

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



Assessment Report

**for the Application of
the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice,
for the Accreditation of the Master's Program
"Nursing Care" (Master in Nursing Care)**

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Decision	07.05.2015

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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's 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 the following procedure, namely accreditation of a study program at the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice, Slovenia, the AHPGS follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), "Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programmes and for System Accreditation" (Resolution of the Accreditation Council of 8 December 2009 as amended on 10 December 2010), as well as the Accreditation Criteria adopted by the AHPGS. Consequently, the decision regarding the accreditation of the Bachelor's study program "Nursing Care" 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

¹ 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 applicable accreditation criteria valid in Slovenia. 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 decision regarding the accreditation of the Master's study program "Nursing Care" of the educational institution Faculty of Health Care Jesenice, Slovenia (further referred as 'the FHCJ' and 'the Faculty') is carried out by the Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (further referred as 'the AHPGS'). The contract between the College of Health care Jesenice (reorganized into the Faculty of Health Care on 20 February, 2014) and the AHPGS was signed on 19 March, 2014.

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) and the accompanying documents were submitted to the AHPGS in electronic format on the 25 August, 2014. On the 30 September, 2014, the AHPGS forwarded open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter OQ) pertaining to the Self-Evaluation Report to the University. On the 20 October, 2014, the University submitted the answers to the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter AOQ) to the AHPGS in electronic format.

The following document presents the summary of the AHPGS for the Master's study program "Nursing Care".

The application documentation submitted by the FHCJ follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Together with the Self-Evaluation Report, the University provided documents specific to the Master's level study program "Nursing Care":

Annex	Description
1	Module description
2	Study Plan
3	Diploma supplement
4	Admission into the next year of study and the duration of studies- 2 nd cycle
5	CVs of the teaching personnel
6	International scientific conferences
7	Executive summary

Table1. Specific Documents for "Nursing Care" Master's Program

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

Annex	Description
A	Criteria for transnational higher education
B	The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999
C	Examination procedures and regulations
D	Criteria for the allocation of credits to study programs under ECTS
E	Declaration on the safety of premises, facilities and equipment
F	Criteria for the accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programs, determined by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
G	The list of all events "Moja kariera – Quo vadis" (My Career)
H	Minimum standards for the appointment of higher education teachers, researchers and faculty assistants at higher education institutions
I	EU directive on professional qualifications
J	Criteria for transferring between study programs
K	Courses and training for clinical mentors

Table2. Documents common for "Nursing Care" of both Bachelor's and Master's levels

The Self-Evaluation Report, the open questions (OQ) and the answer to the open questions (AOQ) as well as the additional documents build the basis for the present summary. The layout bears no significance, as it solely reflects the standards agreed within the University.

2.2 Study program

2.2.1 Structural data

University	Faculty of Health Care Jesenice (FHCJ)
Title of the study program	"Nursing Care"
Degree awarded	Master in Nursing Care
Language of instruction	Slovenian
Form of studies	Part-time (since the academic year 2009/2010) and full-time (starting with the academic year 2014/2015)
Organizational structure	Monday-Friday for full-time students Monday-Saturday for part-time students
Period of education	2 years/4 semesters, for both full-time and part-time

	forms of studies
Credit Points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)	120
Hours/CP	1 ECTS = 25-30 hours
Workload	Total: 3,000 hours Contact hours: 1,080 hours Individual work: 1,920 hours
CP for the final paper	20 ECTS credits
Beginning of the study program	Academic year 2009/2010
Previous accreditation	In 2010 national reaccreditation by SQAA (Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency)
Time of admission	Each winter semester
Number of available places on the program	Starting with the academic year 2014/2015: 30 for full-time studies and 20 for part-time studies (previously 30-60 for part-time studies only)
Number of enrolled students in the academic year 2014/2015	13 (full-time students)
Number of graduates by the year 2014	9
Particular enrollment conditions	-Bachelor degree in Nursing (worth of 180 or 240 ECTS credits) or -Bachelor degree in other field (worth at least 180 ECTS points) with a requirement to pass Nursing Care exams prior to enrolment.
Enrollment fees in the academic year 2014/2015	For full-time students: no fees For part-time students: 862,66 EUR – 1st year 862,66 EUR – 2st year
Tuition fees in the academic year 2014/2015	For full-time students: no tuition fees For part-time students: 1. year (entry requirements A and B) 2.500,00 EUR 1. year (entry requirements D) 1.600,00 EUR

	1. year (entry requirements C) 2.500,00 EUR
	1. year (entry requirements E) 2.272,00 EUR
	2. year (entry requirements A and B) 2.500,00 EUR
	2. year (entry requirements D) 1.600,00 EUR
	2. year (entry requirements C) 2.500,00 EUR
	2. year (entry requirements E) 2.272,00 EUR

Table3. Structural data of "Nursing Care" Master's Program

The "Nursing Care" Master's program offered by the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice is a two-year second-cycle study program that is aimed at expanding and deepening the students' core nursing knowledge and skills, and their acquiring of new knowledge and skills in specialized nursing areas. The study program comprises obligatory and elective courses worth of 60 and 40 European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) credits, respectively, and a Master's thesis (20 ECTS credits), and is worth a total of 120 ECTS points. During the first year of studies when the compulsory modules are taught, the program focuses on research and evidence-based practice competencies as well as basic understanding of nursing as a profession. In the second year, students can select from nursing specialties choosing the respective elective courses. The main language of instruction is Slovenian; however, some courses, mainly given by visiting professors, are taught in English (see Self-Evaluation Report, Introduction on pp. 1-3 and Paragraph 1.2.8).

2.2.2 Qualification objectives and employment opportunities

In the Introduction to its Self-Evaluation Report, the FHCJ posits that the Master's program complies with domestic educational standards and criteria, such as the Higher Education Act of the Republic of Slovenia (HEA) or the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (SQAA) (Annex F), and also with internationally recognized guidelines for study program development, for instance, the Bologna Declaration (Annex B). The general competencies acquired by the program students are said to correspond to level 7 of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). According to its main objectives, course units, as well as general and subject-specific competences, the Master's program is classified under the field of Health (72) in the ISCED classification and under Medical and Health Sciences in the Frascati Manual (see Self-Evaluation Report, Introduction, pp. 2-3 and Paragraph 1.3.2).

In Paragraph 1.3.1 of the Self-Evaluation Report, the FHCJ states that the main objective of the “Nursing Care” Master’s program is to help students acquire the knowledge and skills required for a thorough implementation of all elements of contemporary nursing, independent identification of issues related to health and diseases and search of creative nursing approaches in solving them as well as effective health and health care promotion among all population groups. Besides this, a program graduate is expected to participate in the modernization of organizational systems in nursing; management of nursing and inter-professional teams; introduction of innovative changes in nursing; or education and scientific research in nursing.

First and foremost, the program is expected to prepare qualified specialists with a thorough theoretical and practical knowledge in nursing and adjacent fields of knowledge, such as management, quality assurance, pedagogy, and andragogy. For this purpose, the students are taught to understand the nature of theories and philosophy of nursing, gather expert experience and evidence-based nursing practice; plan and implement research, including data collection and analysis; follow ethical principles in the research and practice of nursing; as well as provide for organization, management, leadership, quality assurance and teaching in nursing. Moreover, candidates broaden and deepen their knowledge in specific areas of health care which do not pertain solely to nursing: for instance, health education, health promotion, continuous health care provision, etc. (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.3.3).

In order to prepare its students for the professional occupation, the program also endows its students with further cognitive, communicative, and organizational competencies:

1. knowledge in information technology (compiling, storing, receiving, and sending information in various forms);
2. skills in writing specialist and research papers;
3. efficient communication skills;
4. abilities to collaborate with individuals and groups in different situations and environments in order to achieve common objectives;

5. abilities for organizational and implementation management in order to introduce changes, recognize possibilities, decide for a specific option or strategy, and be actively involved in its implementation and evaluation of its effects².

The graduates of the "Nursing Care" Master's program can continue their studies at the doctoral level. At the moment, there is no doctoral program in nursing in Slovenia. However, Master's degree holders can obtain a doctoral degree in public health at the Faculty of Medicine (University of Ljubljana) or pursue doctoral studies in social sciences, humanities and management (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.4.1). Another path for the graduates to follow is to engage professionally with implementation of the advanced level of nursing, monitoring of the quality of work, patient safety, introduction of improvements in practice, research and development, clinical research, management and leadership, etc. In this regard, the Faculty offers annual seminars and conferences under the title My Career – Quo Vadis (see Annex G).

The Self-Evaluation Report, Paragraph 1.4.1 states that employment opportunities for the graduates of the study program lie in a range of health care settings, long-term care facilities, spas and wellness centers as well as in the business sector. The FHCJ further admits that career perspectives for registered nurses (RNs) are limited in Slovenia, and they are even scarcer for nurses with a Master's degree as positions for level 7 of the EQF are not systematized in health care institutions. Although no unemployment has been registered for the Master's program graduates, the Faculty has been so far implementing only part-time Master's program for students with existing employment within the health care system (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.4.2).

2.2.3 Modularization and exam system

According to the documents submitted by the University, the "Nursing Care" Master's program is designed for two years (four semesters): the first year of studies comprises six obligatory courses of the Nursing Care module, whereas the second year consists of four entirely elective courses of the Clinical Module and the Leadership and Quality in Nursing Module as well as a Master's thesis. Each course, regardless of the module, is worth of 10 ECTS credits, whereas the

² In accordance with Paragraph 1.3.2 of the Self-Evaluation Report, the information on the competences the Master's program enables is taken from the FHCJ website: <http://www.fzj.si/index.php?page=competences-2>

Master's thesis gives the final 20 ECTS points. Thus, out of the total amount of 120 ECTS credits, 50% of the points are awarded for the compulsory subjects, 33.33% for the electives, and 16.67% for the Master's thesis.

As presented in Annex 2, the first year of the Master's studies consists of the obligatory Nursing Care module that comprises the following courses:

Compulsory Module: Nursing Care						
Sem.	Course title	*L	S	CE	ISW	ECTS
1	Research and Research Methodology	40	40	20	150	10
	Education and Mentoring Process in Clinical Nursing Practice	40	40	20	150	10
	Advanced Application of Ethical Theory in Clinical Nursing Practice	40	40	20	150	10
1/2	Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing	-	80	20	150	10
2	Theory and Practice of Nursing	40	40	20	150	10
	Basics of Management, Leadership and Quality in Health Care and Nursing Care	40	40	20	150	10
	Total:	200	280	120	900	60
<p>*Contact hours: L – Lectures, S – Seminar, CE – Clinical Exercises Self-study hours: ISW – Individual Student Work Credit points: ECTS – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System</p>						

Table 4: Overview of Compulsory Courses (1st Year of Studies)

The program ensures minimum elective content (at least 10%) for theoretical learning activities as in the second year of their studies the Master students choose four courses within the Clinical Module and the Leadership and Quality in Nursing Module out of the 19 electives presented below in Table 4:

Sem.	Course title	L	S	CE	ISW	ECTS
Elective Module: Clinical Module						
3	Epidemiology and Introduction into Demography	40	40	20	10	10
	Health Promotion	40	40	20	10	10
	Clinical Nutrition	40	40	20	10	10
	Hospital epidemiology and infection control	40	40	20	10	10

3/4	Oncology Nursing Care with Oncology	40	40	20	10	10
	Mental Health	40	40	20	10	10
	Nutrition	40	40	20	10	10
	Molecular Aspects of Clinic-Pathological Syndromes and Conditions – Selected Themes	40	40	20	10	10
	Nutrition II	40	40	20	10	10
4	Continuous and Integrative Nursing and Palliative Care	40	40	20	10	10
	Gerontology Nursing Care with Gerontology	40	40	20	10	10
	Primary Health Care and Community Nursing	40	40	20	10	10
	Elective subjects from other faculties in Slovenia or the EU	40	40	20	10	10
Elective Module: Leadership and Quality in Nursing						
3	Design of Clinical Microsystems and Continuous Quality and Patient Safety Improvement	40	40	20	10	10
	Patient Safety	40	40	20	10	10
3/4	Informatics in Health Care and Nursing Care	40	40	20	10	10
	Leadership in Nursing	40	40	20	10	10
4	Health Economics	40	40	20	10	10
	Health and social inequalities	40	40	20	10	10
	Total (for 4 electives):	160	160	80	40	40
Contact hours: L – Lectures, S – Seminar, CE – Clinical Exercises						
Self-study hours: ISW – Individual Student Work						
Credit points: ECTS – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System						

Table 5: Overview of Elective Courses (2nd Year of Studies)

Annex 1 offers a detailed course description that covers the following aspects: course title, semester, number of credit hours, language of instruction, and description of the course content, its educational objectives, and the methods for student's assessment. Moreover, information of the courses is also available on the FHCJ website. Alongside with the traditional didactic methods of instruction, e-learning is also possible through the Moodle learning platform (version 2.0) introduced in 2011. In the upcoming academic year, integrated forms of instruc-

tion and learning will also be available for several courses of the “Nursing Care” Master’s program. In e-learning platform, students and instructors communicate through a forum and a Skype chatroom of Skype; students can write papers in Wiki as well as start a blog (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.2.5).

Among its main didactic concepts and methods of instruction applied at the program, the Faculty names lectures, seminars, clinical training, clinical exercises, participation in research projects and humanitarian projects. The important objective of the study program is to combine theory with practical experience, therefore a direct connection between lectures and seminars is provided. In both lectures and seminars, teachers follow the principles of systematic and gradual learning, active student participation, and thematic differentiation according to students’ existing knowledge and work experience from the clinical setting (see AOO, 15).

Lectures of the Master’s degree usually serve to expand and, if necessary, restructure students’ knowledge through methods of working in small groups and active discussions. As adults who have already obtained a certain amount of experience, Master program students are encouraged to share with it with their peers. Seminars are envisaged to revise newly acquired theoretical knowledge and apply it in specific examples from the clinical setting, which require prior preparation and active participation from students. Another essential aspect of seminars is to introduce students to independent research work. Master’s degree students have to conduct a research project as a part of the course *Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing*, which also serves as preparation phase for writing a Master’s thesis. The main methods of teaching at seminars include written assignments (research projects, seminar papers, essays, teaching preparation materials), reading assignments and text editing, practical assignments (health education lesson plans), demonstrations (e.g. research methodology), and discussions (see AOO, 15).

Each Master’s course (except for *Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing* that offers a double amount of seminar hours instead of a lecture), regardless of the module and semester, consists of 40 lecture hours, 40 seminar hours, 20 contacts hours of clinical exercises, and 150 self-study hours. Moreover, a student is also entitled to select a required or elective course at another educational institution and submit an application for recognition of credits to the Student Affairs Committee (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.2.1). Furthermore, all the pre-existing achieve-

ments are considered in case of a student's transfer from another program as well at least 10 ECTS credits for an obligatory or elective course are subject to transfer when a "Nursing Care" student switches to another program (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.2.1-1.2.2).

Practical/clinical experience is integrated into the structure of the study program through the courses *Research Methodology* and *Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing*. There and in other courses, students are said to deal with nursing issues in clinical settings. Primarily, theoretical knowledge of students is complemented with clinical experience through their involvement in a research project. Master's degree students are said to participate in the annual international scientific conferences organized since 2008 (see Annex 6). Within 5 years of the program's existence, its students have produced 70 scientific papers and 56 submissions to various scientific events (for details, see AOQ, 16, Table 3).

The last stage of the "Nursing Care" Master's program is a Master's thesis. Since the main aim of the Master's program is to promote, develop and implement evidence-based practice, students' research works are considered to be an essential part of the program. The students of the program have the opportunity of participating in on-going professional, research and development FHCJ projects implemented by the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport and other institutions (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.2.7).

As stated in Paragraph 1.2.7 of the Self-Evaluation Report, students become familiar with the theoretical basis for scientific research in the first year of study, particularly in the course *Research and Research Methodology*. Equipped with the knowledge and skills from the course *Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing*, students prepare a research project, write a research report and publish it either as an original scientific article in a journal, or as a submission for an international scientific conference. All the submissions should follow the standard IMRD model and meet all the requirements of scientific research work. Master's students participate in the international two-week Works in Progress (WIP) seminar.

The Master's thesis is a major research work prepared by a student and worth 20 ECTS credits. Students can begin to work on their Master's thesis when they have met all the obligatory requirements for the first year of study worth a total of 60 ECTS credits and published a scientific article (an original scientific article, a review or a submission to a conference). The Master's thesis comprises a the-

oretical and empirical part; the latter is the candidate's contribution to the development of nursing care.

Knowledge assessment and grading are prescribed by documents *Examination Procedures and Regulations* (Annex C) and *Criteria for Allocation of Credits to Study Programmes Under ECTS* (Annex D). The following types of knowledge assessment have been adopted at the FHCJ: examinations as well as assessment of seminar papers and presentations. Assessment can be written, oral, or combined written and oral. Group assessment is also possible; in this case criteria for evaluating the contribution of each member towards the final group project grade have to be clearly set out (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.2.3).

The FHCJ Senate adopts an academic calendar no later than four months before the start of a new academic year, thereby adopting a plan for organized learning activities and exam periods. Exam periods cannot overlap with learning activities for full-time students. Each academic year at the FHCJ has three examination periods: winter (the last week of January to the 3rd week of February), summer (mid-June to the 2nd week of July), and autumn (the 3rd week of August to the 2nd week of September) exam session. Table 5 gives an example of the academic year 2014/2015:

Winter exam period	Summer exam period	Autumn exam period
26 January – 20 February	15 June – 10 July	17 August – 11 September

Table 6: Exam Sessions in Academic Year 2014/2015

Annex C also specifies that a student is allowed to retake an exam four times in a given academic year and a specific exam up to eight times during the course of studies, although a fee for retaking an exam for the fourth or any subsequent time shall be charged (see Articles 11 and 14). The period between failing an exam and retaking it has to be at least 14 days (Article 12). Dean may approve a student's application for an alternative examination date, if a student provides a sufficient reason (for instance, hospitalization during the examination period, giving birth, forthcoming studies or student practice abroad, active participation in extracurricular cultural/social events, top athletic competitions, etc.) and supporting documents (see Paragraph 2.5).

Regarding the grading system, the requirements for the teaching staff are provided in Annex C, Paragraph 2.7. The FHCJ applies the following grades for assessment at the Master's program (see Annex C, Article 30a):

Grade	ECTS grade	Grading scale
10 (excellent)	A (excellent)	95.6-100%
9 (very good)	B (very good)	84.3-95.5%
8 (very good)	C (good)	70.8-84.2%
7 (good)	D (satisfactory)	59.6-70.7%
6 (satisfactory)	E (sufficient)	55.5-59.5%
5 (fail)	F (fail)	50.5-54.9%
1-4 (fail)	F (fail)	Less than 50.5%

Table 7: Exam Sessions in Academic Year 2014/2015

In its Self-Evaluation Report, Paragraph 1.2.3, the FHCJ assures that the study program is compliant with the Bologna Declaration (Annex B), Criteria for Accreditation and External Evaluation of Higher Education Institutions and Study Programs (Annex F), Criteria for Allocation of Credits to Study Programmes under ECTS (Annex D) and with the Higher Education Act of Slovenia (HEA). For the academic feasibility of the exams, refer to Paragraph 2.3.3 of the present report.

The “Nursing Care” Master’s program is designed to suit the purposes of internationality. The FHCJ has made international cooperation one of its strategic goals, and was awarded the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) on December 12, 2013 for the program Erasmus Plus (2014-2020), enabling the Faculty to conclude bilateral agreements, conduct student exchange programs and instructor exchange programs with foreign partners and cooperate in joint international life-long learning programs (see Self-Evaluation report, 1.2.9). In accordance with the information provided in the Self-Evaluation Report, Paragraph 1.2.8, the FHCJ has concluded 17 bilateral agreements with the international higher education institutions enabling teaching staff and student exchanges as well common research and development projects³.

Visiting professors cooperating with the Faculty in the implementation of the Master’s program teach courses in English as the HEA allows a foreign language to be a language of instruction. In this regard, four visiting lecturers from University of Aberdeen, Swansea University, and University of the West of Scotland have been regularly teaching Master’s Nursing courses since 2009. Besides this, the FHCJ encourages its students and employees to be part of the Erasmus

³ For the list of educational institutions, refer to: <http://www.fzj.si/index.php?page=bilateral-agreements>

mobility, Norway Grants, and Norwegian Financial Mechanism programs implemented by CMEPIUS, Slovenian national center for mobility⁴.

Since 2010, the FHCJ has been a member of the IRIS network⁵ which organizes the international Erasmus intensive program called *Works in Progress* (WIP). The two-week WIP seminar is an international nursing event with a focus on professional, research and scientific activities. Participants of the WIP seminar include Master students and instructors coming from five European higher education institutions: Oslo and Akershus University, College of Applied Sciences, Norway; Faculty of Health Care Jesenice, Slovenia; School of Nursing and Midwifery, Trinity College, Dublin, Ireland; Polytechnic Institute of Leiria, School of Health Sciences Portugal; University of Malta, Malta. The seminar gives Master students an opportunity to present their research results in English in an international group. By participating in the WIP and successfully passing the requirements, students earn 5 ECTS credits. As stated in Table 4, Paragraph 1.2.9 of the Self-Evaluation Report, so far 15 students of the "Nursing Care" Master's program have participated in the two-week WIP seminar. In addition to WIP, students can also visit foreign educational institutions through the Erasmus exchange program. So far, they have not expressed much interest in such long (three-month) exchange stays abroad, since the majority of Master level students are employed. Nevertheless, with the implementation of the program on the full-time basis beginning with the academic year 2014/2015, students' enthusiasm is expected to increase (see AOQ, 17).

In Paragraph 1.6.6 of its Self-Evaluation Report, the FHCJ states that gender disproportionality of enrollment in the Master's program under consideration reflects the traditional perception of RN as a woman's profession in Slovenia. Although no students with special needs or disabilities are currently enrolled in the study program, the Faculty guarantees equal study opportunities for this category of students by taking their specific needs into account. The corresponding adjustments, for example, include extension of time for written and oral examinations, printed material with bigger font and greater spacing between lines, taping of attended classes, longer consultations with the teaching staff, etc. In terms of space facilities, adjusted locations and access to clinical training, seminars and exercises as well as elimination of architectural barriers are claimed

⁴ For the list of participants in exchange programs for teaching staff, refer to <http://www.fzj.si/index.php?page=staff-international-exchanges>

⁵ For the full list of memberships, refer to: <http://www.vszn-je.si/index.php?page=membership-in-associations>

to be provided at the Faculty (see the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.7). Besides this, the FHCJ also discerns athletes as a special category of students (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.9).

2.2.4 Admission requirements

In accordance with the Self-Evaluation report, Paragraph 1.1.8, in order to be enrolled in the “Nursing care” Master’s program at the FHCJ, a candidate has to be holder of the following:

1. a Bachelor degree in Nursing worth 180 ECTS credits; or
2. a higher education degree of completion of a professional study program in Nursing Care worth 180 ECTS credits (issued before the Amendment to the Higher Education Act of Slovenia took effect); or
3. a Bachelor degree in other field (other health care sciences, humanities, social sciences, social work, environmental studies, safety assurance, etc.) worth at least 180 ECTS points). Before enrollment, such candidates have to take the missing exams from the Bachelor program in Nursing Care worth up to 40 ECTS credits. Candidates can enroll in the first year of Master’s study only after passing the missing exams; or
4. a University-level degree of completion of a study program in Health Sciences or Nursing worth 240 ECTS credits (a higher education professional study program worth 180 ECTS and a specialization in Nursing worth 60 ECTS). Such candidates shall be awarded 60 ECTS. At the Master’s program they will need to obtain 30 ECTS credits in the required courses of *Research and Research Methodology*, *Nursing Theory and Practice*, and *Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing*, 10 ECTS credits in one elective course, and 20 ECTS credits for the Master’s thesis.
5. a University-level degree of completion of a study program in Nursing, Health Sciences or any other field (other health care sciences, humanities, social sciences, social work, environmental studies, safety assurance, etc.) worth 240 ECTS credits including a specialization other than Nursing worth 60 ECTS. Such candidates shall be awarded 40 ECTS. At the Master’s program they will need to fulfil the following requirements: 40 ECTS credits in four required subjects of *Research and Research Methodology*, *Nursing Theory and Practice*, *Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing*, and *Application of Contemporary Ethical Theories into Nursing Practice*; 20 ECTS credits in two elective subjects; and 20 ECTS credits for the Master’s thesis.

The Faculty posits that the “Nursing Care” Master’s program is designed in accordance with the Bologna Declaration (see Annex B) as its students will hold a total of 300 ECTS credits upon their successful completion of the study program (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.5.5). In case of enrollment limitations, candidates shall be selected based on the grade obtained for their diploma thesis (20%) and the grade point average during the course of studies (80%). Work experience is not an admission requirement (see Annex 7). Upon enrollment, accepted candidates have to submit a medical certificate of their ability to perform the work and tasks of a RN issued by the Clinic of Occupational Health, Traffic and Sports.

To advance into the following year of study, students of the “Nursing Care” Master’s program have to obtain at least 40 ECTS credits passing at least four of the six required courses from the first year of study; two of these must be *Research and Research Methodology* and *Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing* (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.1.9). Besides this, Master students can select a required or elective course at another higher education institution and submit an application for the recognition of ECTS credits to the Student Affairs Committee. Moreover, the HEA enables transfers between Master’s study programs (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.5.4).

2.3 Study conditions and quality assurance

2.3.1 Human resources

The teaching staff of the full-time second cycle (Master’s degree) program “Nursing Care” comprises in 8 internal FHCJ members, of whom 3 are full-time instructors, 5 are instructors with the secondary employment position. Besides, 47 instructors are employed under a copyright contract and/or a work contract. These instructors are also involved in teaching the first cycle program “Nursing Care”. Seven of contract teachers come from abroad (see AOO, 18). For more detailed information on the teaching staff, refer to their CVs in Annex 5. All in all, for the implementation of the Bachelor’s and Master’s programs in Nursing Care (both full-time and part-time) the FHCJ employs 69.4% of all the teaching staff (full-time employment) and has concluded contracts with the rest 30.6% (half-time instructors).

The students of the Master’s program are expected to complete their studies in 4 semesters (2 years). In the academic year 2014/2015, 13 full-time students

have been admitted to the second cycle program (see AOO, 12, Table 2). Provided that there are 8 internal FHCJ instructors, the student-teacher ratio for the time being constitutes approximately 1.6:1, i.e. there are 1 or 2 students per 1 teacher.

In Paragraph 2.1.3 of the Self-Evaluation Report, the Faculty affirms its commitment to offer chances for the academic development of the teaching staff. The teaching staff at the FHCJ is relatively young⁶; therefore, the Faculty supports them in establishing and advancing their career through active and passive cooperation at the events organized by the FHCJ Center for Life-Long Learning, Career Counselling, Tutoring and Mentoring, such as: international scientific conferences, professional conferences, summer research schools, seminars, workshops and other events. Every year, The FHCJ organizes educational courses in didactics for lecturers and assistants, which is particularly important for those without any prior experience in higher education teaching. For statistics of the educational and training activities for the FHCJ teaching and non-teaching staff, refer to Table 9 in Paragraph 2.1.3 of the Self-Evaluation Report.

The Faculty further asserts that it encourages its younger full-time employees to enroll in postgraduate degree programs by financing their tuition fees. Four such employees were placed in degree programs; three of them already completed their studies. All instructors are urged to participate in international research and development projects as well as exchange programs (see Self-Evaluation Report, 2.1.1 and 2.1.3). Promotions are based on monitoring employees' work in accordance with specific work, educational and personal career development plans. In 2014, six employees met these conditions for promotion.

Habilitation is conducted in correspondence with the criteria for obtaining the title of a higher education instructor, researcher or higher education assistant at the FHCJ that comply with the SQAA national standards specified in Annex H. In order to obtain a title, candidates have to meet the cumulative basic requirements (appropriate level of education, professional training, pedagogical training, a positive assessment on candidate's qualifications from the majority of observers, active knowledge of a foreign language), general requirements (formal conditions, such as length of work experience) and special requirements (qualitative and quantitative conditions pertaining to the scientific, research, pedagogic and

⁶ In the academic year 2013-2014, the average age of full-time employees was 38 years and 49 years, respectively.

professional work of a candidate). When re-qualifying for a title they hold, candidates have to attach a certificate of participation in a higher education didactics course within the last five years of their employment (see Self-Evaluation Report, 2.1.2 and 1.2.4).

Regarding the administrative staff, coordination of the Bachelor's and Master's programs is conducted at three Faculty departments, while the coordination of development and organizational activities is implemented by Vice-Deans for Education, Research and Quality, and Evaluation. In performing the administrative and managerial tasks, the Dean is assisted by the Secretary General. Other senior management members include Head of Clinical Training, Head of Student Office, Library Director, and Head of General Administrative Office. In future, the FHCJ plans to organize the work over the study programs within its departments expanding the non-teaching staff (see Self-Evaluation Report, 2.2.1).

2.3.2 Facilities

According to the Faculty, premises of the both Bachelor's and Master's programs in nursing care are all located in one address, at Spodnji Plavž 3, 4270 Jesenice, Slovenia. The building is said to be owned by the Municipality of Jesenice and managed by the FHCJ. In addition, the FHCJ has a three-year lease contract for its Study Center Ljubljana, located at Letališka cesta 16, 1000 Ljubljana (the Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.1).

The FHCJ building in Jesenice is said to provide enough space for curricular and free-time activities of both instructors and students. Lecture halls, a library with an e-learning room and a Student Office are to be found on the first floor of the Faculty. Two larger halls can be divided into 4 separate seminar rooms equipped with whiteboards, removable boards, and computers, power outlets for laptops, sound system, projectors and overhead projectors. The second floor contains one lecture hall and the rest of the premises are used for administrative purposes (See Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.3).

The Study Center Ljubljana includes a lecture hall with 120 seats that can be converted into two lecture halls/seminar rooms with 60 seats each. The lecture hall is equipped with the required IT equipment (a computer, a projector, an overhead projector, a whiteboard, and access to the Internet). In addition to the lecture hall, the Study Center Ljubljana also has a Student Office and a library equipped with computers, printers, Internet access, etc. and provides study

materials for the students of the Master's program. The Faculty claims that the premises of the Study Center are suitable for students with special needs and disabilities (See Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.2).

As stated in Paragraph 2.3.2 of the Self-Evaluation Report, the FHCJ library (including the funds of the library in the Study Center Ljubljana) offers in total 3,924 units of library material, of these 3,568 are books and monographs, 265 are serial publications, 91 are CDs and other units (see the Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.2). 3,284 items of library material are available to Bachelor's Nursing students, and 640 to Master's Nursing students. Students can also enjoy access to Slovenian as well as international databases, such as CINAHL, SpringerLink, ProQuest, Human Anatomy Online – ATLAS. Moreover, the FHCJ has a subscription to printed journals that are not available in full-text articles through databases (JONA, Nurse Education Today, Nursing Science Quarterly, Nursing Studies, International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship and other).

Regarding the program-related acquisition of learning material, the FHCJ complies each year a list of required and recommended reading based on the program curriculum. These books and periodicals are usually obtained by the beginning of each academic year, although a specific title can also be acquired during the year. The Faculty's own publications constitute a part of the library material; for example, two higher education textbooks in nursing. Interlibrary loans and returns between Jesenice and Ljubljana are also possible, as transportation of library units between both locations is organized.

The Faculty library is open from 12:00 till 16:00 for 4 days a week: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. It is closed on Wednesdays and on weekends. A reading room is equipped with 8 computers and when necessary they can also use additional 15 computers in the e-learning classroom. Each student and member of the teaching staff has a password in order to use Windows OS and access various databases. The opening hours of the library in Ljubljana correspond to the study activities taking place in the Study Center Ljubljana. Once a month, a library timetable is prepared for the following month and published on the FHCJ website.

As the main source of its funding, the FHCJ indicates tenders for research and development projects funded by Slovenia and the EU. However, the Faculty does not expect any increase in the state funding of higher education due to the continuous economic recession in the country. Consequently, the Faculty tries to

cover the needs of the Master's program "Nursing Care" and to obtain new financial resources for the Master's degree program "Health Promotion" currently undergoing the accreditation procedure (see Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.4).

2.3.3 Quality assurance

Quality management of the Faculty applies quality assurance measures and standards outlined by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (SQAA). According to the requirements of the SQAA (Annex F, art.6), accreditation of the institution and study programs have to be conducted every 7 years. In 2013, the FHCJ has obtained positive re-accreditation valid until 2021. The Faculty has obtained the international standard ISO 9001:2008 and the national standard Quality for Future Education (QFE) in 2012. The FHCJ has been implementing the Master's program in Nursing Care since October 2009. In 2012, the Faculty submitted the application for introducing full-time study at the program, which is to be launched in the academic year 2014/2015 (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.1 and 1.6.6).

According to the FHCJ, quality assurance is integrated into all processes taking part within the institution and all stakeholders participate in quality assurance processes in order to ensure its continuous quality improvement. With this purpose, the Faculty established the Centre for Quality and Evaluation as a separate organizational unit in May 2014. The Centre includes the Quality and Evaluation Committee and the Continuous Quality Improvement Group. The function of the Committee is to recognize the necessity of corrective measures, consequently propose and implement them. Student representatives are included into the Committee (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.1 and 1.6.2).

As further stated in Paragraphs 1.6.1 and 1.6.2, the Faculty conveys annual self-evaluation and produces self-evaluation reports which constitute the framework necessary to define the desirable quality level, assess strategic achievements, and design an action plan for the upcoming academic year. Data for such a report is collected with the help of anonymous questionnaires that serve to monitor and evaluate different aspects of the Faculty's functioning. Monitoring results are then discussed at the sessions of the Quality and Evaluation Committee and the Faculty Senate, as well as at the September session of the Academic Assembly.

Students are claimed to be integrated into the internal quality assurance process through evaluation procedures, results of which constitute a part of the final evaluation report. At the end of the academic year, students are required to fill in written questionnaires where they express their satisfaction with the quality of the study program, teaching staff, and their workload in courses (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.3). By such means, the Faculty tries to ensure and maintain the practical relevance of the study program. Students can also participate in the evaluation of the Faculty by sharing and commenting on current issues at meetings with mentors, at Senate sessions, and other. As already mentioned above, there are student representatives in the Quality and Evaluation Committee.

Among the main methods of evaluating student workload, the Faculty names questionnaires, discussions about student workload with individual mentors and instructors, at department and Senate meetings. For Bachelor's degree students, the mandatory attendance comprises minimum of 30% at lectures and 100% at clinical exercises and clinical training. According to the Faculty, all workload figures have been specified and confirmed by the accreditation in 2009 from the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.5).

As for academic feasibility of the student workload and the examinations, they are assessed by means of student questionnaires, discussions with instructors and mentors at department and Senate meetings as well as suggestions of the Student Council representatives. These methods serve as the basis for preventive measures and corrective actions undertaken at the study program. Student workload for a Master's program (part-time study program) includes at least 60% mandatory attendance of each course. Student workload is established through the tutoring system and the FHCJ Tutoring Committee and claimed to be comparable with similar programs at other institutions of higher education (see Self-Evaluation Report, Introduction and Paragraph 1.6.6).

The total number of students in the academic year 2013/2014 was 24, of which 1 part-time student was enrolled in the first year of the "Nursing Care" Master's program, 10 part-time students in their second year of studies and 13 students were writing their Master's theses to obtain the Master's degree. As can be seen from the figures in Table 6, Paragraph 1.6.6, Self-Evaluation Report, there were 22 (91.7%) female students and 2 (8.3%) male students in the study program in

the year 2013/14. Similar disproportionality can be observed in the previous years of both Bachelor and Master programs. These differences of enrollment by gender reflect the traditional perception of Nursing as a profession primarily for women.

In accordance with Self-Evaluation Report, Paragraph 1.6.10, no students with special needs or disabilities were enrolled in the academic year 2013/2014. However, the FHCJ offers special support to this category of students. For instance, as part of the tutoring system implemented at the FHCJ since the academic year 2008/09, students with disabilities are assisted so they could integrate smoothly into the study program. Both members of the teaching staff and senior FCHJ students participate in the system providing introductory, course-specific and individual tutoring. For further measures, refer to Paragraph 2.2.3 of the present report.

Information regarding the study program, its modular system, exam requirements, subject descriptions, instructors, assistant instructors, learning outcomes, recommended or required reading etc., is available to students on the FHCJ website in Slovenian and English. There are various organizations within the University, such as the Counselling and Career Guidance Centre, Medical Students Association Arad-ASMA whose main function is to support, help, and inform students in the aspects of career guidance, personal development, and learning optimization (see Self-Evaluation Report for "Nursing Care" Bachelor program, 1.6.8). Besides this, teachers and tutors have office hours when students can consult them directly. Students can also contact their instructors per e-mail or by phone.

2.4 Information about the University

According to the Executive Summary (see Annex 7), the College of Nursing Jesenice was founded in 2007. On 20 February 2014, the College received an approval from the SQAA and was reorganized into a Faculty of Health Care Jesenice. The FHCJ is, thus, a relatively young institution of higher education with a total of 310 students in the academic year 2014/2015.

At the moment, the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice offers two accredited higher education study programs: "Nursing Care" of the first and second cycle professional degree. Recently, the Faculty has developed a Master's study program "Health Promotion", which is currently undergoing the process of accreditation.

In total, the Faculty is planning to introduce 3 more study programs in the near future.

In accordance with Paragraph 3.1.1 of the Self-Evaluation Report, the study program under consideration started in the academic year 2009/2010. In December 2009, the concession was obtained for the implementation of the "Nursing Care" Master's program as a part-time study program. The first graduate of the program obtained her degree at the beginning of the academic year 2012/2013. Starting with the academic year 2014/2015, the Master's program is offered as a full-time study program as well.

The Faculty emphasizes that research and implementation of development projects constitute the main focus of the institution. The Research Institute for Health Care and Nursing functioning at the FHCJ is claimed to contribute to students' as well as teaching personnel's research activity (for the detailed description of its aims, see the Self-Evaluation Report, 3.1.1). It is emphasized that nursing practice skills have to be based on research results; therefore, research has to be an indispensable part of professional and intellectual activity of every registered nurse as well as of any other health care professional with a higher education.

Another important facility within the Faculty is its Centre for Life-Long Learning, Career Counselling, Tutoring and Mentoring. Established in 2008, the Centre offers courses on higher education didactics to the faculty instructors; it also encourages tutors and the clinical mentors of the "Nursing Care" study programs to take part in various educational and didactic trainings. The significance of the Center is reflected through a wide array of annual events: international scientific conferences, summer research schools, symposiums, and conferences on nursing career development. Through these events the FHCJ can encourage the implementation of evidence-based practice in nursing and necessary changes in health care management.

Among its current developments, the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice names its plans to implement a continuous quality monitoring system and also apply the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The Faculty is also undertaking steps to introduce a Doctoral program in Nursing in the time period 2013-2020, obtain accreditation of the SQAA for the "Health Promotion" Master's program, and finally design new Master's programs as well as training courses. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, Para-

graph 3.1.1 comparability of each program of all cycles (Bachelor, Master, and Doctor) is also one of the main tasks of the Faculty.

3 Expert report

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3.1 Preliminary remarks

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (hereupon, the AHPGS) was commissioned by the decision of the Faculty of Health Care, Jesenice, Slovenia (hereupon, the Faculty) for the accreditation of the study program “Nursing Care” (Master of Nursing).

The AHPGS is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) and is a full member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). In 2006, the AHPGS joined the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). Since 2012, the AHPGS is a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA).

The main focus of the following accreditation procedure is the assessment of learning outcomes and objectives of the study program, its curriculum structure, examination system and transparency, sufficiency of teaching forces and the adequacy of learning facilities, implementation of the results of quality assurance in terms of further development of the study program and the implementation of equal opportunities for all University members involved.

The accreditation criteria, which were developed and approved by the AHPGS in compliance 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), are divided as follows:

- 1) Program Aims and Learning Outcomes
- 2) Curriculum Design
- 3) Staff
- 4) Facilities and Learning Resources
- 5) Study Process and Student Assessment
- 6) Program Management

The accreditation of the study program “Nursing Care” was carried out according to an agreed structure.

As the first step, the documents submitted by the Faculty were reviewed by all nominated experts with regard to the specified criteria as well as disciplinary and substantive aspects.

The second step was implemented when the expert group carried out an on-site visit at the Faculty in Jesenice. The results of the written evaluation served as the basis for discussions with members of the Faculty and program management during the visit. The objective of the on-site visit was to clarify the remaining open questions and verify the statements provided in the documents submitted by the Faculty.

The third step was the preparation of the Expert Report by the expert group. The report is structured in compliance with the above mentioned accreditation criteria approved by the AHPGS. The documents of the Faculty, the feedback from the experts to the documents and the results of the discussions with the representatives of the Faculty during the on-site visit served as basis for the statements made in the Expert Report.

The last step of the procedure is the decision regarding the accreditation of the study program of the Faculty. The decision is carried out by the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS.

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

As representatives of higher education institutions:

Ms. Prof. Dr. Renate Stemmer

Professor for Nursing Science and Nursing Administration at the Catholic University of Applied Sciences, Mainz, Germany, Department of Health Care

Ms. Prof. Dr. Birgit Vosseler

Professor and Dean for Students at the University of Applied Sciences, Ravensburg-Weingarten, Germany, Department of Social Work, Health and Nursing

As representative from the professional practice:

Ms. Sarah Rubsamen⁷

Nursing Manager at Pflegeheim Landwasser, Freiburg, Germany

As student representative:

Ms. Gyrit Fröhlich

Student of Master program “Nursing and Health Care Management” at Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences, Frankfurt, Germany

3.2 The study program to be accredited

The main objective of the master study program “Nursing Care” is to help students acquire the knowledge and skills required for a thorough implementation of all elements of contemporary nursing. Moreover, the independent identification of issues related to health and diseases and search of creative nursing approaches are important contents of the studies. Besides, a graduate is expected to participate in the modernization of organizational systems in nursing, in the management of nursing and inter-professional teams, in the introduction of innovative changes in nursing or in the education and scientific research in nursing. As an advanced program of the second cycle, studies in “Nursing Care” enhance the professional competencies and skills previously acquired by students. Hence, the program focuses particularly on evidence-based practice in nursing and also provides a good insight into other health care areas that are coterminous as well as additional to the profession in nursing.

The Master’s level study program “Nursing Care” constitutes the 2nd cycle of studies in the medical sphere, according to the requirements of the Bologna system. The regular time for study is two years, during which students have to obtain 120 credit points (ECTS). One academic year is worth 60 and each semester is worth 30 ECTS. Out of the total amount of 120 ECTS, 50 % are awarded for the compulsory subjects, 33.33 % for the electives, and 16.67 % for the Master’s thesis. The first year of studies comprises six obligatory courses of Nursing Care, whereas the second year consists of four entirely elective courses in the two possible specializations “Clinical” and “Leadership and Quality in Nursing” as well as the Master’s thesis.

⁷ Mrs. Rubsamen was prevented from attending the On-Site Visit, but participated in the written review.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are awarded with the title 'Master of Nursing'.

The "Nursing Care" master study program accepted the first batch of students in the academic year 2009/2010. By July 2014, 9 students successfully graduated the program.

In order to be admitted to the program, candidates have to have a Bachelor degree in Nursing worth 180 ECTS or a higher education degree confirming the completion of a similar professional study program in Nursing Care worth 180 ECTS (issued before the Amendment to the Higher Education Act of Slovenia took effect); or a Bachelor degree in other fields, such as health care sciences, humanities, social sciences, social work, environmental studies, safety assurance, etc., worth at least 180 ECTS points. Before enrollment, such candidates have to take the missing exams from the Bachelor program in "Nursing Care" worth up to 40 ECTS credits. Candidates can enroll in the first year of Master's study only after passing the missing exams.

Full-time students are charged for 862,66 EUR per year. The amount of the tuition fee for part-time students⁸ is 2562,66 EUR per year.

3.3 Expert report

The on-site visit was carried out on the 5th and 6th of February 2015 according to the previously agreed schedule. One representative from the head office of the AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on the 4th of February 2015 for organizational talks prior to the on-site visit. The submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation, as well as the open questions, had been discussed. Furthermore, the plan of the on-site visit of the University had been structured.

In the course of the on-site visit, the expert group conducted discussions with the Faculty management and the teaching staff of the program "Nursing Care" as well as with students currently studying in the program. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises of the program, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, the library, and computer classes. Besides, experts had the opportunity to see the equipment and the capacity of the training laboratories.

⁸ See discussion under criterion (2)

The Expert Report is structured in compliance with the accreditation criteria approved by the AHPGS. The study program will be discussed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the Faculty, the experts' feedback to the documents, the observations made during the on-site visit and the results of the discussions with the representatives of the Faculty serve as the basis for the statements made in the Expert Report.

(0) Introduction and comprehensive remarks

The Faculty was founded in 2007 under the name of "College of Nursing Jesenice". On the 20th of February 2014, the institution received an approval from the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA) and was renamed into the "Faculty of Health Care Jesenice". The Faculty is, thus, a relatively young institution of higher education with a total of 310 students in the academic year 2014/2015.

Currently, the Faculty offers two accredited higher education study programs in "Nursing Care" of the first and second cycle degree (bachelor and master program). Recently, the Faculty has developed a second cycle study program "Health Promotion", which is currently undergoing the process of national accreditation. In total, the Faculty is planning to introduce 3 more study programs in the near future.

The concession to implement the second cycle study program "Nursing Care" was obtained in the study year 2009/2010.

The Research Institute for Health Care and Nursing functioning at the Faculty is claimed to contribute to students' as well as teaching personnel's research activity.

(1) Program aims and learning outcomes

The representatives of the Faculty state that the study program complies with the guidelines specified in the document "Nurses and Midwives for Health" (WHO, European Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery Education; WHO, 2001) as well as the "Munich Declaration on Nursing and Midwifery" (WHO, 2000).

From the Faculty's point of view, the general objective of the study program is described as to help students acquire the knowledge and skills required for a thorough implementation of all elements of contemporary nursing, for taking independent decisions in health care related issues and for finding creative nurs-

ing approaches in solving problems occurring in everyday professional circumstances. Furthermore, the program encourages the promotion of health care among all population groups. Apart from nursing-specific competences, the program enhances students' knowledge and skills in the management of professional and multi-professional teams within health care institutions. Likewise, graduates are expected to implement innovative methods of health care, to provide education for younger generations, and to conduct scientific research relevant to their profession. For more information on the general objectives of the master's program, please see the introductory section of the given document.

The program is prepared as a continuation and an advancement of the Bachelor's program "Nursing Care". Therefore, it focuses on the enhancement of the previously acquired skills and competences. In particular, the program aims at the promotion, development and implementation of evidence-based practice in nursing. During their studies, students learn to respond to the continuously changing requirements in health care services and act according to the needs of the Slovenian population.

According to its main objectives, course units, and general/subject-specific competences, the second cycle study program "Nursing Care" is classified under the field of Health (72) in the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED). Moreover, the program is closely connected with other interdisciplinary science/research fields in ISCED, such as Social Sciences (31) and also Business and administration (34), which are offered among elective subjects.

From the experts' point of view, the orientation and qualification objectives of the program have not been clearly comprehensible at first. On the one hand, the program appears to provide students with methodology and skills necessary for conducting an independent research project that focuses on quantitative results and statistics. On the other hand, the program modules are aiming at deepening and consolidating nursing care in different medical disciplines in terms of 'advanced nursing practice'. In addition, students are trained to acquire management competences, basic pedagogical skills as well as knowledge in community-oriented health care services.

The discussions with the program management have helped to clarify the broad range of qualification objectives pursued by the program. They have brought forward the argument that it is not just yet possible to predict areas of employ-

ment or positions for graduates. Besides, there are no alumni surveys available at the moment given that the program started in 2010.

As a consequence, the program management is offering a wide number of mandatory elective module, thus enabling students on the one side to broaden their qualifications and to meet a multitude of requirements arising from the dynamic development in nursing in Slovenia and on the other side to offer them the possibility to choose from different fields in nursing for an in-depth study to specialize in. The Faculty is trying to respond to the variety of possible qualification objectives by offering a number of mandatory elective modules, e.g. "Clinical Nursing" and "Leadership and Quality", which enable students to set an emphasis on a specific professional direction in nursing.

The experts recognize this approach as reasonable. In this regard, the broad methodological and scientific orientation could make more sense for a small country like Slovenia than to specialize the master to narrow.

Nevertheless, they recommend the continuous evaluation of students' needs and practical requirements of the field, which is important for the consecutive development of the program. Hereby, the experts support and encourage the Faculty in its decision to establish and further implement a master study program aimed at "Advanced Nursing Practice".

In this regard, it is recommended for the program to focus on central study topics and to introduce a stronger linkage to the respective fields of practice into study process. This will allow the implementation of the so-called methods of 'learning-by-doing'.

From the experts' point of view, the Faculty of Health Care could assume one of the leading roles in questions of development of nursing care programs in Slovenia, particularly with regard to master programs. The experts encourage the Faculty to call for the adoption of modern approaches in nursing sciences. In respect thereof, the Faculty should use its position to implement a framework of comparable national standards in nursing training on the master level.

In the course of discussions with the program management and the students, it became clear that teaching activities applied in the master program go far beyond the described requirements.

Taking into account the discussions with the teaching staff, the experts came to the conclusion that the master study program "Nursing Care" provides a clear and coherent vision of objectives. Its qualification objectives encompass academic and multidisciplinary aspects and bear reference to scientific qualifications, competences required for employment activities, and skills to exercise social commitment and personal growth.

Thereby, the modules in research methodology as well as the master thesis serve as the main tool for the improvement and solidification of scientific qualifications in the program. The module "Research and Research Methodology" envisages students' engagement in scientific work starting with the first semester of studies.

Regarding the qualifications enabling to take up a position in the job market, it has to be mentioned that only nine students have finished their studies up to now. Here, the experts recommend to the program to assist graduate students by providing information about vacant positions and other employment related developments.

Modules such as "Basics of Management, Leadership and Quality in Health Care and Nursing Care", "Education and Mentoring Process in Clinical Nursing Practice", as well as research modules, broaden students' perspectives on social engagement. Such an approach must be given a lot of consideration in the study programs focused on health care. Besides, the discussion with the students made it clear that the program "Nursing Care" not only assists in training of professional competences but also contributes to their personal growth.

To sum up, the experts conclude that the study program fulfills the discussed criteria.

(2) Curriculum design

The "Nursing Care" master program comprises 120 ECTS. One academic year is worth 60 and each semester is worth 30 ECTS. Out of a total of 120 credits, 50% of the points are awarded for compulsory subjects, 33.33% for elective subjects, and 16.67% for the Master's thesis. The first year of the Master's studies consists of obligatory Nursing Care modules. The program ensures the minimum elective content (at least 10%) for theoretical learning activities. In the second year of their studies, master students are required to choose four courses within either the "Clinical" specialization or the "Leadership and Quality in Nurs-

ing" specialization (out of a total of 19 elective modules). 20 ECTS are given for the Master's thesis.

Regarding the didactic concepts and methods of instruction applied in the program, the Faculty names lectures, seminars, clinical training, clinical exercises, participation in research projects and humanitarian projects. Here, the combination of theory with practical experience has to be highlighted. Therefore, a direct connection between lectures and seminars is provided. In both lectures and seminars, teachers follow the principles of systematic and gradual learning, active student participation, and thematic differentiation according to students' existing knowledge and work experience from the clinical setting.

It is positively noted that students' assistance in research projects is awarded with 10 ECTS. Furthermore, internationally oriented modules such as Theory and Practice of Nursing, Gerontology Nursing Care with Gerontology, Primary Health Care and Community Nursing are taught in English.

Nevertheless, the experts encourage the program to better integrate and combine the modules of the second year with each another and, based on evaluation results, to further improve their profile. Hereby, the experts make a reference to the remarks of the first criterion, the program aim, and speak of the program's strive to acquire a profile in "Advanced Nursing Practice".

The study program is offered in both full-time and part-time forms with duration of 4 semesters. The full-time students' schedule consists of 5 days a week (from Monday to Friday), whereas the part-time students' schedule includes also classes on Saturday.

The Faculty states that most of the part-time students are already employed at health care institutions and long-term care facilities. Therefore, they are offered classes in the afternoons in order to enable students to participate in the program.

From the experts' point of view, such a regulation of the timetable is of little expediency, although it is stipulated by the Slovenian Higher Education Act. The experts consider it reasonable to stretch the total period of studies for part-time students so that everybody, including employed part-time students, can complete the program within a manageable period of time. Hence it is suggested that the program should offer students the opportunity to prolong their studies for one and a half year, which means that the total duration of the program will

constitute 3,5 years. For those who want to complete the program in 3,5 years, the program management should offer a study plan with a structured distribution of modules throughout the whole period of studies. During the on-site visit discussion, students have also welcomed this suggestion, which they believe will help to decrease their high study workload and allow them to combine the education process with a professional occupation and/or a family life. As needed, there should be an opportunity to mitigate students' invested time in the program through the prolongation of studies. The experts believe that this option should also be discussed with other Slovenian faculties as well with the revision of the national requirements to study programs in nursing care in mind.

As it was already mentioned, in the second year of studies, students have the opportunity to choose 4 out of 19 optional modules. The experts agree that such a range of modules provides students with sufficient options to cut their own path of specialization.

The experts assume that the curriculum revision in general offers a good opportunity to assign a number to each module. This will increase the transparency of information for all stakeholders involved and people interested. According to the module manual, all modules are offered in both Slovenian and English languages. However, this does not quite agree with the statements of the program management who stated that most of the modules are offered in Slovenian only.

The experts positively underlined the internationalization strategy of the Faculty. The Erasmus Extended University Charter was awarded in 2009. In 2013, the Faculty was awarded the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) for the program Erasmus Plus (2014-2020), enabling it to conclude bilateral agreements, to conduct student exchange programs and instructor exchange programs with foreign partners and to cooperate in joint international life-long learning programs. The Faculty has signed 17 bilateral agreements with other EU countries, like England, Finland, Scotland, Slovakia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Belgium, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Croatia and non-EU countries (Norway, Turkey). It also cooperates with higher education institutions in countries to which the Erasmus Charter does not apply (USA, Bosnia and Herzegovina). During the last years, the Faculty hosted more than 20 visiting instructors from different foreign higher education institutions as part of the Erasmus exchange program. At the same time, 11 foreign exchange students from five higher education institutions

received clinical training at the Faculty through a 3-month Erasmus exchange program.

The experts conclude that the program fulfills the discussed criterion.

(3) Staff

The master program "Nursing Care" at the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice is implemented by 3 full-time instructors and 5 instructors with a secondary employment position. Besides, 47 instructors are employed under a copyright contract and/or a work contract. These instructors are also involved in the teaching of the first cycle program "Nursing Care". Seven of 47 contract teachers come from abroad. All in all, for the implementation of the bachelor and master program in "Nursing Care" (both full-time and part-time) the FHCJ employs 69.4% of all the teaching staff (full-time employment) and has concluded contracts with the rest 30.6% (half-time instructors).

Regarding the administrative staff, the coordination of the bachelor's and master's program is conducted at three Faculty departments, while the coordination of development and organizational activities are implemented by Vice-Deans for Education, Research and Quality, and Evaluation. In performing the administrative and managerial tasks, the Dean is assisted by the Secretary General. Other senior management members include Head of Clinical Training, Head of Student Office, Library Director, and Head of General Administrative Office.

During the on-site visit, the experts observed a high level of engagement of the teaching and non-teaching staff in the activities carried out in the study program and at the Faculty in general. Such eagerness was unanimously confirmed also by the students during the discussions.

From the experts' point of view, human resources of the program are sufficient both in quantitative and qualitative terms.

As a recommendation for the improvement of the teaching staff, the experts encourage the Faculty to establish a self-contained PhD program and to further promote it. This will enable the Faculty to create a foundation to cultivate its own teaching personnel and simultaneously develop an autonomous profession of a nurse in Slovenia. Furthermore, by offering a PhD program in the field of nursing, the Faculty will at the same time forward its own position in the nursing field among other higher education institutions of the country and thus reinforce

its unique features. Finally, the active internationalization policy undertaken in the Faculty is worthy of mention; hereby the attraction of the institution can also be further intensified through offering a PhD program for students from abroad and through cooperation with foreign universities.

To sum up, the experts evaluate the criterion of human resources to be fully met.

(4) Facilities and learning resources

In the course of the on-site visit, the expert group had the opportunity to observe and evaluate the learning and training premises of the Faculty.

The Municipality of Jesenice owns the building of the Faculty. The premises are provided for the implementation of courses where students gain new knowledge and experience through practical examples and procedures. Students of both the bachelor and master program share the same premises for theoretical and practical classes.

The equipment enables the implementation of clinical exercises, allowing students to gain the required competences before entering the clinical setting. Two laboratories are equipped for nursing care provision for adults and one for children. The microbiology and biochemistry practice settings are equipped for research purposes.

A special room is equipped for gaining knowledge and skills in laboratory medicine and physiology, especially for conducting tests and clinical trials. All of the clinical practice premises are located on the ground floor of the Faculty.

Lecture halls, the library with an e-learning room and the Student Office are located on the first floor of the building. Two of the larger lecture halls can be divided into four separate seminar rooms containing whiteboards, removable boards and computers, power outlets for laptops, a sound system, projectors and overhead projectors. The second floor contains one lecture hall whereas other premises are used for administrative activities.

The experts give a positive evaluation to the fact that the Faculty and the practical parts of study programs are realized in close cooperation with the local clinic and other health care institutions. The library of the Faculty in Jesenice offers about 4.000 units of library material to both students and teachers. 3.500 units

are classified as books or monographs, 300 are classified as serial publications and are classified as other non-library material units.

The experts recommend reconsideration of the library opening hours; at the moment they only include the timeframe from 12.00 till 16.00 on working days. Although students have expressed their contentment with these opening hours, because during the first half of the day they are usually busy with practical tasks in the clinical settings. Therefore, an extension of the opening hours in the evening would most likely comply with the current tendency in the arrangement of self-study time. The Faculty could first carry out a test phase in order to assess the demand and the popularity of additional library hours among students.

With regard to financial configurations of the Faculty, it is clear that funding through state subsidies has become more difficult. Until now, 60% of the necessary financial support has been supplied by the state, whereas 40% of it has been provided through the tuition fees of part-time students as well as through the third-party funding. The experts are aware of the financial challenges of the Faculty.

With regard to financial support, the experts recommend that the government should introduce a system of financial reward according to the accomplishment of each higher education institution. Such national criteria of performance quality would enable the education institutions to receive more funding by effectively increasing their achievements in teaching, scientific research, international exchange and other criteria. Furthermore, this system could lead to a more transparent distribution of financial resources among education institutions.

Overall, the experts conclude that the requirements of the criteria are fulfilled.

(5) Study process and student assessment

General provisions of the Faculty with regard to admission requirements and procedures, rules of examinations, assessment and grading of students' academic performance regulate the study process of the program.

Information about the master program "Nursing Care", its admission requirements and other details relevant to the program are available on the web-page of the Faculty.

Admission requirements are appropriate to the level of the study program. A candidate holds a Bachelor degree in Nursing worth 180 ECTS; or a higher edu-

cation degree of completion of a professional study program in Nursing Care worth 180 ECTS (issued before the Amendment to the Higher Education Act of Slovenia took effect); or a Bachelor degree in other fields of health care sciences, humanities, social sciences, social work, environmental studies, safety assurance, etc. worth at least 180 ECTS. Before enrollment, candidates who have not a degree in Nursing Care have to take the missing exams from the Bachelor program in Nursing Care worth up to 40 ECTS. Candidates can enroll in the first year of the master's study program only after passing the missing exams. A further opportunity is to have a University-level degree in Health Sciences or Nursing worth 240 ECTS (a higher education professional study program worth 180 ECTS and a specialization in Nursing worth 60 ECTS). Such candidates shall be awarded 60 ECTS. They will need to obtain 30 ECTS credits in the required courses of "Research and Research Methodology", "Nursing Theory and Practice", and "Evidence-Based Practice in Nursing", 10 ECTS credits in one elective course, and 20 ECTS credits for the Master's thesis.

The aspects of gender equality and admission possibilities for people with disabilities are managed according to national legislation.

Students' support is available through the tutoring system and different forms of mentorship in clinical setting. The Faculty states that the teachers communicate and cooperate with students through the Student Council and other units of the Faculty. Office hours of the instructors are posted on the Faculty's webpage and are conducted on a face-to-face basis. In addition, students always have the option of contacting instructors via e-mail or telephone. Discussions with students revealed that supervision and academic support mechanisms are provided on a good level. It should be mentioned here that such an effective support system is primarily organized thanks to the vivid commitment of the teaching staff and also due to the manageable size of the Faculty. Besides, tutoring also appears as a well-functioning and helpful part of the student support system.

From the experts' point of view, the program "Nursing Care" provides a high level of academic support and fair treatment of its students. Thereby, students themselves have confirmed that they are satisfied with the support measures, as well as the information provision system at the Faculty.

The Examination Procedures and Regulations define the assessment methods, grading system and criteria for obtaining ECTS. All teachers inform their students of the course curriculum and assessment methods at the beginning of each se-

mester. The assessment of the master's thesis is regulated by the *Diploma Thesis Regulations*. An assessment can be written, oral, or combined written and oral. Group assessments are also possible, in which case criteria for evaluating the contribution of each member towards the final group grade have to be clearly set out. Equal study opportunities for students with special need and students with disabilities are guaranteed. In the implementation of the study program, their special requirements are met by adjusting the study process and the assessment methods based on an application submitted by the student. Each academic year, the Faculty holds three examination periods (winter, summer and autumn exam period). In the current academic year, students may attempt to take an exam up to 4 times, which complies with the national provisions.

From the experts' point of view, the examination system is considered as adequate to the study program. Written examinations outbalance, however, other methods of student performance evaluation. The program needs to apply a larger variety of examination forms because they will reflect the outcomes of a broader range of competences. Therefore, the experts underline the necessity to review the study program in terms of examinations, which should be more competence-oriented.

Furthermore, the experts recommend reducing the amount of re-examination possibilities. At the moment, students can repeat an exam up to four times and even when they fail the last try, the Faculty finds it difficult to take a decision about their exclusion. Meanwhile, lowering the number of re-examinations could help to improve the level of education in the program because students will be obliged to prepare for examinations more thoroughly. This will additionally entail a certain decrease of organizational expenditure. The experts are similarly aware of the fact that the examination provisions at the Faculty are determined by national legislation. Hence, it is difficult for the Faculty to introduce any changes autonomously.

The experts conclude that the program fulfills the discussed criteria.

(6) Program management

Quality assurance measures are integrated into all processes and sub-processes conducted within different units of the Faculty. Furthermore, the Faculty has prepared the "FHCJ Quality Manual", which entails the annual strategic devel-

opment plan of the institution as well as the regulations for the maintenance and further enhancement of education quality in the study programs.

Moreover, the Faculty founded the “Center for Quality and Evaluation” in 2014 as a separate organizational unit. The purpose of the Center is to ensure a quick response to development requirements, providing a systematic approach to quality assurance and continuous quality improvement.

The Faculty’s focus on development and continuous quality improvement ensures the implementation of its strategic objectives as well as the realization of various educative, administrative, scientific and extra-curricular activities on a good level.

All stakeholders participating in FHCJ’s activities are part of the quality assurance process. It has to be highlighted, that the Faculty obtained the international standard ISO 9001:2008 and the Slovenian national standard Quality for Future Education (QFE) in 2012, when the Faculty became the first educational institution in Slovenia offering health care programs with the certificate demonstrating that they meet the standards set for the quality management system.

The Faculty has adopted quality assurance measures through the national accreditation by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (SQAA). Accreditation is required both for the education institution and the study programs, and has to be obtained every seven years. In 2013, the first cycle Nursing Care program has underwent a re-accreditation procedure and received a quality certificate valid until 2021.

Data regarding quality assurance aspects are collected with the help of anonymous questionnaires as well as by monitoring and evaluating the previously set variables covering different areas of Faculty’s activities. Results of questionnaires and monitoring indicators are discussed at the sessions of the Quality and Evaluation Committee and the Senate. The results are also presented annually to the Academic Assembly.

The experts come to the conclusion that the quality assurance processes conducted in the “Nursing Care” program correspond to the overarching quality assurance measures of the entire Faculty.

Discussions with students revealed, however, that results of quality assurance and the results of practically implemented quality assurance measures are not

communicated to students in a regular and sufficiently transparent manner. In this regard, the Faculty should reflect upon the possibilities to disclose the relevant information in accordance with data protection rules. Availability and direct experience of survey results can potentially encourage students to participate more actively in various quality assessment procedures.

The experts also recommend the Faculty to employ quality evaluation methods, such as interviews and discussions with students, in a more intense manner. Hereby, the Faculty should make sure that the obtained results are stored and analyzed in appropriate units and by eligible authorities of the institution in order to draw reasonable and applicable conclusions on further development possibilities.

The Faculty of Health Care Jesenice is a relatively new organization. The first cohort of students graduated in 2011. In July 2014, the amount of graduate students constituted 123 people. Alumni Association of the Faculty was founded in 2012, which is in the process of continuous development. The criteria chosen for the evaluation of students' career development include professional achievements and recognition, published articles and other written works as well as contribution to the development of nursing.

The expert group concluded that the criterion of quality assurance is fulfilled.

3.4 Summary

Based on the information from the written documents and the results of the on-site visit, the experts came to the conclusion that the master study program "Nursing Care" offered at the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice fulfills the above described criteria.

The master study program is evaluated to offer useful qualifications complementary and in addition to the bachelor studies. Although from the international perspective, both programs lead to the acquisition of the qualification of a 'registered nurse'. The implementation of the master study program focused on clinical practice as well as leadership and quality in nursing complies with the local strive to solidify the position of professional nursing care in the context of guaranteed health care provision, which is an important issue in the light of demographic change and the increasing number of elderly people in Slovenia.

The experts emphasize that the program reveals a great potential to educate and train future nurses with a deep academic background and practical experience.

In the course of the on-site visit, the experts held very informative and positive discussion sessions with the representatives of the Faculty. All stakeholders, including the teaching staff and students, have clearly expressed a high level of commitment to the development of nursing in Slovenia. From the experts' point of view, such a commitment serves as an evidence of a great need and interest in further development of nursing science in Slovenia on an academic level.

It has also become evident during the on-site visit that the Faculty possesses a larger record of accomplishments than has been conveyed through the documents submitted for the accreditation procedure. Thus, notwithstanding the national restrictions, the Faculty has launched new developments in nursing in terms of teaching and research methods. Based on these observations, the experts recommend the Faculty to display its activities to the local as well as international audience in a more evident and available manner.

Taking these facts into consideration, the experts came to the conclusion that they will submit a recommendation to the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS for a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the master study program. The experts encourage the representatives of the Faculty to go forward in their development.

Based on these observations, the experts recommend the accreditation of the study program on the following recommendations, which should be accomplished in the course of upcoming adaptations upon the expire date of the next national accreditation:

- The module description should be revised in terms of lacking module enumeration, absent titles and partially incomplete information with regard to study hours.
- Concerning the part-time form of studies, the duration of the program should be prolonged for one year, thus, making part-time education available for employed students and single parents as well.
- The Faculty should consider the establishment of a PhD program in nursing in order to create a younger generation of teachers to continue working in the program.

- With regard to financial support, the government should introduce a system of financial reward according to the accomplishment of each higher education institution. Such national criteria of performance quality would enable the Faculty to receive more funding by effectively increasing their achievements in teaching, scientific research, international exchange and other criteria. Furthermore, this system could lead to a more transparent distribution of financial resources among education institutions.
- The number of re-examinations should be reduced with the aim to increase the quality of assessment results as well as students' motivation.
- There should be a larger variety of competence-oriented examinations applied in the program in order to assess a broader range of competences.
- Results of quality assurance and the results of practically implemented measures should be regularly and orderly communicated to students.
- The students' needs and practical requirements of the field should be evaluated regularly.

4 Decision of the accreditation commission

Faculty of Health Care Jesenice (FHCJ), Slovenia; Master Study Program "Nursing Care" (Master of Nursing)

The resolution of the Accreditation Commission is based on the Faculty's application as well as the expert report and the on-site visit covered in the expert report. The on-site visit occurred on 5 and 6 February 2015 according to the previously agreed schedule.

Furthermore, on 13 April 2015, the Faculty has submitted its response opinion regarding the expert report. The Accreditation Commission took it into consideration.

The accreditation decision is based on 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).

In the response opinion, several factual corrections were outlined. These are considered in the current version of the expert report.

The Accreditation Commission adopts the following resolution:

The Master study program "Nursing Care" will be accredited. The program is offered since the winter semester 2009/2010. The Master study program "Nursing Care" constitutes the 2nd cycle of studies in the medical sphere. The regular time for study is two years, during which students have to obtain 120 credit points (ECTS). One academic year is worth 60 and each semester is worth 30 ECTS. Out of the total amount of 120 ECTS, 50 % are awarded for the compulsory subjects, 33.33 % for the electives, and 16.67 % for the Master's thesis. The first year of studies comprises six obligatory courses of Nursing Care, whereas the second year consists of four entirely elective courses in the two possible specializations "Clinical" and "Leadership and Quality in Nursing" as well as the Master's thesis. Upon completion of the program, graduates are awarded with the title 'Master of Nursing'.

The initial accreditation is carried out for a period of five years and ends at the 30 September 2020.

For the degree program no conditions are imposed.

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as the Faculty as a whole, the AHPGS Accreditation Commission recommends the responsible units to take into consideration the program-specific and the overarching recommendations listed in the Expert Report.