

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



Assessment Report

**for the Application of
Beirut Arab University, Lebanon
Faculty of Health Sciences,
for the Accreditation of the Study Program “Nutrition and Dietetics”,
Bachelor of Sciences in Nutrition and Dietetics**

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Decision

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1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organization. Its mission is to evaluate Bachelor and Master' programs in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in related domains such as law or economics. By conducting accreditation and recommendation procedures, the AHPGS contributes to the improvement of the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, the higher education institutions remain responsible for implementing the quality assurance recommendations made by the AHPGS. Since 2004, the AHPGS has been a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). In 2006, the AHPGS also joined the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and became a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) in 2009. Since 2012, the AHPGS has been a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). Furthermore, the AHPGS has been listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) since 2009.

In carrying out accreditation procedures, the AHPGS follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). In the present case, the decision regarding the accreditation of the study program is carried out by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission based on the following accreditation criteria¹:

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

I. The University's application

The AHPGS verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the University, namely the Self-Evaluation Report and its corresponding annexes. These are to fulfil the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS standards. With this

¹ Approved by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission

information, the AHPGS produces a summary, which is to be approved by the University and subsequently made available for the expert group, together with all other documentation.

II. Written review

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

III. Site visit (peer-review)

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

Following the site visit, the expert group writes the expert report. This report is based on the results of the visit, the written review of the study programs, and the documents submitted by the University. Finally, the report is made available to the University for the opportunity to issue a response opinion.

The expert report as well as the University's response opinion – together with the provided documents – 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 foundation for the commission's decision regarding the recommendation for accreditation of the study program. Consequently, the decision – together with all

other documentation – is forwarded to AHPGS Accreditation Commission for it to reach a decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

2 Information about the University

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

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

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

The University describes itself as an educational institution classified as a non-profit organization. It is described that BAU's budget and expenses rely mainly on students' tuition fees and all other types of administrative fees that contribute to about 90% of the University's income. BAU has also delivered its stream of revenues to develop a new funding model in the light of a highly competitive

market. The revenue streams are detailed as follows: BAU specialized clinics (the dental clinics, the nutrition and dietetics clinic); consultancy services, laboratory testing and experimentation; Center for Continuous Professional Development (CCPE); Governmental funds for scientific research projects at BAU such as those coming from the National Council for Scientific Research (CNRS); Philanthropic funding coming mainly from donating bodies (SER 2.3.4).

Information about the Department

Currently, the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics is running only one program, the Bachelor of Science in Nutrition & Dietetics offered in two campus Beirut and Tripoli. In addition to two Masters programs, 1) Master of Science in Nutrition and 2) Master of Science in Food Analysis and Safety (SER 3.2.1).

In January 2013, a nutrition clinic was established in the Nutrition and Dietetics Department on the sixth floor of Hariri Building, later renamed the Nutritional and Weight Management Clinic in 2016. This clinic received accreditation from the European Association for the Study of Obesity (EASO) in 2018 and renewed in 2023. Renovations in 2023 expanded its capacity with two additional clinical units. The clinic specializes in Cognitive Behavior Therapy for obesity treatment, equipped with an electronic body composition analyzer and Indirect Calorimeter. In 2016, a nutrition and weight management clinic was set up at the Tripoli campus, offering services to BAU staff, students, and the local community.

A nutrition lab was established in 2011, equipped with anthropometric measurement instruments, food models, computers with statistical programs, and nutritional databases. This lab aids students in practicing theoretical knowledge from nutrition courses.

3 Overview

3.1 Procedure-related documents

The Self-Evaluation Report for accreditation (without the awarding of the official seal of the Accreditation Council of the Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany) of the above-mentioned study programs (hereinafter the SER) of the Beirut Arab University (hereinafter the University) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) in electronic format on the June 23, 2023. The contract between the University and the AHPGS was signed on the January 12, 2023.

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

Specific documents for the study program "Nutrition and Dietetics"

Annex 01	Curriculum
Annex 02	Modules
Annex 03	Module Overview Chart
Annex 04	Teaching Matrix
Annex 05	CVs
Annex 06	University Study Comparison
Annex 07	Internship Handbook
Annex 08	Hospital Practice Agreement
Annex 09	International Agreements
Annex 10	Faculty Handbook I
Annex 11	Faculty Handbook II
Annex 12	Diploma Supplement
Annex 13	Declaration of Commitment

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

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

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

3.2 Structural data of the study program

University	Beirut Arab University (BAU)
Faculty/Department	Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), Department of Nutrition and Dietetics
Cooperation partner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Dallaa, Hammoud, Al Raii and Labib, Saida Governmental Hospital - Al Makassed General Hospital - Al Hayek and Al Hayat, Clemenceau medical Center (CMC) - Geitawi Hospital - Al Sahel and Al Zahraa Hospital University Medical Center - Ain Wzein Hospital - Al Mounla Hospital - Al Nini Hospital - New Mazloom Hospital,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Albert Haykal Hospital - Dar Al Shifaa Hospital - Tripoli Governmental Hospital
Title of the study program	Nutrition and Dietetics
Degree awarded	Bachelor of Sciences (B.Sc.) in Nutrition and Dietetics
Form of studies	Full-time
Organizational structure	Day-time on campus program Monday-Friday 8:00 – 16:00
Language of Studies	English
Period of education	Six semesters (three years)
Credit Points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)	202 ECTS
Hours/CP	1 lecture contact hour = 1 credit 2–3 hours of tutorial, practical or clinical classes = 1 credit (Each credit point requires 2 hours of self-study.)
Workload	Total: 2772 hours Contact hours: 1750 hours Individual: 1022 hours
CP for the final paper	
Launch date of the study program	Academic year 2008/2009
First accreditation	2017 by AHPGS
Time of admission	Fall semester
Number of available places on the program	50 students per year
Number of enrolled students by now	74 students in Beirut 50 students in Tripoli
Particular enrollment conditions	Entrance exam (held twice annually); English test; Aptitude Test (Thinking Skills, Scientific Knowledge: Biology, Chemistry, Physics); Interview

Tuition fees	The average fees per semester are around 44,132,000 LBP + 2,477 US\$. Fees are calculated based on credit hours undertaken
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Chart 1: Structural data of the study program

4 Expert Report

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

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

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

The expert report is structured in compliance with the based on the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The study program will be described and analyzed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the University, the Experts’ feedback to the documents, the observations made during the site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University, Faculty of Health Sciences and the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics serve as the foundation for the statements made in the expert report.

4.1 Program aims and their implementation

Summary

The general objective of the Nutrition and Dietetics program is the aim of providing entry-level dietitians with qualifications in accordance with international standards of dietetic practice. Students will obtain sufficient clinical nutrition knowledge and skills such that they are capable of providing high-quality health services, work and communicate effectively within a multidisciplinary health care team to meet the needs of the community and the region, while accounting for professional ethics and being dedicated to lifelong learning. The program also aims at equipping students with all the essential knowledge base in food, food sciences and food systems as well as basic science, communications skills and humanities offered from different faculties at BAU in addition to the Faculty of Health Sciences.

The program aims to produce graduates who are academically and clinically competitive in evidence-based dietetics practice, meeting both local and international standards. Graduates will possess the necessary cognitive, intellectual, and practical skills for applying evidence-based dietary advice within the nutrition care process model. They will also be proficient in research-related skills, enabling them to utilize recent evidence-based guidelines covered in relevant courses.

During the six-month supervised training, students will apply these acquired skills in real-world scenarios, encompassing food service management, community nutrition, and medical nutrition therapy.

The outcomes of the internship align with program objectives, as outlined in the Internship Handbook (Appendix 7). Student performance evaluations during training are based on the intended learning outcomes of the program, assessed directly by the training supervisor.

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

Knowledge and Understanding

Upon successful program completion, graduates will possess a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of various domains in the field of nutrition and

dietetics. This includes foundational insights into basic, social, and behavioral sciences encompassing chemistry, organic chemistry, biology, anatomy and physiology, biochemistry, microbiology, epidemiology, biostatistics, psychology, and sociology. Graduates will adeptly describe the essential components of foods, encompassing their chemical and physical attributes, nutritive value, functions, metabolic processes, sources, utilization within the body, and the ramifications of over or under consumption leading to both chronic and deficiency diseases. Furthermore, graduates will be proficient in identifying the pivotal role and responsibilities of a registered dietitian within interdisciplinary healthcare teams. They will demonstrate an in-depth understanding of nutrient standards, nutritional requirements, and dietary guidelines across diverse life stages, spanning pregnancy, lactation, infancy, childhood, adolescence, adulthood, and old age, under varying health conditions. Additionally, graduates will elucidate the correlation between diet and disease, comprehend disease pathophysiology, and articulate the rationale underlying nutrition interventions for disease prevention and treatment at both individual and community levels, holding substantial public health significance. Graduates will also excel in recognizing the core principles of dietary planning and nutrition support, incorporating modifications, substitutions, and feeding methods. With an understanding of research principles and evidence-based practice specific to nutrition and dietetics, graduates will be adept at designing, executing, analyzing, and reporting nutrition research. Furthermore, they will embody a profound understanding of ethical codes governing professional dietetic practice and interdisciplinary collaboration across diverse contexts (SER 1.3.3).

Intellectual skills

Upon completing the program successfully, graduates will possess essential intellectual skills in the field of nutrition and dietetics. They will excel in analyzing, synthesizing, and summarizing information to solve complex problems in nutrition, dietetics, and food service across various settings. Graduates will be able to design effective nutritional assessment tools, interpret measurements, and identify nutritional risks in diverse populations and disease conditions. They will skillfully evaluate dietary intake, predict nutrition diagnoses, and plan interventions for different age groups and health issues. Graduates will also demonstrate proficiency in estimating nutrient requirements, designing interventions to address malnutrition at the community level, and understanding risk factors for nutrition-

related diseases. Additionally, they will be well-versed in research methodologies, food safety practices, and the role of nutrition in public health (SER 1.3.3).

Professional and practical skills:

Upon completing the program successfully, graduates are adept in applying fundamental laboratory techniques in biology, chemistry, and biochemistry. Additionally, they demonstrate proficiency in employing nutritional assessment and screening methods to identify malnutrition and nutritional risks across a range of scenarios and populations.

Utilizing advanced computerized dietary analysis tools, graduates expertly conduct assessments, plan meals, and address the specific needs of different population groups. Moreover, they apply the nutrition care process with sensitivity to psychosocial aspects, health behavior, and ethical considerations in various settings.

The graduates are skilled in calculating food energy, as well as determining energy and nutrient requirements for both individuals and diverse population groups. They also employ evidence-based nutrition guidelines, meal planning principles, and dietary tools to create flexible dietary plans, recipes, and menus that accommodate cultural diversity, affordability, and health needs.

Lastly, the following General skills:

Graduates of the Nutrition and Dietetics program adeptly gather and critically evaluate information from various scientific and IT sources, formulating solutions and driving positive change in professional practice. Whether working independently or within a team, they excel as leaders or collaborators, effectively utilizing group members' strengths and clarifying tasks.

Time management is a forte, enabling them to prioritize workloads and meet demands promptly. Additionally, the graduates harness self-learning techniques to continuously expand their knowledge base. These capabilities equip graduates for success in a dynamic professional landscape. Further intended learning outcomes can be found in 1.3.3 of the SER.

Labor market

Graduates of the Nutrition and Dietetics program have diverse employment prospects across clinical, community, food service management, and emergency

humanitarian settings. In clinical environments like hospitals, dietitians offer comprehensive nutrition services, counselling, and education to both inpatients and outpatients, designing and overseeing interventions for specific medical conditions such as diabetes, renal failure, and hypertension and others. In community settings, dietitians target nutrition-related issues in populations like children, pregnant women, adolescents, and the elderly, promoting healthy eating habits through tailored education programs. Within food service management, dietitians contribute to large-scale food operations by handling menu planning, recipe adjustments, food safety, human resources, and budgeting. In emergencies, they play a critical role in planning and evaluating nutritional rations to prevent malnutrition among disaster-affected populations. Graduates find opportunities in sectors such as public health ministries, private hospitals and clinics, the food industry, research labs, biotechnology firms, schools, and government agencies, providing nutrition counselling and expertise to contribute to enhanced public health and well-being (SER 1.4.1).

A preliminary survey of Nutrition and Dietetics alumni reveals diverse career paths, with a significant portion working as clinical dietitians, while others are engaged in food safety/services, community nutrition, and humanitarian roles. The department maintains active communication with alumni to monitor their progress and achievements, and further plans to conduct comprehensive surveys to gather feedback from employers and assess graduates' employability experiences. This commitment to ongoing assessment and commitment underscores the department's dedication to enhancing graduates' career outcomes and adapting to evolving market needs (SER 1.4.2).

Judgement

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

The experts also talk to the University about the ability to continue studying after the Bachelor's degree. The University assures a good connectivity to the

University's Master's study program in "Nutrition". The Master's program is offered in Beirut only, and many students are willing to commute from Tripoli to Beirut to continue their studies at Beirut Arab University.

From the experts' point of view, the Bachelor's study program "Nutrition and Dietetics" focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

According to the explanation of the University and the students, the employability after the graduation is very high.

Decision

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

4.2 Structure of the study program

Summary

The program comprises 40–46 modules, out of which 34 are mandatory and 6-12 (depending on the credit worth of different courses) are elective modules. There are between five and six modules in total provided for each semester. All modules have to be completed within one semester.

The list of modules offered:

Nr.	Title	Sem.	CP (not ECTS)
Semester 1			
1	Basic Biology	1	3
2	General chemistry	1	3
3	Human anatomy and physiology	1	3
4	Organic chemistry	1	3
5	Epidemiology and biostatistics	1	3
6	Elective*	1	2
	Total		17

	Semester 2		
7	Biochemistry	2	3
8	Microbiology	2	3
9	Healthcare profession and bioethics	2	1
10	Basic nutrition	2	3
11	Elective*	2	7
	Total		17
	Semester 3		
12	Food chemistry	3	3
13	Human nutrition and metabolism	3	3
14	Assessment of nutritional status	3	3
15	Psychosocial aspects of health and illness	3	2
16	Meal and diet planning	3	3
17	Elective	3	3
	Total		17
	Semester 4		
18	Nutrition in the life span	4	3
19	Nutrition education	4	2
20	Therapeutic nutrition I	4	3
21	Food technology	4	3
22	Research and evidence-based practice	4	2
23	Elective	4	4
	Total		17
	Semester 5		
24	Malnutrition and nutrition intervention	5	3
25	Therapeutic nutrition II	5	3
26	Sports Nutrition	5	3
27	Food safety and hygiene	5	3
28	Nutrition and non-communicable diseases	5	2
29	Food service management	5	3
	Total		17
	Semester 6		
30	Community nutrition	6	3

31	Research project	6	2
32	Therapeutic nutrition practicum	6	2
33	Special topics in nutrition	6	2
34	Interprofessional education for healthcare	6	1
35	Elective	6	6
	Total		16
	Total:	6	101

Table 2: Modules oversight

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

- Basic Sciences Modules (BS) - Part of Nutrition Program
 - o Basic Biology (BIOL 223)
 - o Biochemistry (BCHM215)
 - o General chemistry (CHEM 214)
 - o Organic chemistry (CHEM 215)
 - o Microbiology (BIOL226)
 - o Epidemiology and Biostatistics (COMM 201)
 - o Human Anatomy and physiology (HESC 201)

- Healthcare profession and bioethics (HESC 202)
- Interprofessional education for healthcare (IPEH 512)

- Elective courses – part of nutrition program
 - o Community health (NURS213)
 - o Child development (NURS 315)
 - o Food laws (NUTR 314)
 - o Breastfeeding essential (NUTR 321)
 - o Healthy cooking (NUTR 333)
 - o Food additives (NUTR 332)
 - o Drug nutrient interaction (NUTR 420)
 - o Dietary analysis simulation (NUTR 422)

- General Elective courses – part of the University
 - o English
 - o Arabic

- Communication skills
- Human rights

Courses from other study programs are aligned with Nutrition and Dietetics program objectives through collaborative efforts among faculty members, course instructors, and quality assurance members. The aim is to ensure that course specifications match the intended learning outcomes and program goals. A designated faculty member further reviews course blueprints to confirm alignment with specifications and coverage of intended learning outcomes. The department of nutrition and dietetics is the sole responsible for implementing the undergraduate program curriculum (SER 1.1.2).

The program is designed to prepare students for a career as dietitians by providing a comprehensive set of courses and practical experiences. In the initial year, students build a solid scientific foundation through courses like basic chemistry, biochemistry, microbiology, and anatomy. They also get introduced to ethical aspects of the profession, patient care, and clinical research ethics.

Moving into the second year, the curriculum delves deeper into specific nutritional needs, metabolism, and diseases related to nutrition. Students learn about assessment measures, dietary modifications, and meal planning. This stage also covers intervention strategies and emergency food planning for vulnerable populations. More advanced topics include dietary needs during different life stages, managing diseases, and nutrition education based on evidence.

In the third year, the program focuses on practical application and professionalism. Students engage in hands-on experiences through virtual case simulations and research projects. They explore community nutrition, understanding the role of a dietitian in promoting public health through community-based interventions. The interdisciplinary aspect is emphasized as students simulate implementing nutrition care within a healthcare team. Moreover, advanced subjects like diet-disease associations, nutrition support, psychosocial health, and food laws are covered.

The curriculum is designed to ensure a gradual progression of skills and knowledge acquisition. It is structured to encompass intellectual, professional, and practical competencies, aiming to fully prepare students for success in their future careers as skilled and knowledgeable dietitians (SER 1.3.4).

Didactic concepts

The Department of Nutrition and Dietetics employs a diverse range of teaching methods, such as lectures, discussions, labs, case studies, field visits, research projects, self-study reports, and problem-based learning, which are used in combination to achieve program outcomes. Blended learning is facilitated through e-learning platforms like Moodle, Teams, BBB, and Zoom. In the third year, students gain practical experience in medical nutrition therapy, enhancing skills in applying nutrition care processes and therapy for various conditions. They engage in research activities, including data collection and analysis, preparing for graduate-level research. Practical skills like nutritional assessment and diet analysis are learned through lab sessions. Students receive coaching during faculty office hours for assignment and coursework help, and case study simulations are planned for clinical sessions to foster critical thinking and decision-making skills (SER 1.2.4).

The Department of Nutrition and Dietetics has modernized classrooms and lecture halls equipped with multimedia tools like data projectors, PCs, and sound systems for interactive learning with various media formats. All spaces have internet access, enabling students and instructors to use online resources throughout the campus. Specialized laboratories are also available. The University offers an academic portal, BAU i-Connect Portal, where students register for courses, track academic progress, access transcripts, and receive course-related information. This portal also serves as a platform for posting lectures, grades, and announcements.

The University utilizes e-learning facilities such as Moodle, Teams, and Zoom for course management and online teaching. Moodle supports sharing course materials, quizzes, and exams. The Nutrition and Dietetics Department follows a plan for online, blended, or hybrid course delivery, with recorded online sessions available for convenient student access.

The Information Technology Department manages the student information system (Banner), handling student-related operations like acceptance, registration, fees, grades, and transcripts. This technology-driven environment enhances learning experiences and administrative processes (SER 1.2.5).

Internship

According to the Lebanese legislation of dietetic practice, graduating dietitians have to commence a six-month hospital based supervised training following their graduation date (SER 1.2.6).

The dietetic internship is a distinct component of the curriculum, managed separately from regular instruction. Instructors don't directly oversee the training, but the department ensures internship quality through a well-defined internship manual. This manual outlines a suggested schedule, rotations, and intended learning outcomes. Students are assigned to internship sites during their final semester, and the manual is shared and discussed with both trainees and supervising hospital staff at the beginning (SER 1.2.6).

Trainees are guided to prepare internship reports summarizing their activities during each rotation. Evaluations, completed by both trainees and supervising dietitians, assess acquired skills and task performance, ensuring the quality of training. Instructors make periodic visits to the sites, utilizing a checklist for assessing activities and outcomes, contributing to continuous improvement (SER 1.2.6).

Upon completion, each trainee receives a hospital-issued certificate verifying the fulfillment of internship requirements. The report, evaluation forms, and certificate undergo review and approval by the Faculty, the Nutrition and Dietetics Department Chair, and the Faculty of Health Sciences Dean. Once authenticated by the Ministry of Public Health, graduates with internship certificates are eligible for the colloquium exam, followed by practice licensing. To ensure readiness, a mock colloquium exam is administered by the Nutrition and Dietetics Department. This comprehensive process ensures trainee qualification, exam success, and professional readiness (SER 1.2.6).

International aspects of the curriculum

The Nutrition and Dietetics program aligns with international guidelines, drawing from accredited curricula worldwide and international universities. Over 90% of its content aligns with those of esteemed international counterparts. This curriculum focus ensures the highest standards are met, in line with recognized international standards, including those set by the Accreditation Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics (ACEND) in the USA (SER 1.2.8).

The curriculum mirrors established international programs in terms of credit requirements, core courses, and university requisites. It offers 101 Cr. Hrs. for graduation, comparable to accredited programs globally, and includes 23 Cr. Hrs. from basic sciences. The core major courses, totaling 56 Cr. Hrs., and departmental electives (6 Cr. Hrs.) provide comprehensive knowledge in nutrition and dietetics (SER 1.2.8).

The curriculum integrates insights from staff mobility, conferences, and partnerships. Sustainable diet concepts, recent advancements, and global perspectives are incorporated into courses. Coursera courses from respected institutions, including University of Sydney, John Hopkins University, LMU Munich, and University of Colorado, are integrated to enhance students' exposure to diverse perspectives (SER 1.2.8).

English is the primary language of instruction, covering major core courses, basic sciences, major departmental electives, and university electives. Arabic language and related studies, as well as French language courses, are taught in their respective languages. This emphasis on a global curriculum, language inclusivity, and international benchmarking (SER 1.2.8).

Internationality of the program and student mobility

The University has actively engaged in international projects, particularly with the European Union (EU), through initiatives like TEMPUS, ERASMUS MUNDUS, and ERASMUS+. These collaborations have facilitated exchange activities involving students and staff from BAU and 19 European partner universities across different faculties (SER 1.2.9).

The BAU International Relations Office plays an important role in coordinating and facilitating mobility opportunities, enabling students and academic staff to engage in exchanges, study placements, or work placements ranging from 3 to 10 months. Notably, the Nutrition and Dietetics Department has signed agreements with European universities such as the University of Modena and Reggio Emilia, and the University of Pavia, enabling teaching activities and summer training for staff and Master's students (SER 1.2.9).

To further enhance professional development and internationalization, BAU provides access to a range of professional development courses through platforms like Coursera. Courses cover topics from software training to health and disease

aspects, offered by esteemed institutions worldwide. BAU ensures comprehensive facilities and support for outgoing and incoming students and academic staff to maximize the benefits of the mobility programs (SER 1.2.9).

More detailed information and updates on BAU's internationalization efforts and mobility programs can be found at the official BAU website, Instagram, and social media channels dedicated to international relations and health sciences (SER 1.2.9).

Integration of research

The “Research and Evidence-Based Practice” course delves into research design principles, methodologies, proposal development, application, critique, and manuscript preparation. Here, students create research proposals on self-selected topics (SER 1.2.7)

The “Research Project” course immerses students in research tasks like data collection, entry, analysis, literature search, systematic reviews, and evaluating research quality. The “Nutrition and Non-Communicable Diseases” course explores current scientific evidence relevant to dietary guidelines and clinical applications. In the “Therapeutic Nutrition Practicum” course, students engage in evidence-based practice, applying recent findings to dietary recommendations and nutrition prescriptions (SER 1.2.7).

To enhance their research exposure, students are encouraged to participate in local conferences pertinent to their field of study. Overall, the program cultivates research acumen, equipping graduates with a comprehensive understanding of research methodologies and their practical applications in the realm of nutrition and dietetics (SER 1.2.7).

Judgement

The Bachelor study program “Nutrition and Dietetics” has a course-based structure and a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the courses are embedded within course syllabi. The course syllabus contains information on the module number, level/semester, module title, credit hours, language, learning outcomes/goals/skills, content of the module and the examination. The experts value the detailed syllabus, which enables students to prepare adequately for the individual lectures as well as the scheduled examinations.

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

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

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

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

The experts and the University discuss student-centered teaching methods. The University explains its developments in moving towards interactive, multimethod

teaching within the last years. The efforts are clearly recognizable, and engaging students in critical discussions is intended.

The experts inquire about the internship in the study program. According to the University, Lebanese legislation of dietetic practice graduating dietitians have to commence a six months hospital based supervised training following their graduation date. Accordingly, the dietetic internship cannot be an integral part of the Nutrition and Dietetics program offered at BAU and is not a graduation requirement. However, the Nutrition and Dietetics Department explains that it follows up with the training process by coordinating with the supervising dietitian at the training site. For this purpose, a training manual was developed.

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

Thus, the experts conclude that the study program aims at providing students with specialized and interdisciplinary knowledge as well as professional, methodological and general competences. Furthermore, the experts acknowledge the very detailed course files with its contents and aims, which allows a high level of transparency. In the experts' opinion, the structure of the curriculum seems to make the workload manageable.

Decision

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

4.3 Admission and Feasibility

Summary

Prospective students applying to Beirut Arab University (BAU) are required to hold the official Lebanese Secondary School Certificate or its equivalent as determined by the Equivalence Committee of the Lebanese Ministry of Education & Higher Education. Admissions for the Faculty of Health Sciences involve an English Aptitude Test covering Thinking Skills, Scientific Knowledge (Biology, Chemistry,

Physics), and an Interview. The interview evaluates personal attributes, motivation, general knowledge, career goals, and behavior-based aspects. The admission exam holds a 90% weight in the placement score, while the interview contributes 10%. Two admission exams are conducted biannually (spring and summer terms), and results are announced a month after the exam. Those who don't pass the first entrance exam can apply for the second one in July (SER 1.5.1).

All applicants need to pass the BAU English Language Entrance Exam with a score of at least 60%, or show evidence of passing TOEFL (minimum score 520), IELTS (minimum score 5.5), or SAT I writing (minimum score 480). IGCSE/GCE program completers are exempt from the English Language Admission Exam. Applicants with a non-Lebanese Secondary School Certificate must submit equivalence from the Equivalence Committee (SER 1.5.1).

After acceptance, students undergo specified medical tests before registration. A comprehensive folder is provided containing essential documents including the registration form, relevant faculty handbook, student manual, advising policy, academic calendar, program study plan, student contract sheet, and course lists and schedules (SER 1.5.1).

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

Judgement

The admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are properly documented and made publicly available. The experts find these requirements fitting and proportional to the study program; therefore, it was determined that the admission and student selection procedures correspond to the standards and learning objectives of the study program.

The experts determine a relatively high number of exams to be passed during the "Nutrition and Dietetics" study program. The University credibly conveys that the workload of the students is monitored. Asking the students on site about their

workload, they consider the workload and the amount and the examination cycle appropriate. The type as well as the time of the different examinations is defined and communicated to the students transparently and at the beginning of the course.

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

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

According to the University, there is a financial aid system for students. Scholarships are, on one hand, offered to the top 3 students of the class and on the other hand, for financially disadvantaged students.

Decision

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

4.4 Examination system and transparency

Summary

The University uses a continuous assessment approach to measure students' achievement of each course's intended learning outcomes throughout the semester. The Nutrition and Dietetics program's courses have specific learning outcomes aligned with the program's overall intended learning outcomes. These outcomes, are evaluated through various assessment methods, including written exams, quizzes, practical exams, reports, seminars, presentations, classroom discussions, and mock colloquiums. Students are informed about the type, timing,

and weighting of each assessment at the beginning of each course. The assessments are designed following the “Guidelines for Student Assessment” (Annex F) to ensure fair and comprehensive evaluation. Additionally, a test blueprint is established to ensure all course outcomes are adequately represented in the exams (SER 1.2.3).

According to University regulations, the course’s instructor is asked to present at least 2 written exams during the semester if the course is mainly theoretical without any laboratory or clinical sessions (SER 1.2.3).

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

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

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

Lastly, the University has a non-discriminatory policy towards students with disabilities, providing support tailored to their individual needs. The department council assesses individual cases and recommends appropriate compensation measures to ensure equal opportunities for success. For example, students with ADHD were offered extended exam time, and adjustments were made to accommodate the needs of a student with mental illness during the clinical chemistry (MELS 304) final exam. Furthermore, the University also offers

counselling services, assistive technology, and other resources to support students with disabilities and chronic illnesses (SER 1.2.3)

Judgement

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. The study programs have a course-related examination system. Its implementation, including the grading system, course load regulations, repetition of courses and exams is regulated and transparent for the students.

From the experts' point of view, the examinations serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. Nevertheless, in the experts' opinion, the study program includes a high number of exams which causes a high workload not only for students but also for the teaching staff. The transparent information of examination methods and of the examination schedule at the beginning of each term makes the high number of assessments during and at the end of each semester manageable. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organizations, is appropriate.

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

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

Decision

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

4.5 Teaching staff and material equipment

Summary

The program employs a total of five full-time faculty members in the Beirut campus and two in Tripoli (refer to teachers CV Annex 5). The general teaching load for

full-time faculty members is 15–24 hours per week. Furthermore, in Beirut, a total of nine adjunct professors contribute to the teaching of the program:

- three from the Faculty of Health Science teaching the basic science courses,
- four from the Medical Laboratory Department, teaching also basic science courses
- two from the Physiotherapy and Nursing Department teaching core course.

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

The student ration is based on full-time instructors. In Beirut, the student/faculty ratio is 94/15 or 6 students per professor. In Tripoli, the student faculty ration is 52/8 or 7 students per professor.

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

Premises

The Faculty of Health Sciences, of which the Department of Nutrition and Dietetics is part, is located on the fifth and sixth floor of the Hariri building on the Beirut campus and the second and third floors of Block E building for Tripoli campus. That space encompasses six classrooms in Beirut Campus and two classrooms in Tripoli campus, teaching offices, the dean's office, the registrar's office, the student affairs office, and faculty members' offices, alongside the laboratories (SER 2.3.1):

- Nutrition and Dietetics Laboratory
- General chemistry laboratory

- Organic chemistry laboratory
- Pharmacology
- Pharmaceutical microbiology
- Biochemistry
- Anatomy laboratory

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

Library

The University contains eight libraries spread among the Beirut site and Tripoli branches. The Medical Sciences Library is located in Beirut and on Tripoli campus and serves students of all Medical Sector Faculties of the University. The library can accommodate 60 users in Beirut Campus and 118 users in Tripoli campus at the same time which can benefit from the photocopying, printing and scanning machines available to serve users' needs. Interlibrary and interlibrary loan services are also available (SER 2.3.2)

The Library of Health Sciences contains 1022 books, 175 dissertations and 173 multimedia items in the Beirut Campus (SER 2.3.2). The inventory can be found in physical or electronic format. Students also have access to several electronic library full-text databases, such as Science Direct, Scopus, Access Medicine, CINAHL Plus and MEDLINE Complete. An electronic list of new arrivals will be issued to faculties concerned to be distributed to faculty members. Then books will be delivered to the medical sciences library (SER 2.3.2).

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

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

Students have access to the multi search database “EBSCO”, which enables them to inquire in other databases. This service is offered free of charge to all faculty, staff and registered students through the BAU portal system “I-connect”.

Through this portal, students will have access to an automatically add or drop their courses, manage their schedules, look up information about examinations, their grades and cumulative GPA. The Nutrition and Dietetics students benefit from a concentrated collection of Nutrition and dietetics related books as well as from several electronic library full-text databases such as: Science Direct, Springer, Up-to-date, CINAHL Plus, MEDLINE Complete (SER 2.3.2)

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

A computer lab, offered by the University, is also available for students to allow them internet access. Recently, BAU has begun providing campus-wide wireless internet for all its registered students (SER 2.3.3).

Judgement

New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the programs and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. Overall, the teaching and academic staff at the Beirut Arab University show a very high level of commitment and potential for the execution as well as further development of the study program they are responsible for. The experts conclude that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics among the University and the faculty administration. As motivations to teach at BAU, the faculty cites the University's good reputation, good working atmosphere, and support mechanisms related to research and academic development.

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

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

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

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

The two University locations, Beirut and Tripoli, work well together. The curriculum is identical in both locations. The exchange is very active on a student and teaching staff level. After the last accreditation, the University has set up a test kitchen in Tripoli. Students from both locations are free to use it. The students report that there are buses between the campus. As a whole, it was ascertained by the experts that the Bachelor's study program "Nutrition and Dietetics" has ample teaching facilities at its disposals.

Decision

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

4.6 Quality assurance

Summary

Beirut Arab University has a Quality Assurance Center (UQAC), whose main function is to evaluate the academic performance of different faculties and to facilitate the improvement of the educational process within the institution (Annexes 10 and 11: Faculty Handbook). Every faculty of the University has a Quality Assurance Unit that is supervised by the faculty dean.

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

- Course evaluation questionnaires, in which students evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, conducted online through I-connect,

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

In the Nutrition Department, the curriculum has been achieved and enhanced based on international benchmark standards (SER 1.2.8). This continuous enhancement is supervised by the faculties' quality assurance units (FOAU) and the University Quality Assurance Center (UQAC), which both perform regular internal auditing to assess the academic performance of the department and make sure the curricular changes are compatible with the University rules, regulations, and policies.

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

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

At the beginning of the academic year, a course coordinator is assigned under the supervision of the dean. By the end of each semester, a course report is written related to each course offered during the relevant semester. This report includes basic course information, topics taught and their relevant hours, statistical

information about students' attendance, students' assessment and examination results, used teaching and learning methods, administrative constraints, students' evaluation, course enhancement suggestions and an action plan for the following year. Any recommendations regarding revision of the course intended learning outcomes, the assessment method, modification of the course content; requirements for special tools/equipment for implementing the course objectives or any other difficulty faced during the semester are stated in the course report. The course report is then submitted by the termination of the course. Noted issues will be discussed in the departmental council and then raised at the faculty council. The course report will also be analyzed by the UQAC representatives during their regular visits to the faculty every semester to evaluate the academic performance (SER 1.6.3).

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

According to the University, practical relevance of the study program is assessed through feedback obtained from students during their rotations at different hospitals and the evaluation of the instructors from the rotation sites regarding their satisfaction with the students' performance. In addition, the Nutrition department follows-up on graduated students working in various settings.

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

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

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

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

Judgement

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

On site, the University explains the relevance of the quality assurance system at the University. For example, a SWOT analysis is carried out every two years to set new goals and create an action plan to close possible loops. Feedback from students is highly appreciated and taken into consideration.

The results of the internal quality assurance management are applied for the continuous development of the study program. In doing so, the University takes into close consideration the quality evaluation results as well as the analyses of students' workload, their academic accomplishments and feedback from graduates. The experts appreciate that regularly meetings on different levels are held to improve the study programs.

Decision

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

4.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities

Summary

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

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

Judgement

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

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

Decision

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

5 Conclusion

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

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

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

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the site visit, the experts concluded that the Bachelor study program "Nutrition and Dietetics" offered at the Beirut Arab University fulfil the above-described criteria. Hence, the experts recommended that the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS make a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

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

- social and environmental elements should be further strengthened within the curriculum.

6 Decision of the accreditation commission

Decision of the accreditation commission February 15, 2024

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

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

The accreditation procedure is structured according to the Accreditation Criteria developed by the AHPGS. The Accreditation Criteria are developed by the AHPGS in close accordance with the existing criteria and requirements valid in the Federal Republic of Germany and based on the „Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area“ (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

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

The Bachelor study program requires the obtainment of 101 Credit Hours according to the internal credit hour system. 101 Credit Hours are equivalent to 202 Credit Points according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The regulated study period in the program "Nutrition and Dietetics" is three years. The program comprises 40–46 modules, out of which 34 are mandatory and 6-12 (depending on the credit worth of different courses) are elective modules. The language of instruction is English. The Bachelor study program "Nutrition and Dietetics" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Bachelor of Sciences in Nutrition and Dietetics". Admission takes place every fall semester. The first cohort of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 2008/2009.

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

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

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as of the University as a whole, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS supports the recommendation articulated in the Assessment Report.