



AGENTUR FÜR  
QUALITÄTSSICHERUNG DURCH  
AKKREDITIERUNG VON  
STUDIENGÄNGEN E.V.

## FINAL REPORT

UNIVERSITY AUTÓNOMA DE CHILE

### HEALTH CLUSTER

- KINESIOLOGY (BACHELOR)
- NUTRITION AND DIETETICS (BACHELOR)
- NEUROSCIENCE (MASTER)
- MASTER IN ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION ABA  
IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER (MASTER)
- BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE (PHD)

June 2023



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## DECISION OF THE AQAS STANDING COMMISSION ON THE STUDY PROGRAMMES

- “KINESIOLOGY” (BACHELOR)
- “NUTRITION AND DIETETICS” (BACHELOR)
- “NEUROSCIENCE” (MASTER)
- “MASTER IN ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION ABA IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER” (MASTER)
- “BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE” (PHD)
- OFFERED BY UNIVERSITY AUTÓNOMA DE CHILE, CHILE

Based on the report of the expert panel, the comments by the university and the discussions of the AQAS Standing Commission in its 17<sup>th</sup> meeting on 22.05.2023, the AQAS Standing Commission decides:

1. The study programmes “Kinesiology” (Bachelor), “Nutrition and dietetics” (Bachelor), “Neuroscience” (Master), “Master in Assessment and Intervention ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder” (Master), and “Biomedical Science” (PhD) offered by University Autónoma, Chile are accredited according to the AQAS Criteria for Programme Accreditation (Bachelor/Master) and the AQAS Criteria for Doctoral Programme Accreditation (PhD).

The accreditations are conditional.

The study programmes essentially comply with the requirements defined by the criteria and thus the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in their current version.

The required adjustments can be implemented within a time period of twelve months.

2. The conditions have to be fulfilled. The fulfilment of the conditions has to be documented and reported to AQAS no later than **30 June 2024**.
3. The accreditation is given for the period of **six years** and is valid until **30 June 2029**.

### Conditions:

#### For all Bachelor’s programmes:

1. The transparency in the certification must be increased clearly indicating what is part of the academic responsibility of the university and what are additional requirements for professional practice. Alternatively, the programmes must become more involved in the students’ practical stage of their education in the 5<sup>th</sup> year.

Additionally for the “Nutrition and Dietetics” programme:

2. More professional ILOs on "dietetics" have to be incorporated and consequently represented in the teaching to reflect the current title of the study programme.
3. An action plan of the programme on its “assistance programme” is required indicating all steps of the process.

Additionally for the “Neuroscience” programme:

4. The study programme must demonstrate how it assures that students are acquainted with up-to-date methods, such as generation sequencing (NGS), single-cell NGS, digital PCR, analysis of whole genome sequencing data, whole genome methylation data, RNA-Sequencing data and Microbiome data.

Additionally for the “Biomedical Science” programme:

5. The programme must implement measures to assure that PhD thesis are more complete and include background information on the topic or the general interest of it.
6. To assure competitiveness of the qualification and fully achieving the Doctoral Level of the EQF courses and seminars in English have to be implemented.

The following **recommendations** are given for further improvement of the programmes:

For all programmes:

1. A structured process should be implemented how students are informed of survey results and measurements taken because of these results.
2. All study programmes should consider further developing the form of their surveys concerning its granularity, frequency, scope and questions, possibly including free-text fields.
3. Graduates should be provided with a document that better explains the obtained qualifications and programme learning outcomes also in the context of the national higher education system (Diploma Supplement).
4. To guarantee the continuation of the quality of the study programmes in the future, extending the amount of full time-professors is recommended.
5. The study programmes should offer English classes to its teaching staff and students, promote these courses and encourage all university members to improve their language skills.
6. Teaching load reductions should be offered to enable lecturers and professors to conduct research.
7. Financial support mechanisms available to students should be further developed, also considering the regularity with which funds are distributed and the point in time when a student receives their grant.
8. The university should update its homepage
  - a. to cover important information and learning outcomes of all programmes;
  - b. to include an easily accessible English version of the homepage;
  - c. to incorporate an easy to find list of contact persons for all stakeholders;
  - d. and ensure it is kept up-to-date at all times.
9. The manual for international students should be updated and published to make sure all important questions are addressed and all essential information for international students is provided.

Additionally for the “Nutrition and Dietetics” programme and the “Master in Assessment and Intervention ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder” programme:

10. The study programmes should ensure that the individual participation of each student in the Degree Seminar is visible through a designated procedure or instrument.

Additionally for the “Nutrition and Dietetics” programme:

11. A thesis at the end of the study programme should be implemented.
12. More methodological and research-oriented courses and opportunities should be introduced to apply this knowledge throughout the study programme.

Additionally for the “Kinesiology” programme:

13. The number of opportunities for internships should be extended that involve experiences in different health systems to expose students to different realities of the patients they attend to.

Additionally for the “Master in Assessment and intervention ABA in autism spectrum disorder” programme:

14. Possibilities should be developed to support students gaining more practical experience through a service that helps them finding appropriate external placements and/or through adding supervised practice opportunities campus, e.g., such as the simulation clinic.
15. Within the programme more well-trained behaviour analysts should be involved. This can be achieved by
  - a) encouraging and enabling current teaching staff to pursue behaviour analytic qualifications, and
  - b) prioritise well-trained behaviour analysts in future appointments.

Additionally for the “Neuroscience” programme:

16. Dedicated modules for Neuropathology and Neuroimmunology should be included into the study programme.
17. The requirements for the thesis should be further developed to encourage writing dissertations in English to be better prepared for an internationally oriented PhD or postdoc programme.

Additionally for the “Biomedical Science” programme:

18. The programme should develop an action plan how to prepare its students for international postdoc positions.
19. It should be considered to require the PhD thesis to be produced in English language.
20. It should be considered to prolong the time period dedicated to the PhD thesis within the study programme.
21. The programme should assure its students and staff have constant access to modern technologies that allow them to use the latest methods in their field of study.

With regard to the reasons for this decision the Standing Commission refers to the attached experts' report.

**EXPERTS' REPORT**

**ON THE STUDY PROGRAMMES**

- “KINESIOLOGY” (BACHELOR)
- “NUTRITION AND DIETETICS” (BACHELOR)
- “NEUROSCIENCE” (MASTER)
- “MASTER IN ASSESSMENT AND INTERVENTION ABA IN AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER” (MASTER)
- “BIOMEDICAL SCIENCE” (PHD)

**OFFERED BY UNIVERSITY AUTÓNOMA DE CHILE, CHILE**

Visit to the university: 21-24 November 2022

**Panel of experts:**

<b>Prof. Dr. Karola Dillenburger</b>	Queen's University of Belfast/Northern Ireland, Professor of Behavioural Analysis and Education
<b>Prof. Dr. rer. nat. Manuel Montesinos-Rongen</b>	University of Cologne, Institute for Neuropathology
<b>Prof. Dr. Thomas Sommer</b>	Max-Delbrück-Center for Molecular Medicine in the Helmholtz Association and Humboldt University of Berlin, Professor of Cellular Biochemistry
<b>Prof. Pablo LaSpina</b>	Buenos Aires University/Argentina, Professor Surgical Kinefisiátrica Clinic School of Kinesiology and Physiatry
<b>Prof. Dr. Fanny Petermann-Rocha</b>	Universidad Diego Portales/Chile, Faculty of Medicine
<b>Gabriele Börries</b>	Member of the Board of Directors for the German Professional Association of Nutritional Science and Home Economics, Germany (representative of the labour market)
<b>Damon Mohebbi</b>	Student at University Düsseldorf (HHU) (student expert)
<b>Coordinator:</b>	
Ronny Heintze	AQAS, Cologne, Germany
Dr. Sarah Jenischewski	AQAS, Cologne, Germany

## I. Preamble

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AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes – is an independent non-profit organisation supported by more than 90 universities, universities of applied sciences and academic associations. Since 2002, the agency has been recognised by the German Accreditation Council (GAC). It is, therefore, a notified body for the accreditation of higher education institutions and programmes in Germany.

AQAS is a full member of ENQA and also listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) which confirms that our procedures comply with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), on which all Bologna countries agreed as a basis for internal and external quality assurance.

AQAS is an institution founded by and working for higher education institutions and academic associations. The agency is devoted to quality assurance and quality development of academic studies and higher education institutions' teaching. In line with AQAS' mission statement, the official bodies in Germany and Europe (GAC and EQAR) approved that the activities of AQAS in accreditation are neither limited to specific academic disciplines or degrees nor a particular type of higher education institution.

## II. Accreditation procedure

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This report results from the external review of the Bachelor-, Master- and PhD-programmes “Kinesiology (Bachelor)”, “Nutrition and Dietetics (Bachelor)”, “Neuroscience (Master)”, “Master in Assessment and Intervention ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Master) and “Biomedicine (PhD)” offered by Universidad Autónoma de Chile.

### 1. Criteria

Each programme is assessed against a set of criteria for accreditation developed by AQAS: the AQAS Criteria for Programme Accreditation (Bachelor/Master) and the AQAS Criteria for Doctoral Programme Accreditation (PhD). The criteria are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015. To facilitate the review each criterion features a set of indicators that can be used to demonstrate the fulfilment of the criteria. However, if single indicators are not fulfilled this does not automatically mean that a criterion is not met. The indicators need to be discussed in the context of each programme since not all indicators necessarily can be applied to every programme.

### 2. Approach and methodology

#### *Initialisation*

The university mandated AQAS to perform the accreditation procedure in December 2021. The university produced a Self-Evaluation Report (SER). In August 2022, the institution handed in a draft of the SER together with the relevant documentation on the programmes and an appendix. The appendix included e.g.:

- an overview over statistical data of the student body (e.g. number of applications, beginners, students, graduates, student dropouts),
- the CVs of the teaching staff/supervisors,
- information on student services,
- core information on the main library,
- as well as academic regulations.

AQAS scrutinized the SER regarding completeness, comprehensibility, and transparency. The accreditation procedure was officially initialised by a decision of the AQAS Standing Commission on 29 August 2022. The final version of the SER was handed in October 2022.

#### *Nomination of the expert panel*

The composition of the panel of experts follows the stakeholder principle. Consequently, representatives from the respective disciplines, the labour market, and students are involved. Furthermore, AQAS follows the principles for the selection of experts defined by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). The Standing Commission nominated the aforementioned expert panel in October 2022. AQAS informed the university about the members of the expert panel and the university did not raise any concerns against the composition of the panel.

#### *Preparation of the site visit*

Prior to the site visit, the experts reviewed the SER and submitted a short preliminary statement including open questions and potential needs for additional information. AQAS forwarded these preliminary statements to the university and to all panel members in order to increase transparency in the process and the upcoming discussions during the site visit.

#### *Site visit*

After a review of the SER, a site visit to the university took place on 21-24 November 2022. On site, the experts interviewed different stakeholders, e.g. the management of the higher education institution, the programme management, teaching and other staff, as well as students and graduates, in separate discussion rounds and consulted additional documentation as well as student work. The visit concluded by the presentation of the preliminary findings of the group of experts to the university's representatives.

#### *Reporting*

After the site visit had taken place, the expert group drafted the following report, assessing the fulfilment of the AQAS Criteria. The report included a recommendation to the AQAS Standing Commission. The report was sent to the university for comments.

#### *Decision*

The report, together with the comments of the university, forms the basis for the AQAS Standing Commission to take a decision regarding the accreditation of the programmes. Based on these two documents, the AQAS Standing Commission took its decision on the accreditation on 22. May 2023. AQAS forwarded the decision to the university. The university had the right to appeal against the decision or any of the imposed conditions.

In June 2023, AQAS published the report and the result of the accreditation as well as the names of the panel of experts.



### III. General information on the university

Universidad Autónoma de Chile (UAC) is a non-profit institution founded in Temuco in 1989 (as Universidad Autónoma de Sur). Starting with undergraduate degree programmes in Law and Commercial Engineering, the University expanded to the Maule and Metropolitan region in 1993 and decided to change its name. The University points out that the direction of expansion (from regional towards the capital) was an exception within the Chilean Higher Education system because many universities in Chile expanded from the capital towards other regions. At the time of the self-evaluation report (SER), the University has 29,741 students and 1,924 academics. By now, UAC has four campuses located in three cities (Providencia Campus and El Llano Campus in Santiago de Chile, Talca and Temuco).

With the programmes to be accredited, the university follows its goal to educate health professionals responding to the growing demand of health services focused on maintaining and restoring the quality of life and health of human beings as well as the community, as stated in the SER.

The Faculty of Health Sciences (FHS), to which all programmes belong, was founded in 2008, and is today the largest of seven faculties with 12,194 students (41,1%). It is led by a Dean, who is supported by a Faculty Secretary, and Vice-Deans at the campuses, where he himself cannot be permanently present. All Vice-Deans form a part of the Faculty's General Council. In addition, each campus has a Programme Director for each offered degree, who oversees the academic, administrative and management development. The Faculty offers undergraduate and graduate programmes, research and extension activities in nine different areas: Medicine, Odontology, Nursing, Nutrition and Dietetics, Obstetrics, Occupational Therapy, Kinesiology, Chemistry and Pharmacy, and Speech Therapy. At postgraduate level, the Faculty offers different academic and professional masters, diplomas, and a doctorate.

In addition to the Faculty, the Directorate of Development and Postgraduate Studies is responsible for the development and design of the Master's programmes to be reviewed, according to the SER. Following this concept, for the PhD programme in Biomedical Science, the Faculty shares its responsibility with the Vice-Rector Office for Research and Doctoral Studies, and here specifically the Institute of Biomedical Sciences (ICB), whose main task is to connect researchers to develop research, as the SER states. This structure supports research within the Faculty of Health Sciences, coordinates teaching in the Faculty's undergraduate programmes and trains students in the Biomedical Sciences PhD programme or the Neuroscience Master's study programme.

### IV. Assessment of the study programmes

#### 1. Quality of the curriculum / Aims and structure of the doctoral programme

##### **Bachelor's/Master's degree**

*The intended learning outcomes of the programme are defined and available in published form. They reflect both academic and labour-market requirements and are up-to-date with relation to the relevant field. The design of the programme supports achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*

*The academic level of graduates corresponds to the requirements of the appropriate level of the European Qualifications Framework.*

*The curriculum's design is readily available and transparently formulated.*

[ESG 1.2]

##### **Doctoral degree**

*The intended learning outcomes of the programme are defined and available in published form. They reflect both academic and labour-market requirements and are up-to-date with relation to the relevant field. The design of the programme supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*

*The academic level of graduates corresponds to with the requirements of the appropriate level of the national qualifications framework or the European Qualifications Framework.*

*The curriculum's design is readily available and transparently formulated.*

[ESG 1.2]

## Description

The full-time study plan for all five programmes to be accredited equals 1,800 hours per year, according to the SER. This equals 60 SCT-Chile per year (1 SCT-Chile = workload of 30 hours). For the undergraduate studies, which correspond to level 3 of the NQF, this means an average credit load of 300 SCT upon graduation.

The SER states that the ILOs for the undergraduate study programmes to be reviewed fall into three categories of criteria: disciplinary, professional and generic. While the disciplinary and professional ones differ, the generic ILOs are the same for all programmes. They stem from five elective courses of general training helping students to develop transversal competences: teamwork, critical thinking, ethical behaviour, and social responsibility.

Both undergraduate study programmes also have the mandatory external curricular internships in common that students have to do during the course of their studies.

Concerning mobility, according to the SER, more than 100 memorandums of understanding have been signed with universities around the globe allowing student mobility or even a double-degree (with Oviedo for the Neuroscience Master's study programme). This process has taken a backstep since 2019 but resulted in many virtual exchanges (esp. in 2021). For the programmes submitted there are no specific agreements. According to the SER, the problem lies in giving international students access to practical components of the courses. Currently, there is no mobility for the Master's study programmes due to the professional character, with an exception for the double degree. For the PhD study programme the SER mentions one student from a Colombian university. Its students also receive the opportunity of mobility through participation at international seminars, conferences, or internships.

### Nutrition and Dietetics (Bachelor)

This programme was simultaneously established at the Temuco and Santiago El Llano Campus in 2006 and at the Santiago Provincia Campus in 2009 in the daytime mode. It was accredited for four years in 2015. Its study plan was adjusted to the Transferable Credit System SCT-Chile in 2018. In 2021, the programme represented 11% (1,344 students) of the total enrolment in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

According to the SER, the study programme takes ten semesters to complete, during which each semester lasts 18 weeks and students are supposed to take 30 SCT. The study programme itself is separated into three different cycles. The initial cycle spans the first four semesters in which 24 subjects are studied (ten basic courses, eleven courses concerning the professional training, three generic training courses); the intermediate cycle from semester five to eight includes 23 subjects (two basic subjects, 18 professional ones, three generic ones). The last two semesters consist of two consecutive internships with eight weeks each.

The Nutrition and Dietetics study programme aims to preparing graduates to work in areas where food and nutrition are presented as the foundations for the promotion, prevention and recovery of health, in administration of collective food services and in management and quality assurance of food safety. According to the SER, students are taught to be autonomous professionals, socially responsible, attached to ethical and cultural principles, committed to the local, regional and national reality, capable of facing new challenges, prepared to form multidisciplinary work teams and participate in research teams.

The SER mentions one disciplinary ILO for this programme

- The graduate uses the essential scientific and humanistic knowledge required to provide comprehensive care in all areas in which nutrition and dietetics are presented as the basis for maintaining health, within a framework of ethics and respect for diversity

and five professional ILO, namely the graduate

- Uses the scientific method to carry out basic research on nutritional food problems and generate intervention and evaluation strategies, based on teamwork and lifelong learning, promoting self-learning and critical, responsible, and ethical analysis;
- Develops health intervention, promotion and prevention plans in areas where food and nutrition are the fundamental axes for the maintenance of health in individuals and communities, with emphasis on the quality of care, cultural and social relevance, based on current regulations;
- Performs comprehensive nutritional intervention throughout the life cycle in individuals with pathologies, as a form of support for therapeutic treatment, for rehabilitation and recovery of health, applying diet therapy based on critical analysis and solid scientific knowledge, under ethical behaviour and social responsibility;
- Manages collective food services, in accordance with the legal regulations in force, promoting teamwork, using effective communication and conflict resolution skills, basing their work on ethical principles and social responsibility;
- Proposes strategies for the management and assurance of quality in the food industry, applied from the design, elaboration, production, and commercialisation of food, in an innovative manner, in accordance with current regulations, based on teamwork habits and attitudes, with ethics and social responsibility.

### Experts' evaluation

Generally, the experts view the study programme in a positive light. Concerning the course offers and the transparency the programme responsible provided, it becomes evident through its course descriptions that the programme is described with a good level of detail regarding the area of competency development, level, number of credits, direct and indirect hours, learning outcomes, and teaching requirements, among others. The experts furthermore applaud the effort to follow the same course curriculum across all campuses. In cases where different teaching staff teaches on different campuses, those in charge of the same course have weekly or monthly meetings to discuss the most relevant aspects of the ongoing course. In fact, some exams are the same or taken simultaneously on campuses. This is well organised in the eyes of the panel.

However, the curriculum should reflect the study programme title of "Nutrition and Dietetics" more. Currently, dietetics is not a prominent part of the five professional ILOs of the programme. Whereas there does not necessarily have to be more courses explicitly dedicated to this topic, more content and details on dietetics have to be taught in the study programme and respectively represented in the professional ILOs (**Finding 1**).

Furthermore, the site visit could not clear up the aim and the structure of the "assistance concept", the study programme includes in its study plan regarding the continuous skill and competency development. While such student support is welcome and relevant to achieve the outcomes the way it was presented and described was slightly confusing and should be elaborated in the form of an action plan. This way all stakeholders are able to understand how teaching staff finds out who needs help and how, in a next step, this help and assistance is provided (**Finding 2**). Another programme UAC offers in its Nutrition & Dietetics study programme is the "Science Initiation Programme". This opportunity for students to begin doing research at an early stage in their university education and to excite them for a possible career in academia is supported by the experts of the panel, who encourage the study programme to continue this effort.

Another area of careful reflection is the demonstration of the achievement of the final qualification gained in the programme. With the reviewed student work the experts confirm it reaches bachelor level. However, clearly an area of improvement is the future implementation of a thesis at the end of the study programme for the

students to obtain their degree (**Finding 3**). In an applied field this will help better and easier demonstrate the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and also strengthen the academic character of the qualification. Currently, students complete a Degree Seminar instead in the 8<sup>th</sup> semester before going to their internships. This is sufficient, while probably not very future proof.

When it comes to the future development of this study programme, the experts support the implemented continuous development and update of the courses to ensure that they are up to date. Nevertheless, to uphold with future developments and strengthen the academic character of the qualification the panel clearly suggests including more methodological and research courses not only to improve the Degree Seminar, but also to offer more chances to participate in research projects to be better prepared for the current labour market (**Finding 4**).

## Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

### Kinesiology (Bachelor)

This programme was first taught in 2004 at the campuses in Temuco and El Llano/Santiago de Chile. One year later it was also established in daytime mode at the campus in Talca. Since 2009 it has additionally been taught at the 2<sup>nd</sup> campus in Santiago, in Providence. In 2016 the programme was accredited for three years. Its study plan was adjusted to the Transferable Credit System SCT-Chile in 2018.

According to the SER, the study programme takes ten semesters to complete, during which each semester lasts 18 weeks and students are supposed to take 30 SCT. The study programme itself is separated into three different cycles. The initial cycle spans the first four semesters in which 24 subjects are studied (twelve basic training subjects, eight professional training courses, four generic training courses); the intermediate cycle in semesters five to eight consists of 24 subjects (one basic training course, 21 professional training, two generic training courses). The last two semesters consist of two consecutive internships with eight weeks each.

Possible future fields of work for graduates include the areas of health education, disciplinary intervention and management of kinesiology units at different levels of health care, educational centres, sports and occupational health institutions or a free exercise of the profession. The programme aims at training the students to act with ethical principles, responsible social commitment and teamwork capacity, enabling them to respond to the challenges of health with a biopsychosocial approach and contribute to local, regional and national development. In 2021, the programme represented 13.9% (1,661 students) of the total enrolment in the Faculty of Health Sciences.

Apart from the generic ILOs (see above) the SER states one disciplinary ILO for the programme:

- The graduate bases the analysis of human movement, its function and dysfunction under a biopsychosocial approach,

And four professional ones, i.e. the graduate:

- Argues the resolution of problematic situations contextualised in human movement, based on the integration of various scientific sources available;
- Performs kinesiological intervention and treatment plans according to the reality of the user and community, through critical reflection and / or clinical reasoning, for the maintenance and restoration of movement and functionality throughout the life cycle;
- Supports in the management of care and the health team, through the maintenance and / or recovery of human movement, considering psychosocial and environmental aspects that affect the health of people;
- Performs health education, maintenance and rehabilitation activities, applicable in clinical, educational and workplace contexts, from a biopsychosocial point of view.

### Experts' evaluation

Looking at the curriculum of the Kinesiology programme the experts can confirm that it represents the appropriate contents and is organised progressively according to the acquisition of competencies for the training of a graduate in kinesiology. Courses are oriented along the four main areas of work performance. Cross-sectionally and longitudinally they address issues that introduce and develop all the areas of concern of the professional practice of a future kinesiologist.

The workload and its distribution in semesters are in accordance with the requirements for the dictation and assimilation of the concepts of each subject.

The study programme also implements practice within the physical resources in accordance with the requirements for teaching and amount of students, as well as adequate and updated technical resources (physiotherapy equipment) according to the use in the professional practice of a kinesiologist.

The last year (both final semesters) is dedicated to professional internships. During this time students opt for the different rotation options according to the four training areas. These internship offers are varied. It can be confirmed that generally the study programme has the required agreements that guarantee said rotations. The students have the possibility of choosing and, on some occasions, they have been able to complete these internships in institutions abroad (for example, the Rehabilitation Institute of the City of Mar del Plata, Argentina). In this regard it seems helpful to underline that it is helpful to incorporate into these rotations other options that involve different health systems, where the student can experience different realities depending on the needs of the population they attend (**Finding 5**).

Finally, they experts are impressed to see the importance given to research, providing the necessary tools from the early stages of training, thus generating a progressive advancement within this field to reach the end of the degree, concretely capturing the work carried out. Consequently, the experts can confirm the achievement of the Bachelor level of the European Qualifications Framework. Another strength of the programme is the promotion of continuous training of graduates and coexistence between graduates and students creating opportunities for knowledge exchange.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

#### Assessment and intervention ABA (Applied Behaviour Analysis) in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Master)

This part-time programme was approved to be developed in 2017, making it the only Master's programme in Chile linked to ABA and Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). It responds to national demand for professionals with the necessary skills to assess and develop interventions for individuals affected by autism who require supports. The study programme takes four semesters to complete, in which the students gain 72 SCT. They have to study ten mandatory subjects, which fall into the fields of Assessment in ASD, Intervention in ASD, and Research.

The SER states that its sequence of courses approved by the Behavior Analyst Certification Board (BACB) is particular to this programme, meaning that students could meet the eligibility requirements to take the exam to become board certified once they have completed the BACB required hours of study and supervised practice. The Master's programme itself has a professionalising character, according to the SER, which corresponds to the Level 4 of the National Qualifications Framework

In 2019, the Universidad Autónoma went ahead and reformulated the programme, adjusting subjects and face-to-face hours, which will be carried out at the Temuco and Santiago campuses, explaining the enrolment suspension in that year.

The degree aims to train graduates, who are competent in the development of diagnostic and/or behavioural assessment processes, in generating intervention plans for people with Autism Spectrum Disorder and who are enabled to carry out diagnostic and behavioural assessments as well as to plan and implement intervention programmes according to each individual and their environment. According to the SER, graduates will be qualified to carry out studies using quantitative and qualitative research methods and techniques, enabling them to work on scientific articles as well as to contribute to expanding the knowledge on ASD.

The SER states 16 ILOs for this programme, which fall into five categories of competencies, namely

- Mastering the theoretical and practical knowledge necessary for the assessment and develop behavioural interventions to support individuals affected by ASD from a transdisciplinary perspective, in order to provide comprehensive care to service users.
- Handling techniques, instruments, and materials to obtain diagnostic and behavioural assessment results for service users diagnosed with ASD, within a multi-contextual and transdisciplinary approach, respecting ethical principles of assessment.
- Designing intervention plans for service users affected by ASD, in the areas of autonomy, play, socialisation, communicative functions and verbal behaviour and imitation, comprehensively covering all the contexts in which the service user develops, within a transdisciplinary approach, respecting the ethical principles of intervention.
- Elaborating a functional behavioural assessment in service users with a diagnosis of ASD within the context in which the service user develops, contributing to the solution of the problem within the family, school and/or social environment of the service user, respecting the ethical principles of intervention.
- Developing research projects that constitute a contribution to the area of ASD, using quantitative research methods and techniques, respecting the ethical principles of research with human beings.

### **Experts' evaluation**

Having met the university and study programme leadership as well as the teaching staff, students, and employer representatives, it appears clearly that the study programme facilitates students to achieve the intended learning outcomes and subsequently reach their desired qualification. While much of the basic curriculum evidently focusses on subject-specific topics including ASD and Applied Behaviour Analysis (ABA)-based assessment and interventions, there also is a focus on enabling students to become competent members of an interdisciplinary team.

The intended learning outcomes are laid out distinctly and reflect both academic/scientific and labour market requirements in line with international standards. There is evidence that the study programme leadership and team regularly review the learning outcomes in line with current developments within the science of ABA and the knowledge base in ASD.

There is sufficient testimony that learning aims and teaching outcomes are suitable and appropriate. The testimonial evidence included a range of review methods, including evaluations, surveys, and positive feedback from the labour market. The study programme is taught at Master's level. The SER as well as interviews with staff and students provided verification that the study programme corresponds to the learning outcomes and the requirements of the appropriate level of the European Qualifications Framework as well as the respective national qualifications framework. Students' achievements are demonstrated during the study programme via

assignments and, upon the completion of the programme, via a final year dissertation, samples of which were provided to the experts for assessment and met international standards.

The structure of the programme supports the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the learner's progression by breaking down the learning into appropriate sections and teaching the important information in a modular system. The curriculum is matched against international standards set by the BACB and thereby covers subject-specific and cross-subject knowledge as well as subject-related, methodological and general skills. There have been some curricular modifications a couple of years ago, to ensure that the curriculum can be delivered on two different campuses. This restructuring contributed to the improvement of the programme quality and reach. The documents as well as the interviews with course staff, students, and employers showed transparency and clarity.

The study programme is delivered over two years in part-time mode. A typical course plan was available. In sum, the workload in this programme seems allocated correctly and transparently to the different modules and the correct number of credits are assigned to all elements of the curriculum.

Overall, at the moment the programme meets international standards set by the BACB. However, the BACB no longer allows students who reside outside the USA/Canada to sit the Board Certification exam (from 31.12.2022). Consequently, course developers can change the curriculum to suit their student's and service user local/national needs. Therefore, it is important to ensure that future developments in this course retain their present high standard.

One aspect that was mentioned by course leaders and teaching team as well as the students and employers was the lack of opportunities for Masters in ABA and ASD students to gain adequate practical experience. At the moment, students rely on the good will of local or national/international placement providers to provide supervised practice experience. The BACB requires 2000 hours of supervised practice for each student and students at UA have difficulties in finding appropriate placements (**Finding 6**).

The fact that UA does not provide supervised practice opportunities on campus for students of the Masters in ASD and ABA course was apparent and stood in contrast with some international universities, who provide university-based labs or clinics. The panel of experts carefully recognized that UA does provide comparable facilities for other courses evaluated in this visit and it could not be identified why there is no dedicated UA clinic/lab for ABA and ASD students on either of the campuses. Such a clinic could and should be open to the public and therefore would provide not only good training for the students but also a much-needed service to the community (**see Finding 6**).

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

### Neuroscience (Master)

This part-time programme was first taught on a blended basis at all the university's campuses in 2014 and had a research and multidisciplinary orientation, covering different areas of neuroscience, according to the SER. In 2019, the new study plan that is to be accredited was implemented, which grants a double degree with the University of Oviedo (Spain). So far there have not been any graduates under this plan.

The general objective of the programme, which is designed to correspond to Master level of the European Qualifications Framework, is to provide students with an advanced knowledge of the nervous system at a theoretical and practical level and in its normal and pathological form. Students are explained to be able to use the terms and concepts of this course accurately and apply the most commonly used techniques in terms of their theoretical bases as well as their applications and limitations. The programme also aims to provide

research skills that allow the student to propose and answer relevant research questions in neuroscience. In addition to these disciplinary outcomes, the programme also trains its students to have research and professional ethics and have prepared its graduates to continue their studies with a PhD programme.

The Master in Neuroscience consists of three modules with the first two corresponding to disciplinary courses. The final module focuses on methodology in order to train students in research skills for them to complete their graduation project. Research lines within this study programme are Neurobiology, Cognitive Neuroscience and Experimental Psychology, and Research Topics in Neuroscience.

The SER includes three categories of competencies with nine ILO altogether, such as valuing the contributions of different disciplines in the neurosciences, discovering developing opportunities, designing experimental studies, substantiating the scientific problem in a synthetic way based on pertinent literature or structuring the information of a research process.

### Experts' evaluation

The panel of experts can confirm that students, teaching staff, and course leadership are highly motivated and are aware of the fact that they do some pioneering work for the field of Neuroscience in Chile. After the campus visit, the review of materials and the interviews the panel of experts has no reason for doubt that the students will achieve the intended learning outcomes. Neuroscience by itself is interdisciplinary and that is how it is built up at UAC.

The curriculum design and implementation is adequate and all information regarding the modules are designed and delivered transparently. This holds true for all curricular elements including their functions, their compulsory or elective character and their usage. A typical course plan is provided.

Interviews with students and staff (and the SER) provided verification that the course correspond to the learning outcomes. The curricular structure of the programme supports well their achievement, while they are also constantly adapted to the scientific requirements by adjustments in the curriculum. Neuroscience in itself is a very fast-evolving discipline. This results in permanent work and adaptation in the whole study programme. Currently, there is a lack of a dedicated module for Neuropathology and Neuroimmunology. The panel of experts learned that these topics are dealt with in other modules, which compensates but clearly is not the best solution to continuously offer a future oriented programme (**Finding 7**). Questions regarding the requirements for the labor market beside academia (outside of universities and research centers), are barely applicable as the labour market for people with a Master's degree in Neuroscience outside of research institutions is practically nonexistent. Apart from this, Neuroscience graduates of this programme are able to work in wide areas (despite the field of Neurosciences) and provide a new point of view.

Due to the fact that dramatic changes in research topics is a peculiarity of the field of Neuroscience, the UAC curriculum has to be modified to some degree in the very near future. The two areas of behaviour science and neuroimmunology have been evolved dramatically. Neuroimmunology, in particular, needs more and more molecular biology and it will be mandatory for future researchers in this field to be familiar with methods like next generation sequencing (NGS), single-cell NGS, digital PCR, analysis of whole genome sequencing data, whole genome methylation data, RNA-Sequencing data (in particular on the single-cell level), and Microbiome data. The faculty will have to demonstrate how these elements will be covered in the curriculum (**Finding 8**). Moreover, it will become mandatory, at least in the field of Neuroimmunology, to be able to perform such methods and to be able to plan which kind of material is need (samples from humans, like blood, liquor or defined mouse models) to answer a given question. The whole field of protein analysis is probably the caveat of a PhD course. However, to be able to apply for an international PhD programme, the requirements for the master thesis should be reconsidered to be written in English and should be solely based on self-generated measured values (**Finding 9**).



From an expert's point of view, in a smart way, for a limited number of students the study programme provides the opportunity to achieve a double-degree, a M.Sc. in Neuroscience from a Chilean and a Spanish university.

### Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

#### Biomedical Science (PhD)

This study programme was created in 2013 and updated in 2020. Until 2021, 11 students graduated in it. The programme complies with the provisions of the General Education Act. In late 2021, it was accredited by the National Commission of Accreditation (CAN) for five years. According to the SER, the degree of this study programme can be translated to EQF level 7.

It is an academic full-time programme, whose aim is to train researchers, who work in Chile as well as world-wide. After graduating, the SER states, students will be critical and reflective researchers, who propose and develop original research activities related to biomedical sciences and contribute to the dissemination of knowledge in their area both in their teaching and research work.

The PhD programme consists of compulsory and elective courses, which are designed to support the students developing cognitive skills and competences for advanced research in the fields of Biomedical Sciences. The study programme is structured for eight semesters and 240 SCT. The study plan includes eight compulsory subjects, two seminars and two research units, a qualification exam and the thesis, amongst others. While there are four core subjects to deepen the students' theoretical knowledge, the study plan also allows flexibility in the electives in order to serve the students' specific interests and line of research, which help them later to develop their thesis project and PhD thesis. Furthermore, each student must study two courses on communication strategies and evaluation of pedagogical content to develop competencies for their undergraduate and postgraduate teaching.

The programme has four lines of research, which are covered through the study plan: Applied Neurosciences, Pathogenesis and Microbiological Control, Physiology and Metabolism, Immunopathology and Cellular Pathologies.

### Experts' evaluation

Based on the provided information in the SER and during the discussions on site the Ph.D. programme aims at educating its students for academic careers rather than an industry career track. However, it was also confirmed that at this time the national job market in Chile is small. Consequently, and in order to provide clear and better options for graduates the Faculty should better assure that students in the Ph.D. programme are also prepared for an international postdoc position (**Finding 10**).

The programme comprises additional courses and trainings, which are well prepared and conducted and are appreciated by the students in the programme and also supported by the panel of experts. The programme also includes a Ph.D. thesis, which is conducted in a specific laboratory in the second half of the training programme. It requires 2.5 years and during that time the students must publish a scientific article. They are also associated with a specific laboratory in the first half of the programme, which is not necessarily the one in which they perform their thesis work.

The programme is planned for four years, but on the average, it takes five. Whereas it can be debated, if the study plan should be adapted to this more realistic length of time, the duration in itself is not a problem to the panel of experts, and rather meets international standards in Biomedicine. There are also other elements in the programme which are well executed, such as the organised and structured process of the thesis, the

annual feedback for the students, and the training module on academic writing. The faculty can be applauded for these practices.

Up to this point the programme receives the experts' full support. However, there are also weak parts which need to be improved.

First, as already mentioned above, students should be trained in a way that they can apply for any international postdoc position as currently this focus is underdeveloped (**see Finding 10**). Thus, it is essential to run courses and seminars in English and particularly the thesis should be produced in English language (**Finding 11**).

While generally it can be confirmed that the PhD thesis meet the requirements of the European Qualifications framework, they do not develop their full potential at this time. A more complete thesis that provides more background of the research topic and information on why the project is interesting would be easier to understand for researchers outside of the specific field (**Finding 12**).

Another point of critical reflection addresses the duration of the thesis: 2.5 years of required work for own thesis work in an international comparison is rather short and creates the risk to impact the depth and quality. Consequently, it should be considered to extend the time within the programme that is dedicated to research relevant for the PhD-thesis (**Finding 13**). In this context the panel of expert believe it would be beneficial to see more empirical and innovative Ph.D. works which then can also be published in more competitive journals.

Further critical reflection should be given to the kind of research done connected to the instrumentation available. To train students for an internationally competitive position would require a stronger focus on the most modern technologies, like for example high throughput technologies (Genomics, Proteomics, Metabolomics). However, the instrumentation for that is not available at UAC. While the Faculty compensates well and sends students to other international laboratories to train them in these technologies this practice is not ideal to build a PhD programme on. Clearly UAC should aim to establish these technologies in their institutes to improve training and research or ensure its students have constant access to modern technologies that allow them to use the latest methods in their field of study (**Finding 14**).

## Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

## 2. Procedures for quality assurance

### **Bachelor's/Master's degree**

*The programme is subject to the higher education institution's policy and associated procedures for quality assurance, including procedures for the design, approval, monitoring, and revision of the programmes.*

*A quality-oriented culture, focusing on continuous quality enhancement, is in place. This includes regular feedback mechanisms involving both internal and external stakeholders.*

*The strategy, policies, and procedures have a formal status and are made available in published form to all those concerned. They also include roles for students and other stakeholders.*

*Data is collected from relevant sources and stakeholders, analysed, and used for the effective management and continuous enhancement of the programme.*

[ESG 1.1, 1.7 & 1.9]

### **Doctoral degree**

*The programme is subject to the higher education institution's policy and associated procedures for quality assurance, including procedures for the design, approval, monitoring, and revision of the programmes.*

*A quality-oriented culture, focusing on continuous quality enhancement, is in place. This includes regular feedback mechanisms involving both internal and external stakeholders.*

*The strategy, policies, and procedures have a formal status and are made available in published form to all those concerned. They also include roles for students and other stakeholders.*

*Data is collected from relevant sources and stakeholders, analysed, and used for the effective management and continuous enhancement of the programme.*

*[ESG 1.1, 1.7 & 1.9]*

## Description

According to the SER, the Vice Chancellors Office for Quality Assurance was established in 2018, which is supposed to support a Quality Assurance System based on four components: an Institutional Planning System, an Internal Quality Assurance System, a Permanent Evaluation Programme, and an Analysis System for Institutional Development. At the faculty level a Quality Assurance Faculty Coordinator was implemented, who is in charge of realising the quality assurance's policies and procedures at this level.

The Information Collection System, whose main purpose is to establish the foundations of a permanent consultation system with the internal and external environment, collects the perception, satisfaction, and expectation of key stakeholders in the sustainability and development of the institutional project. This quality/satisfaction survey system is applied annually to teaching staff and undergraduate and doctoral students. As from 2021, the feedback survey mechanism has been adjusted to include graduates, alumni and employers.

The IQAS, which includes 40 different procedures, according to the SER, ensures that all programmes align with students' and society's needs, checking them against the latest discipline research, the labour market or the students' workload, amongst other categories. It centres the quality of the academic programmes and involves all relevant stakeholders to include their impact on its processes. Students are represented in student associations and the Faculty Quality Committee.

Other bodies of Quality Assurance are the programme management team meetings, where all the campuses, where the degree course is taught, work together; the programme council, which analyses the development of lectures, curricular progress of students, or relevance of the study plan or the curriculum committee, an academic advisory board chaired by the Dean that advises programme directors on matters such as study plan or student progression. Some of the processes the SER includes to ensure the quality of the programmes are the Annual Report Process, which analyses academic audit results and monitors academic programmes this way or the Undergraduates Satisfaction Measurement Process, which is applied every year to all students and, hence, gives the university the possibility to learn the opinions and perceptions of the students.

When the transferable credit model was adopted, the curricula of all programmes were updated. Statistics on the student body, retention rates as well as withdrawals are available and collected. According to the SER and depending on the programme, the student body consists of roughly same amount of male/female or up to nearly 90% females (Master in Assessment and Intervention ABA in ASD) and are equally distributed between the different campuses (Nutrition & Dietetics). Other statistics known are the score of the National Higher Education Exam, professional background for higher programmes or nationalities for PhD.

## Experts' evaluation

Overall, the quality assurance (QA) system at UAC is thorough and well-implemented. The enactment of its four components of QA is reflected in the study programmes. The mechanisms include course and programme evaluations, statistics on progression and completion rates as well as reviews on students' needs and expectations.

During the site visit, it became evident that the QA methods produce outcomes in the programmes of the cluster. Results of surveys and the like are screened and suitable steps to improve the study programmes

have been implemented based on the feedback of the different status groups and stakeholders of the university. For example, measures have been put in place to identify students who are experiencing socioeconomic challenges. In these circumstances, UAC provides academic and social support, which may lead to scholarships or other financial support mechanisms, demonstrating the university's strong support structure. Furthermore, UAC staff is in an active exchange with labor market representatives to strengthen the employability of graduates. These activities and measures find the full support of the panel of experts.

The experts commend UAC for its strong viewpoints on safeguarding academic integrity and good scientific practice. To assess plagiarism among students, adequate software is used. This aspect is also particularly important for research students in the doctoral programme, who were well aware of these aspects and benefited from introductory lessons on scientific thinking and writing in their curriculum. The doctoral policies on topic selection, supervisor allocation, cyclical status reporting and final defense to the doctoral board were formalised for the PhD students and were communicated with them adequately.

In general, the university fosters a culture that places a strong emphasis on QA procedures. UAC was able to demonstrate that it examines its study programmes in a closed loop, continuous manner and improves them by including all important status groups in its QA processes. For instance, student representatives are participating in faculty meetings in order to raise issues and take part in decision-making. From the course level to the programme level to the faculty level, there is a straightforward reporting mechanism. Furthermore, interviews and surveys with course staff and students are conducted regularly. These surveys are documented transparently and are appraised by a committee.

Besides, against the background of statutory obligations, the university regularly engages in external QA processes, such as authorization and national accreditation, and does so within the framework outlined by the Chilean educational authorities.

However, it is important to let students know about the findings and modifications of the evaluations in order to increase their involvement in the continued development of the study programmes. Students could be given organized information about the outcomes, measurements, and modifications that stem from their evaluations (**Finding 15**). Surveys could be improved in their granularity, frequency, and scope (subjects, alumni). Results of the course evaluations could be statistically processed in a broader and more differentiated manner in order to be more effective. Free-text fields could be included in evaluation questionnaires to incorporate a more diverse form of feedback (**Finding 16**).

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

### 3. Learning, teaching and assessment of students / Learning and assessment of students

#### **Bachelor's/Master's degree**

*The delivery of material encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.*

*Students are assessed using accessible criteria, regulations, and procedures, which are made readily available to all participants and which are applied consistently.*

*Assessment procedures are designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*

[ESG 1.3]

#### **Doctoral degree**

*The form of supervision and/or course structure is adequate and corresponds with the intended learning outcomes.*

*Students are assessed using accessible criteria, regulations, and procedures, which are made readily available to all participants and which are applied consistently.*

*Assessment procedures are designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*

[ESG 1.3]

## **Description**

The educational model used focuses on student-centredness, transversal learning, lifelong learning, and university social responsibility. According to the SER, all these elements are considered in the process of achieving the wanted learning outcomes of a given degree, guaranteeing what a student is expected to be able to demonstrate once the learning process is completed.

The undergraduate study programmes at U Autónoma consist of three training cycles: basic, where general competencies and a global comprehensive framework of the discipline are at the centre (semester 1-4); intermediate, where a specialisation is deepened and professional training promoted (semester 5-8) and advanced, which concludes the training process (semester 9-10).

Some of the most used teaching methodologies are case studies, role play, learning through observation, clinical activities, simulation, discussion panel. As the SER says teaching methods are correlated with the learning outcomes of the different courses.

For the Master's programmes, the SER states the centrality explicitly. Courses are said to be interactive, and students are continuously assessed. In theoretical classes, too, lectures are kept to a minimum, with students carrying them out oftentimes for the sessions to gain relevance. The Master's study programme in Neuroscience is an exception for this concept since it has a research focus, according to the university, which means it includes some subjects and other learning formats.

The Master in Assessment and Intervention ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder, however, consists of mostly theoretical-practical subjects, as the SER says, with lectures and expository classes plus active participatory methodological strategies. Expository methodologies used include prereading, case studies, project methodology or problem-based learning.

For the doctoral programme, assessment in the theoretical subjects is done through extensive written tests; other subjects also use mini projects and/or oral presentations, according to the SER. In experimental subjects, students write protocols, bibliographical seminars use assignments, tasks, or reports. The thesis project and qualification exam are assessed together with the written thesis project and its defence.

The grades at for the programmes to be reviewed range from 1.0 to 7.0 with a minimum passing grade of 4.0. Results of their assessments must be communicated to the students within ten calendar days.

Following a diagnostic approach, lecturers of the undergraduate study programmes assess the initial learning state for all students, according to the SER, at the beginning of a lecture programme. This way the lecturer knows each students' footing and is able to adjust the syllabus accordingly. This assessment is not graded. In a formative approach throughout the teaching-learning process different assessment methods are used with the aim to gather achievement information, as the SER states, and only with the summative approach, mostly used at the end of an expected learning process, a grade is always achieved. Assessments often consist of tests, in practical procedures observation guidelines or clinical evaluation.

## **Experts' evaluation**

Overall, learning and teaching methods contribute successfully to a student-centred learning environment. Evidence showed that learning and teaching methods correspond to the intended learning outcomes on the different courses and that the diversity of students' needs are considered. Interviews with teaching staff and

students confirmed that flexible learning paths are available and also implemented, and that student motivation, self-reflection, and engagement are stimulated in the learning process.

UAC uses different academic resources for the teaching of the subjects. These resources have been used for a long time and were reinforced as a result of the pandemic. The university currently has mixed alternatives for said dictations, such as virtual classrooms, videoconferences with special guests, clinical simulators. After the main impact of the pandemic, courses now mainly take place on-campus although this teaching is supported by online content and cross-campus teaching using hybrid methods. Teaching methods and content are well documented.

Students of all programmes are well supported and comprehensively trained to transfer their knowledge to situations outside the university context. This is particularly the case for students in Biomedicine and Kinesiology, where expansive labs and clinics are available. This means that methods of learning and teaching as well as assessment formats support an interlacing of theoretical and practical aspects. Within these practical activities, the small groups are worth mentioning: Between 8 and 10 students are allowed in the different laboratories according to the activity. The latter ensures personalised learning as well as very intensive practical training. As described above this is less the case for students on the Masters in ASD and ABA, where practice opportunities (e.g., labs or clinics) on campus are missing at present.

Regulations for assessment procedures are clearly defined and accessible. This clarity also extends to the transparency of examination requirements and grading scales that are available to students in various formats, exception being the Nutrition and Dietetics programme where the minimum mark to pass a course was not available. It is important that the minimum mark to pass a course of the study programme is transparent and communicated to all stakeholders (**Finding 17**).

Also in this programme, as well as in the Master in Assessment and Intervention ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder, the panel of experts carefully looked at the assessment and grading of the Degree Seminar. Currently, it is carried out with up to four students (usually three) and the provided documents and policies do not enable a clear differentiation of individual students contribution and thus achievement of outcomes. As this is the final mark before going to the internships, it is clearly recommended to have fewer students in a group to allow better individual participation in the process. It would be great to implement an instrument or transparency mechanism on each student's contribution level (**Finding 18**).

In the interviews, students expressed a general level of satisfaction in relation to their courses, organisation, exams, and learning overall. There was a clear level of enthusiasm for teaching and learning that was expressed by teaching staff and students.

The supervision arrangements for PhD students appear to be working well and students are highly motivated additionally by their well-qualified expert supervisors in their field. Academic progress is encouraged and monitored comprehensively. PhD students and supervisors are well informed about the specifics of examination procedures and different modes of completing the programme. This included clarity and motivation about the completion of doctoral dissertations, thesis defence or viva voce, recognition of individual achievements, status of publications, and timescale for publications.

A wide range of assessment methods were used across the different courses, reflecting the learning outcomes in the individual modules. The range of examination formats used in the study programmes were adequate and students were familiar with an appropriate range of formats. Examiners are suitably familiar with examination methods and requirements. Appropriate procedures for student appeals are in place and documented and accessible to students. Retake opportunities exist for students who fail their first attempt.

Apposite procedures and regulations are in place for reasonable adjustments to compensate for possible disadvantages, illness, disability, or absence in exams. These procedures and regulations are well documented and accessible for students and staff.

### Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

#### 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification / Legal status, admission and certification

##### **Bachelor's/Master's degree**

*Consistently applied, pre-defined, and published regulations are in place which cover student admission, progression, recognition, and certification.*

[ESG 1.4]

##### **Doctoral degree**

*The institution is entitled to award a doctorate.*

*Consistently applied, pre-defined, and published regulations are in place which cover student admission, progression, recognition, and certification.*

[ESG 1.4]

### Description

Admission at UA follows the Single Admission System (SAS), a national initiative, as the SER states. It operates through an electronic platform, administered by the Undersecretariat of Higher Education, which also updates information on academic offers and their vacancies or admission processes, selection mechanisms, application deadlines. The HEI must provide this information. Students can also register for the Single Selection Test via this page, participate in the centralised application process and review results of the selection process.

The Ministry of Education establishes a maximum percentage of vacancies, but the university allocates them to the academic programmes according to teaching capacities, infrastructure, and resources available. In study programmes of this cluster, the university also considers the capacities available in the clinical practice centres and specific laboratories.

All criteria of admission can transparently be viewed by stakeholders through the website as well as social networks. Universidad Autónoma establishes a homepage concerning each year's admission process, including all relevant information of each degree it offers, like campuses where subjects are taught, curriculum, fees, entrance scores.

The admission for undergraduate study programmes depends on the high school grade average, high school grades ranking and the results of the National Higher Education Exam. Each programme weights different components differently with the minimum average score applying as requirement, according to the SER. A decrease in enrolment in 2021, especially in kinesiology, can mostly be explained by the Covid pandemic.

Prerequisite for the admission for the study programmes at the master level is a professional degree in health sciences (exception: Master in Assessment and Intervention in ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder, here a professional degree in the education area is also accepted). Documents needed to enrol for the programmes include a CV, birth certificate, copy of academic or professional degree, grades transcript, motivation letter and two letters of recommendation. To be accepted for one of the Master's study programmes reviewed,

candidates have to go through a process of submitting the application documents, pass a personal interview and the analysis of their application according to the criteria. For the decision, work experience accounts for 40% and the undergraduate academic background and the personal motivation for 30% each.

According to the SER, to apply for the doctoral degree applicants must have a Bachelor's degree in an area of Biomedical Sciences or related. A Master's degree is desirable but not necessary. Documentation needed to apply include the application form, a CV, a copy of academic degree/s and professional title/s, one of transcripts and graduation ranking and one of the applicant's thesis and publications, a motivation letter including their research interest, two letters of recommendation. After the call for applications, the selection process follows the example of the Master's study programmes.

Enrolment in the study programmes has been stable except for 2019 due to social outbreak, when the programmes had to be changed to online modules and a lockdown was implemented.

The retention rate for the undergraduate programmes is lower than the faculty average but growing steadily (Kinesiology is almost there). In comparison to other universities, the degrees are almost at the same level as the national average, in 2018 around 80%, as the SER states.

Nationally there is no recognition system available in Chile. All institutions have their own recognition system. At the Universidad Autónoma, the student approaches the Curriculum Register Office with their programme curriculum and transcript of examination from their home university plus the syllabus. In total, a maximum of 60% of the degree courses can be validated. The office reviews and validates the records, uploads information onto the academic system SAGAF, where the programme management reviews the information. Finally, it is the Campus Academic Director, who reviews the decision of the programme, as the SER says. For the Master's study programmes, in addition to the criteria mentioned beforehand, the qualifications to be recognised must have the same number of credits and classroom hours, and 75% of the contents must be similar to those taught at Universidad Autónoma.

Once they are enrolled, students are continuously informed about their gained qualifications and the status of their progress via SAGAF, the academic system used at Universidad Autónoma.

In order to graduate, students of the undergraduate study programmes must complete and pass all subjects. In the Master's study programmes, the courses from their study plan must be passed and they must defend their thesis successfully. The weighting of these conditions ranges from 80:20 (ABA) to 90:10 (Neurosciences). For the PhD programme three professors must evaluate the students' thesis and they must pass the qualifying examination after all subjects are completed as well as the degree exam, which is done by defending the thesis. The thesis in this study programme can be a traditional or cumulative one.

### **Experts' evaluation**

Student admission is clearly defined in all study programmes of the cluster. During the site visit, students confirmed that information and the process are transparent, well organised, and available. In case of questions, they could easily reach UAC staff, who helped them readily. It is to stress that students described the friendly atmosphere of the whole application and, where applicable, selection process.

Admission for the Bachelor's programmes follows the national Single Admission System. For the graduate study programmes, UAC follows a process of three steps: application submission, interview through the programme director or coordinator, and application analysis. Especially the Master in Neuroscience is in high demand with 50-100 applicants on average for 20 study places in Santiago and Temuco each. One of the reasons for this demand is the programme's double degree option with the University of Oviedo, Spain.



As data provided showed and was explained by participants of the discussion rounds, the number of applicants has been rising in the last years. The drop in applications in 2019 was explained by Chile's social unrest in that year. The panel of experts found all explanations and shared analysis convincing.

Concerning the prerequisites of applicants, the experts found the importance English has for the application and the study programmes to be underrepresented. Whereas the discussions on site indicated that overall within the level of English education is not a strength of Chilean schools, the experts still suggest that English should play a bigger role, if not during application, then throughout the study programmes (see **Findings 9 and 11**). This is especially true for applicants for the graduate study programmes, where UAC selects its students. Furthermore, and without neglecting the role of the Spanish academic communities in the respective fields, all three graduate programmes in this cluster come from fields where the uncontested academic research language is mostly English.

The students' progression is taken into account in all programmes. The university teaches in modules, building content up on previously taught courses.

Dropout rates are highest in the students' third year. According to the university, at this point, socioeconomic problems and a drop in grades come into play. This leads to more questions about academic support from academic staff. Yet, the panel carefully analysed the numbers and found that overall dropouts are in line with other Universities in Chile. Especially in the PhD programme, the average duration of the studies exceeds the envisioned target of the study programme and lasts roughly five years. The process of obtaining the PhD degree is clearly defined and available to stakeholders.

Recognition of credits and activities is possible in the study programmes of this cluster. Processes and prerequisites to do so are defined for all programmes in the regulations for the respective programmes and available to students.

To receive the professional degree, bachelor students have to fulfil the requirement of a practical stage in the 5<sup>th</sup> year of their studies. However, it is possible to receive the bachelor degree (without professional title) after four years and have the certificate validated in another country. A practical degree board is responsible for the content of this last year of the students' studies. As in the Chilean context, the fifth year is still an integral part of the students' education, the study programmes affected by these rules might consider becoming more involved in this last stage of the Bachelor's study programmes or respectively the transparency in the certification should be increased clearly indicating what is part of the academic responsibility of the university (**Finding 19**).

Upon graduation, students receive a Certificate on their respective degree. There is not yet a general Chilean equivalent of a diploma supplement. However, the experts recommend providing graduates with a document that makes the obtained qualifications and programme learning outcomes comparable and provides standardised descriptions of degrees, supporting a possible international career for UAC graduates (**Finding 20**).

## Conclusion

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

## 5. Teaching staff / Academic level of supervisory staff

### **Bachelor's/Master's degree**

*The composition (quantity, qualifications, professional and international experience, etc.) of the staff is appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*

*Staff involved with teaching is qualified and competent to do so.*

*Transparent procedures are in place for the recruitment and development of staff.*

[ESG 1.5]

### **Doctoral degree**

*The composition (quantity, qualifications, professional and international experience, etc.) of the staff is appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.*

*Staff involved with teaching is qualified and competent to do so.*

*Transparent procedures are in place for the recruitment and development of staff.*

[ESG 1.5]

### **Description**

U Autónoma employs two types of lecturers: regular staff (full time) with contracts and adjunct staff (part time) working on a fee basis. During the hiring process, professionals with a doctorate are prioritised. If this is not possible, and especially for 1<sup>st</sup> year courses, staff should have a Master's degree and teaching experience. According to the SER, the hierarchy at U Autónoma is as follows: instructor, assistant professor, associate professor, full professor.

Within the professors at U Autónoma, there are three kinds, according to the SER: faculty professors, who are dedicated to teaching activities; associate professors, who are partially dedicated to the programme, but also teach somewhere else; and visiting professors, who come from another university, but carry out specific academic activities at U Autónoma. The Master's study programmes to be reviewed use all kinds of these professors.

For the study programmes to be accredited, the teaching staff situation currently is as follows:

- Nutrition and Dietetics: 85 teachers (40 Santiago, 45 Temuco; 72% with graduate studies)
- Kinesiology: 94 teachers (Santiago 59, Temuco 22, Talca 13; 86% have graduate studies)
- Master: 19 teachers, 11 of them belong to the ICB
- PhD: 50 academics, all with PhD (18 faculty, 18 collaborating, 14 visiting)

The SER mentions a policy for academic improvement that is in place: major training for teaching staff in the Master's, doctorate or postdoctorate degrees and minor training, which includes the basic teacher training. This training includes courses such as My Teaching Practice for the Achievement of Learning Outcomes; Assessment of Learning Outcomes; Collaborative Pedagogy; and Mediation and active-participatory methodologies centred on the student. These are mandatory for all academics at U Autónoma.

### **Experts' evaluation**

Overall, the University presents a clear organisational structure. Both undergraduate and postgraduate students have the opportunity to have transversal learning. Both professors and researchers have the right competencies and qualifications to teach the courses they are associated with.

The friendly atmosphere with pleased students and very appreciative, motivated, and passionate teachers is evident to the experts. The study programmes have strong teaching staff. Almost 100% of the staff has a Master's or PhD degree. In addition, most of the PhD programme staff have completed a postdoc or have received a grant by the National Fund for Scientific and Technological Development (FONDECYT).

Following the discussion on site and provided documents also the recruitment processes for future teaching staff at UAC are transparent. The university prioritises staff with the highest academic degree in the development area, i.e., PhD. If this criterion is cannot be fulfilled by the pool of candidates, they recruit staff with the correct competencies with at least a master's degree and according to the programme requirements. Once new staff is hired, the clearly structured hierarchy consists of instructors (first level), assistant professors, associate professors and full professors (last level).

UAC provides stakeholders with a complete list of the academics and teachers in each area for the semester and year. However, this way it becomes evident, that the programmes under review employ a large number of part-time lecturers. Only some teachers are part of the permanent staff. To guarantee the continuation of the quality of the study programmes in the future, the experts recommend extending the amount of full time-professors (**Finding 21**). Furthermore, it is desirable to train teaching staff and researchers further concerning their English skills (**Finding 22**). Especially in study programmes with inevitably international orientation due to the field of research, English proficiency is necessary to continue an academic career.

For their general development, didactically and in their field of expertise, staff can apply for particular funding to continue their education/training or go abroad. The university has a supportive process to train better teachers, which allows them to learn new techniques in their field, e.g., while being financially supported. Additionally, teachers can access the “Teacher Training Diploma”.

Following university policies, teaching staff also has access to funds to continue their own studies on a Master's or PhD level, if they have yet to obtain this degree.

Nevertheless, also with regard to keeping staff qualifications up to date the experts see room for improvement. For the Bachelor's degrees, resources are at a high standard level and similar among campuses. Yet, for the Master's degree and PhD programme, some available equipment is outdated by today's standards. This is a limiting factor for these researchers to continue to be at the expected level of research and clearly this also limits the capacity of UAC to become a research university. To enhance the programmes' influence and its quality of output, UAC should continue and strengthen its effort to obtain constant access to the latest technologies, especially in the study programmes of Neuroscience and Biomedicine (**see Finding 14**).

Specifically in the Bachelor's programmes under review, teaching staff has an average teaching workload of 24 hours per week. The high teaching burden makes it difficult to develop research areas. Although some academics are progressing in this area (e.g., research in the microbiome and behaviour disorders), research comes mainly from Science Institute members who also support the programme. The experts, therefore, recommend offering teaching load reductions to enable lecturers and professors to conduct research (**Finding 23**).

Within the Master's study programme in Assessment and Intervention ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder, it is important to include well-trained behaviour analysts. At the moment, most of the staff who deliver the Masters in ABA and ASD are Speech and Language therapists, rather than Board Certified Behaviour Analysts (BCBA). Staff should be encouraged to pursue behaviour analytic qualifications and future appointments should prioritise well-trained behaviour analysts (**Finding 24**).

As for human resources (administrative, teaching and professional) they demonstrate training, education and suitability for the performance of their respective functions. Specifically, in the teaching aspect, they have different established positions and functions, which can be accessed and promoted through pre-established competitions for said positions.

## Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## 6. Learning resources and student support / Support and research environment

### **Bachelor's/Master's degree**

*Appropriate facilities and resources are available for learning and teaching activities.*

*Guidance and support is available for students which includes advice on achieving a successful completion of their studies.*

[ESG 1.6]

### **Doctoral degree**

*Guidance and support are available for students which include advice on achieving a successful completion of their studies.*

*Appropriate facilities and resources are available for learning and research activities.*

[ESG 1.6]

### **Description**

The university collects student fees with the undergraduate fees making out the largest part of its finances. However, according to the SER, the highest percentage of students (depending on the different programmes up to 81%) benefit from a free waiver programme, a so-called gratuity, from the Chilean government, that covers the tuition fees for the total duration of the degree. Whereas tuition fees for graduate students are the students' responsibility, they, too, have possibilities to lessen their fees, such as scholarships for those, who have graduated from an undergraduate degree from the Universidad Autónoma de Chile, employees of companies that have current agreements with the university, have a degree grade that equals or is higher than 5.5 or who would have to spend more than 50% of their gross monthly income on tuition fees.

All programmes have access to classrooms with different capacities and a clinical simulation centre they share with other programmes of the faculty. Additionally, the different programmes have laboratories facilitating their needs: Nutrition and Dietetics has four educational spaces and laboratories (bromatology, dietetic sciences, body composition, nutritional care box); Kinesiology five (therapeutic gymnasium, kinesiology lab, exercise lab, exercise physiology, movement analysis, physiotherapy). At the campus in Temuco there is also has a kinesiology clinic. For the graduate level advanced experimental research laboratories in the area of Biomedical Sciences are available as well as a physical space for their rest and research development, which has twelve computers at their full disposal and a priority room for the teaching of the PhD with capacity for ten people with adequate furniture. The ICB room is also available for PhD teaching and has a capacity for eight people and is equipped in the same way as the PhD teaching room.

In regard to experimental work students can use the infrastructure of the ICB in Santiago, which has a physical plant of 800 m<sup>2</sup>, where laboratories, cell culture rooms, bacterial culture rooms, fungus culture room, microscopy room, PCR work area, animal procedure room, surgery and stereotaxis room, electrophysiology room, bioinformatics laboratory are available. Although the programme is taught at the Santiago site, infrastructure and equipment at the other sites can be made available if necessary. Thus, Talca has 200 m<sup>2</sup> of laboratory space for the development of research in molecular biology, immunology, metabolism and bioinformatics, and Temuco has 400 m<sup>2</sup> of laboratories for cell culture, microbiology, molecular biology, among others; in addition to 3,793 m<sup>2</sup> and 2,153 m<sup>2</sup> respectively in the library.

According to the SER, the library system includes collections of basic and complementary bibliography books, general collection including recreational literature as well as individual and group study rooms, computers and six 32" screens for presentations. The library collection is composed of physical and digital books, scientific and technical journals and has subscriptions to specialised and multidisciplinary databases in addition to 16 specialised databases in Health Sciences.

Student support is mostly university-coordinated for the undergraduate study programmes: the Directorate of Student Affairs is responsible for students' needs, extracurricular matters, family/personal/psychological/economic and health difficulties. The SER also mentions the Student Finance Support Office, which coordinates public entities that provide resources. Furthermore, the Complementary Academic Support System is responsible for academic support such as an orientation programme to welcome 1<sup>st</sup> year students and organising mentoring (by 2<sup>nd</sup> year student or higher).

Postgraduate students are not part of this system but have other instances of support such as direct communication via regular meetings, e.g. with the postgraduate management team.

## Experts' evaluation

### Student Support

Throughout the student life cycle, students benefit from a wide array of support mechanisms. During the application phase, prospective students have various opportunities to get in touch with administrative and teaching staff. Students are given adequate access to information about the programmes, specialised information sessions are often presented, and all services are provided in an uncomplicated, low-threshold manner. New students are welcomed with introductory lectures and courses on a variety of subjects that are necessary for foundational orientation. A notable peer mentorship programme is established where new students receive tailored guidance by other students.

Throughout their studies, students are supported by teaching staff who offer scheduled consultation hours on a regular basis. Furthermore, financial support as well as mental support services are in place. The very well-structured student advisory services that are accessible to students appear to be a stronghold of all UAC campuses.

During the talks with different status groups, it became evident that UAC actively supports practical placements and internships. Students benefit from individualized counseling by the internship coordinator in the relevant programmes in order to get matched to a suitable placement both in terms of location and interest. During the final-year clinical internships, students are paired with an academic tutor and a clinical tutor who collaborate on-site. The lively interaction between the student and the tutor includes coaching, direction, and support. The experts praise UAC for establishing clinics in close proximity of the campuses where students profit from this individualized learning setting.

These different offers result in a very low drop-out rate. Outside of their general study plan, students can join the "Science Initiation Programme". This is an opportunity to begin research from earlier stages and motivate students into science.

Post-graduate students are supported in gaining hard and soft skills through workshops and modules, including writing academic papers, acquiring research funding, and teaching/mentoring other students. In order to broaden and intensify international collaboration and exchange, English language courses should be offered and promoted to all UAC students (see **Finding 22**).

In terms of financial support, bachelor students benefit from the national fee-waiver programme enabling more socioeconomically diverse student cohorts. Master and PhD students have the opportunity to apply for internal and external funding for their tuition fees and receive help from the university when applying for scholarships. Mobility grants for studying abroad are in place; however, student would benefit if they were adapted more profoundly to the students' needs. It is recommended that the scholarships application dates are extended and that students can apply to funding more regularly, e.g. twice yearly. Also, it is recommended to consider the destination country with its living costs when determining the amount of funding. The grants could be disbursed to students before starting their stay abroad, rather than when they return to UAC (**Finding 25**).

### Learning resources, university facilities

The visited libraries were spacious and modern. Additionally, to academic journals and books on-site, digitalised access to international and national data banks and sources are possible. Workplaces with and without computer access are available in a sufficient number. Recreational literature is available on-site. The library offered a great variety of non-academic books and journals.

Generally, and especially for the Bachelor's programmes under review, UAC is well equipped. For these programmes it is important to mention that laboratory resources and equipment are comparable in all campuses, even if some were recently renewed and others were not. The good infrastructure has also been a key element in opening new opportunities to students in different labour markets. For instance, in the Nutrition and Dietetics programme, students are well-trained in the food industry market.

For the Master in Neuroscience and PhD in Biomedicine, basic equipment in the laboratories is available. However, as previously stated, the experts recommend finding and guaranteeing possibilities to access state of the art technologies for conducting more modern research (see **Finding 14**).

Apart from facilities for their studies, the different campuses offer students open spaces, indoors and outdoors, to meet, learning spaces for group activities, as well as sports facilities to also spend part of their leisure time on campus. Sun sheltered spaces were also in place. These recreation areas on the campuses in Temuco and Santiago were arranged nicely and look inviting. A canteen is also available and was made use of. Altogether UAC offers students well equipped campuses and preferable student support with the intention to enable students a smooth and successful learning experience.

### **Conclusion**

The criterion is partially fulfilled.

## **7. Information / Public information**

### **Bachelor's/Master's degree**

*Impartial and objective, up-to-date information regarding the programme and its qualifications is published regularly. This published information is appropriate for and available to relevant stakeholders.*

[ESG 1.8]

### **Doctoral degree**

*Impartial and objective, up-to-date information regarding the programme and its qualifications is published regularly. This published information is appropriate for and available to relevant stakeholders.*

[ESG 1.8]

### **Description**

According to the SER, the website and the different social networks provide all information to the interested community. The dissemination of information is implemented institutionally, following the aim to position the university within the higher education system.

The Official Information Management is responsible for keeping information up to date and guaranteeing the quality assurance mechanisms for this information. Information given by this unit include the academic offer, access and graduate profiles, policies and main regulations, external assessment results and the complaint and suggestion form, amongst others.

Additionally, the Public Information Procedure publishes more detailed information about the programmes, such as the ILOs, qualifications awarded, admission requirements and the selection procedure, teaching, learning and assessment procedures, as the SER states.

### Experts' evaluation

The website covers a vast amount of information, mainly targeting the needs of students. It is reasonably structured and easy to navigate. Pumín, the virtual assistant, is a nice way to be guided through the website and to find answers to upcoming questions. Information about the campuses and the study programmes they offer is easily found and extensive. The experts found that the information provided is up to date.

However, particularly considering the future ambitions of the university, the landing page does not supply an English text or a visible way to change to an English version. The pages in English are not easily found though basic information in English is available. The possibility to switch to an English version should be offered on the front page for those who do not understand Spanish at all. For interested prospective students, national as well as international exchange students, it can be difficult to find information about a relevant contact person (**Finding 26**).

It is positive to remark that information about opportunities to go abroad is provided and can be found quite easily. Whereas the experts welcome the page on UAC's exchange universities, they strengthen the importance to keep this information up to date.

Basic information, including the description of quality management at UAC, is available in English, but more and more pages should gradually be translated and offered in an English version. In the manual for international students, information about possible accommodation, etc. should be added as these are frequent and important questions for foreign students (**Finding 27**).

For the PhD-programme: via the website only rudimentary information about investigation projects can be found; recent publications are not available. Only a rough overview over the four lines of investigation is provided. The responsables of the PhD study programme should revise the programme's homepage to include all important information as well as a list of recent publications. Information about the investigation groups is only given in Spanish. Especially the pages regarding investigation should be available in English in order to attract international students and to encourage an international professional exchange. The connection to platforms like Research Gate should be maintained and updated regularly as in the time of the review during different attempts that has not been the case (see **Finding 26**).

Even though employment/vacancy information is accessible via the website, this information is strictly targeted at alumni. For (potential) employers, no special approach to relevant information is provided this way. In the future, a subpage for (potential) employers and an accordingly arranged offer of information might be an idea worth considering.

The panel of experts found that UAC is present in all relevant social media which seems to be an important factor also to students. All in all, with the above-mentioned comments, the website is a well-equipped tool to provide up-to-date information covering the aspects as stated in the SER.

### Conclusion

The criterion is fulfilled.

## V. Recommendation of the panel of experts

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The panel of experts recommends accrediting the study programmes “Nutrition and Dietetics (Bachelor)”, “Kinesiology (Bachelor)”, “Neuroscience (Master)”, “Master in Assessment and Intervention ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder (Master), and “Biomedical Science (PhD)” offered by Universidad Autónoma de Chile with conditions.

Findings:

1. For the Nutrition and Dietetics programme more professional ILOs on "dietetics have to be incorporated and consequently reflected in the teaching to reflect the current title of the study programme.
2. For the Nutrition and Dietetics programme an action plan on its “assistance programme” is required indicating all steps of the process.
3. For the Nutrition and Dietetics programme the experts recommend implementing a thesis at the end of the study programme.
4. For the Nutrition and Dietetics programme the experts recommend introducing more methodological and research-oriented courses and opportunities to apply this knowledge throughout the study programme.
5. For the Kinesiology programme the experts recommend enlarging the number of opportunities of internships that involve experiences in different health systems to expose students to different realities of the patients they attend to.
6. For the Assessment and intervention ABA (Applied Behaviour Analysis) in autism spectrum disorder programme the experts recommend developing possibilities to support students gaining more practical experience through a service that helps them finding appropriate external placements and/or through adding supervised practice opportunities campus, e.g. such as the simulation clinic.
7. For the Neuroscience programme the experts recommend including dedicated modules for Neuropathology and Neuroimmunology into the study programme.
8. For the Neuroscience programme the study programme must demonstrate how it assures that students are acquainted with up to date methods, such as generation sequencing (NGS), single-cell NGS, digital PCR, analysis of whole genome sequencing data, whole genome methylation data, RNA-Sequencing data and Microbiome data.
9. For the Neuroscience programme the requirements for the thesis should be further developed to encourage writing dissertations in English to be better prepared for an internationally oriented PhD or postdoc programme.
10. The Biomedical Science programme should develop an action plan how to prepare its students for international postdoc positions.
11. The Biomedical Science programme must run its courses and seminars in English and particularly consider requiring PhD thesis to be produced in English language.
12. The Biomedical Science programme should implement measures to assure that PhD thesis are more complete and include background information on the topic or the general interest of it.
13. The Biomedical Science programme should consider prolonging the time period dedicated to the PhD thesis within the study programme.
14. For the Biomedical Science programme UAC should find ways to ensure its students and staff have constant access to modern technologies that allow them to use the latest methods in their field of study.
15. For all programmes the experts recommend implementing a structured process how students are informed of survey results and measurements taken because of these results.
16. All study programmes should consider further developing the form of their surveys concerning its granularity, frequency, scope and questions, possibly including free-text fields.



17. The Nutrition and Dietetics programme must ensure transparency concerning the minimum grade to pass a course, e.g. through adding it to the course handbook.
18. For the Nutrition and Dietetics programme as well as the Master in Assessment and Intervention ABA in Autism Spectrum Disorder the study programmes should ensure that the individual participation of each student in the Degree Seminar is visible through a designated procedure or instrument.
19. The Bachelor programmes should consider becoming more involved in the students' practical stage of their education in the 5<sup>th</sup> year or respectively the transparency in the certification should be increased clearly indicating what is part of the academic responsibility of the university.
20. The experts recommend providing graduates with a document that better explains the obtained qualifications and programme learning outcomes also in the context of the higher education system.
21. To guarantee the continuation of the quality of the study programmes in the future, the experts recommend extending the amount of full time-professors.
22. The study programmes should offer English classes to its teaching staff and students, promote these courses and encourage all university members to improve their language skills.
23. The experts recommend offering teaching load reductions to enable lecturers and professors to conduct research.
24. The university should include more well-trained behaviour analysts. This can be achieved by
  - a) encouraging and enabling current teaching staff to pursue behaviour analytic qualifications
  - b) prioritise well-trained behaviour analysts in future appointments.
25. The experts recommend to further develop the financial support mechanisms available to students also considering the regularity with which funds are distributed and the point in time when a student receives their grant.
26. The university should update its homepage
  - A. to include important information on all programmes
  - B. to include an easily accessible English version of the homepage
  - C. to include an easy to find list of contact persons for all stakeholders
  - D. and ensure it is kept up-to-date at all times.
27. The faculty should update its manual for international students to make sure all important questions are addressed and all essential information for international students is provided.