

**INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS****ASSESSMENT REPORT****HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION: TARTU HEALTH CARE COLLEGE**

<b>STUDY PROGRAMME GROUP</b>	<b>Health care</b>
<b>ACADEMIC CYCLE</b>	<b>Master's studies</b>

<b>STUDY PROGRAMME</b>	<b>Health Sciences (Nurse-Specialist)</b>
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**COMPOSITION OF ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE:**

**Josette Denekens** – Chair; Emeritus Professor in General Practice, Head of the Department of General Practice, former Vice Rector at the University of Antwerp, Belgium

**Ruud Heijnen** – Zuyd University of Applied Sciences (Zuyd Hogeschool) in Heerlen, Faculty of Health. Coordinator of international cooperation for the faculty of health; Program coordinator for the master program Advanced Health Care (in development); National and international auditor for health care

Education, the Netherlands

**Margus Viigimaa** – Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine, Director of the Institute of Cardiovascular Medicine, Tallinn University of Technology; Head of the Centre of Cardiology, North Estonia Medical Centre, Estonia

**Samin Sedghi Zadeh** – student member; Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Turin, Italy

**PERIOD OF EVALUATION: January – April 2018**

**DATE ASSESSMENT REPORT SENT TO INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION: 19 March 2018**

**DATE COMMENTS RECEIVED FROM INSTITUTION UNDER EVALUATION: 23.03.2018**

**ASSESSMENT BY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE: THE QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION PARTIALLY CONFORMS TO A REQUIRED STANDARD**

**INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS****Comments:**

The Master in Health Sciences (Nurse–Specialist) complies with the requirements and standards of Master level studies and the quality of studies provided in chapter 6 of the Standard of Higher Education and with the level 7 of the European Quality Framework.

There is clearly a need and wide support for opening the Master level studies in Nurse–Specialist.

After reading the preparatory documents and hearing the different discussion groups, the Committee is convinced that the Master of Nurse–Specialist will create a new profile of nurses needed for the labour market in the health care system in the near future and to provide a body of research for the profession of nursing. The study programme will contribute to the fulfilment of the mission of the educational institution and will achieve its objectives. Employers and other stakeholders are involved in the study programme development.

Even more, this Master’s programme should deliver nurses with competences as leadership, change agents, innovators, and researchers. The Committee is of the opinion that these roles should be made more explicit in the learning outcomes and that also in the teaching and learning activities these roles, and especially the role as collaborator, should more be elaborated. In this respect, the question arises whether the title Master in Nurse–Specialist is the right title. The question arises whether this Master’s programme should be open also for other professions such as physiotherapists, social workers, occupational therapists etc.

There is an excellent body of teachers to launch and deliver the programme. According to the planning there is an intention to share teaching staff with Tallinn Health Care College, mainly with PhD as well as with other collaboration partners. There is collaboration with the University of Tartu to guarantee as much as possible opportunities to do research for the teachers and to involve students in research. The Committee is worried that the total amount of FTE of teachers will not be enough to cover all the teaching and coaching activities in the Master’s programme.

The available infrastructure is outstanding.

The financial resources are sufficient according to the rector and vice rectors.

To further develop the programme, the College should consider the recommendations below:

- Manifest your unique profile to the society
- Make cooperation with Tallinn Health Care College possible at the course level of the study programme with individual teachers
- Consider a Master in Health Sciences more broadly that is open not only for nurses but also for other Bachelor graduates who are caregivers as social

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workers, physiotherapists etc. Broaden your vision and create in a proactive manner an interdisciplinary master in health sciences, accessible for more professions. Such interdisciplinary Master programme will respond even better to the needs of the health care system in the future.

- Make use of / broaden your international contacts to obtain more insight in international evolutions in the field of education in health sciences especially in team-based learning and in developmental issues in the health care systems. In such a way you can take the lead in the developments and innovations for your health care system, for better quality of care for the patients, for society.
- Consider part-time delivery of the study programme
- More consideration should be given to additional support (extra staff, at least 2 FTE with PhD degree) to guarantee sufficient supervisors for the developmental plans and the Master examination/Master thesis
- Incorporate in the agreements with the different internship places the need for support systems concerning teaching and learning at the internship workplaces, including allocated time
- Develop a quality assurance system for the internship places including an ombudsman/woman for the students.

**ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE CONSISTING OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:**

**Josette Denekens** – Chair; Emeritus Professor in General Practice, Head of the Department of General Practice, former Vice Rector at the University of Antwerp, Belgium

**Ruud Heijnen** – Zuyd University of applied sciences in Heerlen, Faculty of Health. Coordinator of international cooperation for the faculty of health; Program coordinator for the master program Advanced Health Care; National and international auditor for health care Education, the Netherlands

**Margus Viigimaa** – Professor of Cardiovascular Medicine, Director of the Institute of Cardiovascular Medicine, Tallinn University of Technology; Head of the Centre of Cardiology, North Estonia Medical Centre, Estonia

**Samir Sedghi Zadeh** – student member; Faculty of Medicine and Surgery, University of Turin, Italy

**APPROVED THE ASSESSMENT 4 VOTES IN FAVOUR AND 0 VOTES AGAINST:**

**ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE CHAIR: Josette Denekens, 27.03.2018**

**INITIAL ASSESSMENT OF STUDY PROGRAMME GROUPS****REQUIREMENTS FOR QUALITY OF INSTRUCTION****1. Study Programme and Organisation of Studies**

<b>REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>EVIDENCE GATHERED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
<p>The study programme is based on the needs of the labour market and target groups, and contributes to fulfilling the mission of the educational institution and achieving its objectives.</p>	<p>Study programme; the development plan of the educational institution, development plans of specific fields and structural units; discussions with the management of the College, with the developers of the programme and with the employers and representatives of cooperation partners</p>	<p>Improving availability of nursing and midwifery services is one of the primary goals of the “Estonian Nursing and Midwifery Development Strategy for 2011-2022” composed in 2011 by the Estonian Nurses Union and Estonian Midwives Association.</p> <p>The Strategy 2011-2022 emphasises also the need for active research for advancement of evidence-based nursing and to focus on systematic research and development.</p> <p>A survey conducted in 2016 among graduates of nursing specialisation shows that the professional responsibility of the nurses is increasing in the field: 48% are involved in teaching and 44% are involved in innovation of the professional field.</p> <p>A survey was done in 2015 among hospital nurse managers. This survey reveals that nurse specialists are needed in the future in conducting independent nurse appointments to obtain improvement of service availability for patients, especially for patients with chronic diseases.</p> <p>Also in the primary level health care centres there will be, in the future, more demand for nurse specialists according to the OSKA health care report of 2017.</p> <p>Other sectors with more demand in the future are the independent stationary nursing services and the emergency medical services.</p> <p>A survey among graduates of nursing specialisation confirms the interest towards more in-depth specialisation studies for nurses with 73% of</p>

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		<p>respondents finding that specialised nursing should be taught at a Master's level.</p> <p>Last but not least, the students and graduates are interested in nursing specialisation training and broader opportunities for Master's studies as is shown in 2016 at Tartu Health Care College where 122 graduates of the nursing and midwifery curriculum were asked to describe freely their plans for the next five years. 81% was planning to continue their studies, 30% was interested in nursing education specialisation curriculum and 30% want to continue their study at Master's level.</p> <p>Thus, in conclusion we can say that there is a need for more specialised nurses in the field. The question, however, is whether this Master will only be a specialist in his or her own field or will he/she show a new, broader profile of the specialised nurse with more generic competencies as leadership, innovator, collaborator.</p>
Employers and other stakeholders of the study programme group are involved in the study programme development.	Study programme; the development plan of the educational institution, development plans of specific fields and structural units; discussions with the management of the College, with the developers of the program and with the employers and representatives of the partners	The Master programme in Health Sciences (Nurse-Specialist) was developed in cooperation of Tallinn and Tartu Health Care Colleges, the University of Tartu, Estonian Nurses Union, employers and graduates. A joint council was formed, including representatives of the Health Care Colleges, Estonian Nurses Union and the University of Tartu. Demand for a Master's programme in health science for educating nurses has been approved by nurse managers of Estonian health care establishments, Estonian Nurses Union and representatives of Ministry of Social Affairs.
The title of the study programme is consistent with its content.	Study programme	<p>The name of the programme "nurse-specialist" is perhaps not broad enough to implement/cover the developments and the needs in the health care system in the near future.</p> <p>More explicit attention should be given in the programme to competences as leadership and collaboration, inter-professional learning, team-based</p>

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		<p>learning.</p> <p>The stakeholders not only ask for a nurse specialist, but also for health professionals with competencies regarding leadership, innovation, collaboration, change management.</p> <p>In the profession, the nurses work in inter-professional teams and especially the training in these inter-professional teams will be a great challenge in the future to be competent to implement innovations in the health care system.</p> <p>Therefore, the profile of this master graduate can be/should be broader in the opinion of the Committee. In that respect, the title “Master in Health Sciences” would perhaps be better and opens the possibility for masters in physiotherapy, social care etc. and not only masters in nursing specialists.</p>
<p>The objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme are formulated in such a way that they provide a basis for evaluating the knowledge and skills of graduates of that study programme.</p>	<p>Study programme documentation: Development Plan; Curriculum description; examples of modules; discussions with the developers of the programme and teaching staff</p>	<p>The study programme consists of 90 ECTS, divided over 3 semesters. The curriculum contains 3 modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- development of profession and management 30ECTS</li> <li>- Speciality module 45 ECTS (to choose from clinical nursing, intensive care nursing, mental health nursing and health nursing. In every module there is 15 ECTS for internship</li> <li>- Master’s degree examination 15 ECTS</li> </ul> <p>The programme fulfils the requirements of the official documents that regulate the opening of a Master programme.</p> <p>The learning outcomes meet the level 7 criteria of the EQF.</p> <p>The learning outcomes are clear, though they are formulated very broadly and not as competencies. It is recommended to the College to revise and reformulate some of the learning outcomes in such a way that the intended level of knowledge, skills and behaviour is very clear and in line with the professional status and that they can be tested at the level of competences.</p>

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		<p>The Committee suggests to make more explicit the role of collaborator and especially the competences of team-learning and inter-professional collaboration.</p> <p>In summary: all the learning outcomes of all parts of the programme should be in line with the general aims (core values of the programme). The worldwide well known and often used CANMEDS-model could be helpful in this process.</p>
<p>The objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme are equal and comparable to the learning outcomes of the academic cycles of higher education as described in Annex 1 to the Standard of Higher Education.</p>	<p>Study programme; Annex 1 to the Standard of Higher Education; the analysis by the educational institution on the compatibility of learning outcomes with the Standard of Higher Education</p>	<p>The detailed table of the learning outcomes of the study programme makes clear that the learning outcomes are equal and comparable with the learning outcomes of academic cycles of higher education as described in Annex 1 to the Standard of Higher education.</p> <p>The final assessment in the programme is not assessed by a Master thesis but by a combination of a development project and a presentation of a critical analysis of a research report. This issue is often discussed in the development of the programme and well elaborated. The Committee thinks the way research competencies are assessed shows a good alternative for a thesis and the graduate really meets the required standards of level 7. Tartu HCC is active in incorporating external and even international examiners, though there is still a way to go regarding this aim.</p>

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<p>Forms of study and student workload for independent work and practical training support the achievement of objectives of the study programme.</p>	<p>Study programme</p>	<p>The college has provided additional information about learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment formats for each course in the curriculum. In this way the Committee was able to see the consistency between learning outcomes, teaching and learning activities and assessment. The assessment methods give evidence to assure that learning has taken place. The learning outcomes all appear to encourage independent and autonomous learning.</p> <p>The management started to select and prepare the learning environments for the internships in the different workplaces and is making agreements with the supervisors at different workplaces.</p> <p>The master examination module is well constructed and meets the requirements of Estonian legislation. Grading is clearly stated in the course documentation.</p> <p>The Committee finds it a pity that there is not a master thesis done by each student and hopes that in the future the master examination will be replaced by doing research by the students themselves in the format of an individual master thesis. In this respect more consideration should be given to additional support from university in the first years in order to guarantee sufficient research topics and to provide sufficient supervisors for the developmental plan and the master examination/master thesis. In the mean time more PhD nurse-specialists have to be appointed for this master. In this way the research basis for the programme can grow in the near future.</p> <p>The assessment formats for the different courses and modules are well described and are given an overview of the different formats for assessment, written exams, OSCE's, portfolio etc.</p> <p>The recommendations of the assessment report of 2016 shows that there is a need for external examiners to obtain parity in marking. In this respect, there is an urgent need to do the master examination in English. This also</p>
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		<p>applies for the developmental plan that has to be made by the students.</p> <p>More international teachers should be involved in the teaching and learning activities and especially in the processes of assessment</p> <p>More attention should be paid at the proficiency in academic English of the students. It could be necessary to give a course in academic writing to ensure that students are sufficiently proficient in writing in English</p> <p>The delivery of a part time form of the study should be considered as this would probably encourage and enable more applicants to start this Master programme.</p>
<p>The study programme meets the requirements and trends in international legislation that regulates the professional field and, if a professional standard exists, takes into consideration the acquisition and implementation of the knowledge and skills described therein. In professional higher education, study programmes of a study programme group are related to a specific vocation.</p>	<p>Study programme; international legislation regulating the corresponding professional field</p>	<p>The study programme meets the requirements and trends in international legislation that regulates the professional field of nursing. The document of the Master programme in Health Sciences (Nurse-Specialist) gives an overview of the different documents supporting the curriculum (Institutions of Professional Higher Education Act, Framework requirements for nurse, development plan for nursing education, Principles of nurses' specialist training, Statutes of Tartu Health Care Colleges, Statute of Curricula of Professional Higher Education at Tartu Health Care College, Strategic plan for Nursing and Midwifery in Estonia, Code of Ethics of international Council of Nurses for Nurses, developmental trends of Estonian Health Care until 2020, Population Health development plan, 2009-2020, Estonian Life Long Learning Strategy 2020, Directive of European Parliament and Council 2005/36/EU, recognition of professional qualifications, 7.09.2005)</p>

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<p>The master degree programme of an institution of professional higher education is developed as a continuation of the study programme of professional higher education in the same field of study.</p>	<p>Study programme</p>	<p>To enter the Master programme, a Bachelor of nursing is required. The Master's programme is actually a fluent continuation of the Basic Nursing Education programme at the professional higher education level in Tartu HCC.</p> <p>The question is raised to broaden the entrance for other professionals and to create an inter-professional master (including a broader offer of specialty modules).</p>
<p>The organisation of studies is regulated and takes into consideration the specifics of the study programme group; recognition of prior learning and work experiences is regulated as well.</p>	<p>The document regulating the organisation of studies and the policy for recognising prior learning and work experiences; specific examples of recognising prior learning and work experiences at the educational institution obtained during the site visit</p>	<p>The study regulations constitute the document regulating the organisation and relationships of students at Tartu Health Care College, the Republic of Estonia and the European Union.</p> <p>Recognition of prior learning and work experiences is regulated and quality is assured by following the quality requirements of studies at the College.</p>
<p>The organisation of practical training is clearly regulated, the requirements for implementing practical training are determined, and preliminary agreements with practical training facilities are in place.</p>	<p>Regulations for practical training; preliminary agreements with practical training facilities</p>	<p>The organisation of practical training is clearly regulated, the requirements for implementing practical training are determined and preliminary agreements with practical training facilities are in place. Negotiations with institutions (hospitals, primary care setting, prevention settings etc.) are on-going.</p> <p>In the quality manual the process of organisation of practical training is well described.</p> <p>General aims, learning outcomes, possible internship institutions and supervising lecturer will be introduced at the beginning of the studies. Two weeks before internship exact internship place is confirmed. The evaluation and feedback is thoroughly described in the quality manual.</p> <p>Training for practical training of supervisors is in place (25 learners per group, 40 academic hours) and learning outcomes, teaching and learning</p>

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		activities, assessment, evaluation and feedback are well elaborated in the document.
Students are provided with counselling (study, career, and psychological counselling).		Students are provided with counseling. There are 4 Student Advisors who council students regarding study organisation related issues (problems, questions). If necessary the Student Advisors refer to the Curriculum Coordinator, the psychologist or another specialist to get help. According to the different discussion groups the system works very well.

**2. Teaching Staff**

<b>REQUIREMENTS</b>	<b>EVIDENCE GATHERED</b>	<b>COMMENTS</b>
Qualifications of the teaching and research staffs involved meet the requirements established in legislation as well as those arising from the specifics of a study programme group and the academic cycle of higher education. The educational institution has entered into binding contracts with its teaching staff to conduct studies.	Information about the teaching staff involved; agreements with the members of the teaching staff	<p>The qualifications of the academic staff members involved in the master's program show 6 (24%) having a PhD and 12 (48%) having an MSc degree and 7 of them have another level of higher education (28%).</p> <p>Of the 11 staff members working full time at Tartu College, only 1 of them holds a PhD degree (no research publications in last 5 years) and 3 are PhD students In the future the ratio PhD/MSc will grow thanks to an active policy to give more staff members the opportunity to do PhD studies (the actual situation is that, in total, 5 or 6 are doing a PhD).</p> <p>According to the teachers and the management, the capacity of the staff to guide students in their masters' examination is sufficient. Also, the capacity of the College to find clinical placements and adequate supervisors is sufficient.</p>

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The level and extent of research and development by the teaching and research staffs involved are adequate to teach in the corresponding academic cycle of higher education and to supervise student research.	Information about research and development activities by the teaching staff (the Estonian Research Information System ETIS, or additional information provided by the educational institution)	The department is involved in many development projects (according to the document “Development projects 2008-2017”), many of them in combination with research activities. In the period 2007-2018, 34 applied researches have been completed in the College, resulting in many more publications and presentations, though only 3 of them in high level research publications. This is a concern for the committee.  15 of these researches and development projects are still ongoing. Many of the teachers planned to be involved in the Master’s programme have contributed to these studies.
The teaching staff involved have an adequate teaching competency.	Information gathered during the visit (discussion with the Head of the department and the developers of the program)	The staff members showed all good understanding of the required teaching competencies. The instructional design, based on the profile of the Master graduates, was clearly explained as a “student centred” approach. The competency assessment programme was in line with the didactical design of the curriculum, although attention should be paid to clear formulation of required outcomes of the assessments.
The number of members of ordinary teaching and research staffs involved – based on their responsibilities, workload and the number of supervised students – is adequate for achieving the objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme(s) in a given study programme group.	Information about qualifications as well as research and development activities of the teaching staff involved	The total number of staff that will be involved in the programme is 26: 11 of them teaching full time at Tartu HCC, one with 0,5 teaching load and 14 will be included on the basis of authorisation agreements.  The staff members involved in the masters programme are mainly (almost completely) recruited from the team of teachers of the nursing department. Some external expert teachers are added, coming from regional and local institutes and from Tallinn Health Care College. In spring 2018 during the teachers’ hiring process two more nursing teachers (clinical nursing and mental health nursing) with full time equivalent will be employed. Approximately 3.5 FTEs are allocated for running the Master’s programme, based on a group of 60 students starting in September 2018.

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The teaching staff involved are aware of the objectives of the study programme and their roles in achieving them.	Information gathered during the visit (discussions with the Head of the department and the developers of the program and with the teaching staff and with the employers and cooperation partners)	<p>From all sides the main objectives for the new Master's programme is described as high level educated health workers who are able to lead new research-based developments.</p> <p>The whole team is informed and supports the plan for the new curriculum. The teachers involved in the Master's program have intensively discussed the content of the programme and the didactical approach.</p> <p>The generic outcomes of the study programme, however, need further elaboration and discussion in the group. Not everyone is aware of the fact that competency areas such as leadership, change management and inter-professional collaboration, are explicitly targeted. The objectives related to research and the specialization are all well addressed, but "new" competency areas seem to be covered too little.</p>
The ordinary teaching and research staffs of the educational institution have undergone the required evaluation. The educational institution provides its teaching staff with opportunities for their professional and individual development.	The procedure for evaluation; additional information obtained during the site visit	Staff evaluation is part of the standard quality assurance system of the Tartu Health Care College.

**3. Resources**

REQUIREMENTS	EVIDENCE GATHERED	COMMENTS
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<p>The educational institution ensures that financial resources necessary for conducting studies are available and prepares a strategy for acquiring them (prepares risk analyses and financial forecasts that include a calculation of the cost of a student place, takes into account the risks arising from the operational environment, and uses other appropriate measures to ensure the resources).</p>	<p>Tangible resources and financial information of the educational institution, and the information about the infrastructure of the study programme group; the risk analysis and financial projection; meeting with management, employers</p>	<p>Financial resources necessary for conducting studies are available. The Ministry of Education and Research is providing funds to the College. The employers expressed the willingness to support students.</p> <p>However, the sustainability of financial resources necessary for conducting the programme must be ensured.</p>
<p>There are facilities (lecture halls, laboratories, seminar rooms, rooms for students' independent work) necessary for educational activities, as well as for research and development related to doctoral studies, which are furnished and equipped adequately and are up to date to achieve the objectives of study programmes; or there are specific existing financial decisions/ projects to finance the additional needs.</p>	<p>Tangible resources and financial information of the educational institution, and the information about the infrastructure of the study programme group</p>	<p>All necessary rooms and infrastructure for study, research and developmental activities are in place. Rooms of the study building (lecture and seminar rooms, skills labs, staff rooms, the library etc.) support effectively educational and research activities, enabling the use of various study methods and independent learning of students. Learning environment in the seminar rooms can be modified to facilitate work in small groups. There are four rooms equipped with computers at the disposal of teachers that are suitable for individual or small group tutoring. Simulation room is suitably equipped and used by students with supervisors.</p>
<p>Means of information technology and communications between national and international communication networks – needed for educational activities as well as for research and development related to doctoral studies – are available.</p>	<p>Tangible resources and financial information of the educational institution, and the information about the infrastructure of the study programme group</p>	<p>Lecture and seminar rooms are equipped with modern technical devices (computer, video projector, document camera and smart board). Teachers are using equipment of the rooms in order most efficiently to achieve the learning outcomes. In order to conduct lectures for big student groups the lectures can be transmitted into several rooms.</p> <p>E-learning platforms such as “Moodle” are available for teachers and students to facilitate independent work and educational activities.</p>
<p>The educational institution ensures that up-to-date information sources</p>	<p>Information about existing information sources (including</p>	<p>Up-to-date information sources needed for teaching, learning and research in the study programme group are available. There are open library,</p>

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(including data bases) needed for teaching, learning and research in the study programme group are available.	data bases) and those to be acquired	information centre, 40 computer stations and Wi-Fi available across the study building. Each staff member has a computer workstation. Online journals are available for both staff and students.
Financial indicators regarding economic sustainability of the educational institution are available to the general public. Annual reports of the educational institution or its organising body are audited, unless otherwise established by law.	The annual report	Financial indicators regarding economic sustainability of the educational institution are available to the public. Annual reports are audited.