

## EVALUATION AND ACCREDITATION DOCUMENTS

### Master of Arts in Criminology

College of criminology

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences  
(NAUSS)

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**June 2025**

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International evaluation and accreditation

## EVALUATION REPORT

### Master of Arts in Criminology

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(NAUSS)

Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh

**March 2025**



The Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) has mandated the Hcéres to perform the evaluation of its Master of Arts in Criminology programme. The evaluation is based on the “External Evaluation Standards” of foreign study programmes, adopted by the Hcéres Board on September 18th 2024. These standards are available on the Hcéres website ([hceres.fr](https://www.hceres.fr)).

In the name of the expert committee<sup>1</sup>:

Philippe Lagrange, President of the committee

In the name of Hcéres<sup>1</sup>:

Coralie Chevallier, President

The High Council for Evaluation of Research and Higher Education (Hcéres) is an independent public authority. It is responsible for evaluating higher education and research institutions, research organisations, research units, and training programmes.

<sup>1</sup>In accordance with articles R. 114-15 and R. 114-10 of the Research Code, evaluation reports are signed by the chairman of the expert committee and countersigned by the President of Hcéres.

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## I. STUDY PROGRAMME IDENTITY SHEET

- University/institution: Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS)
- Component, faculty or department concerned: College of criminology
- Programme's title: Master of arts in criminology
- Training/speciality: Criminology
- Year of creation and context: 2020-2021
- Site(s) where the programme is taught (Town and campus): Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS)

### PROGRAMME DIRECTOR

- Surname, first name: Dr. Munahi Bin Shary
- Profession and grade: Associate Professor, Head of criminology department and director of criminology program
- Main subject taught: criminology

### METHODS AND RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS ACCREDITATION(S)

The university's full institutional accreditation was received in 2024 and will be valid until 2031. The accreditation was delivered by the Saudi Education and Training Evaluation Commission.

### HUMAN AND MATERIAL RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE PROGRAMME

#### Human resources

The teaching staff dedicated to this program included five full Professors and four Associate Professors. They were supported by collaborators from within the university, such as the student affairs, counselling and alumni committee, and research and partnership committee.

#### Material resources

The large campus is equipped with infrastructure at a very high level, with adapted classrooms, a large library, computers and screens in all rooms, and even a gym, swimming pool, small medical clinic, and electric vehicles to move around the campus. The campus also provides housing for both students and professors.

### STUDENT POPULATION: EVOLUTION AND TYPOLOGY OVER THE LAST 4 YEARS

Academic Year	Self funded students		Nominated students		Scholarships		TOTAL	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
<b>2020-2021</b>	17	0	3	0	5	0	25	0
<b>2021-2022</b>	9	0	15	0	3	0	27	0
<b>2022-2023</b>	19	0	13	0	3	0	35	0
<b>2023-2024</b>	27	20	12	4	5	1	44	25

The objective of the university is to increase the total number of students (from 1 000 students currently to 1 500 students by the end of 2029). For this, they will create new programs but also increase the number of students admitted to the existing program. Moreover, they decided to open in 2023-2024 all their programs to women. The nominated students are designed and financed by their professional employers. Students are coming from different countries such as Jordan, Kuwait, Tunisia, Palestine, Somalia, Yemen, Libya, Iraq and Saudi Arabia.

#### Number of applications and students enrolled

Academic Year	2022/2023	2023/2024	2024/2025
Number of Applications	419	1038	384
Number of admitted students	34	64	73

*Statistical Report on the Progress Rates of Students (Through three Years)*

Academic Year	Semester	Enrolled	Withdraw		Graduates	
			Total	%	Total	%
2020-2022	1 <sup>st</sup>	26	1	3.85	23	88.46
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	25	1	3.85		
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	24	1	3.85		
	4 <sup>th</sup>	23	---	---		
2021-2023	1 <sup>st</sup>	25	1	4	23	92
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	24	0	0		
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	24	1	4		
	4 <sup>th</sup>	23	---	---		
2022-2024	1 <sup>st</sup>	32	3	9.38	29	90.63
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	29	---	---		
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	29	---	---		
	4 <sup>th</sup>	29	---	---		

The success rate of students is approximately 90%.

## II. COMPOSITION OF THE EXPERTS PANEL

Chairman:

- Philippe LAGRANGE, Full Professor in Public Law, University of Poitiers

Academic Experts:

- Philippe BONFILS, Full professor in Criminal Law, Aix-Marseille University
- Nicolas HAUPAIS, Full professor in Public Law, University of Paris Saclay
- Raphaëlle PARIZOT, Full professor in Criminal Law, University of Paris 1

Student Expert:

- Gustave BERNARD, Sciences Po Lyon

Hcéres was represented by Professor Evelyne LANDE, Scientific Advisor at Europe and International Department.

### III. EVALUATION PROCESS

#### VISIT DESCRIPTION

- Date of the visit: 27<sup>th</sup> of January to 30<sup>th</sup> of January 2025
- Summary of the proceedings  
For each program: institutional meetings; presentation of the College and its program; meetings with teaching staff, students, management, alumni, and stakeholders (questions and answers); and campus visits.
- Organisation of the visit: see table below
- Cooperation of study programmes and institutions to be accredited: the university and the College organised the visit so that the committee could meet all stakeholders (institutional staff, teaching staff, students, management, alumni) and visit the premises. Everything possible was done to respond to the requests of the committee's experts. The committee was assisted by a translator who translated between Arabic and English.
- Any problems: no

#### PEOPLE MET

##### January, Monday 27<sup>th</sup>

Hour	Interviews
09h00-10h00	<b>Institutional meeting: presentation of the College of Criminology</b> Dean of the Criminology College Consultant of the vice-president for academic affairs Head of criminology department and director of criminology program Head of scientific research and partnership committee at the Criminology College Head of Quality Assurance Committee at the Criminology College Head of Programs and Courses plans Committee at the Criminology College Head of Scientific Research and Partnership Committee of the Criminology College Head of Counselling and Alumni Committee at the Criminology Department
10h00-11h00	<b>Managers of the Master of arts in Criminology</b> Head of Criminology Department & Director of Criminology Program Dean of Admissions and Registration Director of Students Affairs Head of E-learning Department Head of Professional Development Director of Partnerships and International Cooperation Department Regional Centre of Expertise on Drugs and Crime
11h15-12h15	<b>Teaching Staff of the Master of arts in Criminology:</b> representative panel of teaching and research staff in the course: tenured, contract and part-time lecturers from various disciplines, not including those responsible for the degree 7 professors met
12h15-13h15	<b>Students of the Master of arts in Criminology:</b> 9 students met (4 in the first year and 5 in the second year)
14h15-14h45	<b>Top management of NAUSS:</b> President Vice President Vice President for External Resources Vice President for Training
14h45-15h45	<b>Alumni from the Master of arts in Criminology:</b> 6 graduated students met online among them 2 from Saudi Arabia, 2 from Kuwait, 1 from Jordan, 1 from Tunisia
16h00-18h00	<b>Campus visit:</b> Documentary resources, IT equipment, group work rooms, lecture theatres and amphitheatre, students facilities, teachers' offices, clinic, sport equipment.

19h00-21h00	<b>Debriefing Master of arts in Criminology – first conclusion</b>
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### January, Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup>

Hour	Interviews
09h00-10h00	<b>Institutional meeting: Presentation of the Criminal Justice College</b> Deputy dean of the Criminal Justice College Head of Criminal Law Department Director of Criminal Law Program Director of Human Rights Diploma Head of Scientific Research and Partnership Committee at the Criminal Justice College Head of Counselling and Alumni committee at the Criminal Justice College Head of Programmes and courses plans committee at the Criminal Justice College
10h00-11h00	<b>Managers of the Master of Criminal Law and Criminal Sciences – 7 people met</b> Criminal Law Programme directors (3 people) e-learning Department Director of counselling and advertising unit Director of Language Centre Director of the Arab Centre for Technical cooperation in the immigration and borders management
11h15-12h15	<b>Teaching Staff of the Master of Criminal Law and Criminal Sciences:</b> representative panel of teaching and research staff in the course: tenured, contract and part-time lecturers from various disciplines, not including those responsible for the degree 7 professors met
12h15-13h15	<b>Students of the Master of Criminal Law and Criminal Sciences:</b> 7 students met (2 in the first year and 5 in the second year)
14h15-15h15	<b>Academic partners involved in the 3 programmes evaluated-</b> 5 people met online from: The Arab Center for technical cooperation in the immigration and borders management (UN body) Tunis El Manar University Hassan I University Princess Noura Bit Abdulrahman University
15h15-16h00	<b>Non academic partners involved in the 3 programmes evaluated – 3 people online:</b> Assistant public prosecutor for investigation Representative of the general intelligence presidency academic education General manager of the internal audit at the oversight and anti-corruption authority
16h30-18h00	<b>Debriefing Master of Criminal Law and Criminal Sciences – first conclusion</b>

### January, Wednesday 29<sup>th</sup>

Hour	Interviews
09h00-10h00	<b>Managers of Higher diploma in Human Rights and Criminal Justice (5 people met)</b> Consultant of the vice president for Academic Affairs Human Rights Program director Head of Scientific Research and Partnership Committee of the Criminal Law Department Head of Counselling and Alumni Committee at the Criminal Law Department College Head of Quality Assurance Committee at the Criminal Law Department
10h00-11h00	<b>Teaching Staff of the Higher diploma in Human Rights and Criminal Justice:</b> representative panel of teaching and research staff in the course: tenured, contract and part-time lecturers from various disciplines, not including those responsible for the degree 7 professors met
11h15-12h15	<b>Students of the Higher diploma in Human Rights and Criminal Justice:</b> 7 students met
14h00-15h00	<b>Alumni from Higher diploma in Human Rights (1 person met) and Criminal Justice and from Master Criminal Law &amp; Criminal Sciences (6 people met) – partly online</b>
15h00-16h00	<b>Quality Assurance – 4 people met:</b> Head of Quality Assurance and Academic Accreditation Department Head of Measurement and Evaluation Unit Head of Quality Assurance Committee at the Criminal Justice Consultant of the Institutional Accreditation

16h30- 18h00	<b>Debriefing Higher diploma in Human Rights – First conclusion</b>
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### January, Thursday 30th

Hour	Interviews
09h00- 12h00	<b>Finalising reports</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Diagnosis/evaluation</li> <li>- Conclusion</li> <li>- Strengths and weaknesses</li> <li>- Recommendations</li> </ul>
14h00- 16h00	<b>Closing session</b> Vice President Dean of the Criminal Justice College Dean of the Criminology College Head of Criminal Law Department Head of Criminology Department Program Coordinator Criminal Law Director Human Rights Director Supervisor of Quality Assurance Unit Consultant of the Institutional Accreditation Consultant of the Vice President for Academic Affairs

## IV. OVERALL PRESENTATION

### 1 – PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

The Naif Arab University of Security Sciences (NAUSS) is an Arab organisation with legal personality and diplomatic status. It functions as the academic body of the Council of Arab Ministers of the Interior, encompassing 22 Arab countries. The establishment of NAUSS reflects the collective intention of Arab nations to combat criminal activities and bolster criminal justice systems. Initially conceived as a training and research centre, this institution was subsequently redesignated as an "academy" and later as a "university" in 2004. The university campus is situated in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia.

The Master of Arts in Criminology programme was inaugurated in the academic year 2020-2021. This postgraduate course is offered by the Department of Criminology within the College of Criminology at Naif Arab University for Security Sciences and is regarded as one of the distinguished programmes offered by a leading institution in the field of Criminology in the Arab World. The College was established in accordance with the university's strategic plan for 2019-2023, with the objective of preparing qualified personnel in the field of criminology and crime prevention. The College comprises two academic departments: (1) the Department of Criminology, and (2) the Department of Crime Prevention.

The Master of Arts in Criminology programme is distinctive within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as it does not reside within the academic structure of any Saudi public or private university. The NAUSS offers this programme as a means to facilitate connections between students and key governmental, regional, and global security organisations for field visits, and collaborative research. This programme was introduced as an independent academic offering.

The Master of Arts in Criminology programme is designed to equip students with a comprehensive understanding and analytical skills pertaining to criminal phenomena and deviant behaviours, while simultaneously enhancing their capacity to address security and criminal justice issues. This multidisciplinary programme integrates criminology, law, psychology, and sociology, emphasising both regional and international perspectives through collaborations with local and global institutions. The curriculum prioritises professional development by facilitating field visits and partnerships with relevant employers. Furthermore, it focuses on correctional and preventive strategies, aiming to provide graduates with the requisite skills to address crime and enhance community security.

NAUSS is committed to developing its programmes and study plans in collaboration with beneficiaries, particularly the security and justice authorities. The Master of Arts in Criminology was established to address the need for knowledge and understanding in criminology, specifically to combat cybercrime and transnational organised crime. The Master of Arts in Criminology aims to provide students with knowledge and to qualify specialists in the field of criminology. It also aims to address job market needs (security sector) and facilitates connections with the professional world (mobility programme, periods of experience for students in a professional environment, etc.). The programme's objectives were both academic and operational.

### 2 - PRESENTATION OF THE PROGRAMME'S SELF-EVALUATION APPROACH

The self-evaluation report was prepared with the assistance of the quality assurance team. It was subsequently validated by a report from an independent expert.

The report takes the form of a comprehensive document (approximately 70 pages), accompanied by highly informative appendices. These documents are accessible to committee members via a secure platform dedicated to this evaluation.

### 3 – FOLLOW-UP OF THE PREVIOUS HCERES RECOMMANDATIONS

The master's programme is being assessed for the first time by Hcéres.

## V. EVALUATION REPORT

### FIELD 1- TRAINING POLICY AND CHARACTERISATION

**The Master of Arts in Criminology study programme is entirely aligned with the institution's ambitions, pedagogical orientations, and thematic priorities.**

The Master of Arts in Criminology programme aligns with the university's mission to prepare Arab security leaders and experts through interdisciplinary education. This programme offers unique training among Arab countries, which led to the establishment of NAUSS in criminology and security. Moreover, the programme is tailored to meet regional security requirements.

Benefitting from its affiliation with NAUSS, the Master's programme enjoys strong international collaborations. Faculty members are recruited from various Arab nations, and the programme has established partnerships with organisations such as INTERPOL, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, and the International Organization for Migration. These affiliations imbue the training with a practical, professional dimension. The courses organisation effectively balances academic rigour and practical application, integrating numerous research links. During the visit, the synergies between this programme and the Master's programme in Criminal law and Criminal Sciences were clearly elucidated through various panels.

Furthermore, the programme takes into account the socio-economic requirements in the field of security across various Arab nations. NAUSS plays a pivotal role in this domain through its collaborations with international organisations such as INTERPOL and the interior ministries of its partner countries.

**The Master welcomes international students and actively fosters international partnerships.**

NAUSS, as an extension of the Arab Interior Ministers Council representing 22 Arab countries, admits international students exclusively from Arab nations. The programme incorporates both incoming and outgoing student mobility initiatives—with financial assistance available where required—although outgoing exchange opportunities are currently limited.

**The Master's programme develops research connections, such as scientific conferences and workshops, with partner entities. These connections are relevant and provide significant added value.**

The study programme benefits from research links that are closely aligned with the University's research priorities and the interests of key stakeholders, including governmental sectors and academic institutions.

The department is home to highly cited professors who publish in Scopus and Web of Science-indexed journals. Over recent years, the department has seen a consistent increase in the number authored books, studies, and scientific papers, facilitated by the university's open journal systems ([Journals Portal](#)) and open-access publication platforms ([Naif University Press](#)). Research within the programme encompasses a broad range of national security themes—such as counterterrorism, extremism, environmental security, and drug-related issues—as well as applications of artificial intelligence in crime prevention, cybercrime, and cross-border crime. Faculty members actively participate in conferences and publish high-quality research in these areas, with several engaged students receiving local and Arab scientific awards. Numerous workshops, conferences, and seminars in the field of criminology have been conducted, including events organised by the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the American Society of Criminology, the European Society of Criminology, the African Society of Criminology and Justice, and other prominent international institutions.

The course programme places a strong emphasis on scientific research and methodology, particularly within the realm of criminal science.

The programme includes an annual scientific forum during which students present posters and deliver presentations on their research projects. In addition, students participate in the biennial international conference of the Arab Society for Forensic Sciences and Forensic Medicine, where they attend workshops and lectures. Recently, the university has established a summer school programme that enables students to collaborate with peers from Saudi, Arab, European, Asian, and American universities. Annual activities comprise research forums and skill development workshops organised by the Innovation Lab or the Student Affairs Department. Students also have opportunities to participate in international conferences hosted by organisations such as the Arab Society for Forensic Sciences, the Regional Office for Crime and Drug Control, the Regional Office of the United Nations for Migration, and INTERPOL, as well as scientific seminars organised by the university's Centres of Excellence.

Several students have published research in prestigious academic journals—for instance, one study, entitled "Using Criminal Statistics to Predict Crime Values through Time Series," focuses on forensic data analytics. In another notable example, a Kuwaiti student received recognition from the Emir of Kuwait for research on the recruitment of adolescents for terrorist activities via social media platforms.

In conclusion, the Master of Arts in Criminology programme aligns with the institution's strategic vision. It is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills required to comprehend and analyse criminal phenomena and deviant behaviours, while also enhancing their capacity to address security and criminal justice issues.

Occupying a coherent position within Arabian countries, this programme effectively bridges the gap between professional training and academic research—a particularly advantageous approach in the field of criminology, which encompasses both theoretical and practical dimensions.

## FIELD 2 – PEDAGOGICAL ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAMME

**The presentation of the pedagogical organisation of the study programme is generally satisfactory. The structure of the programme and the teaching methods are fully aligned with the standardised model established by the University and support appropriate pedagogical strategies**—including lectures, problem-based learning, project-based learning, flipped classrooms, self-directed learning, and simulation exercises.

**The Master of Arts Programme in Criminology is a two-year academic curriculum, delivered over four semesters, that offers specialisation in various areas of criminology.** Students are required to complete 45 credit hours by undertaking 15 courses, which include Research Methodologies, Criminal Psychology, Criminology, Introduction to Criminal Law, Criminal Sociology, Criminal Statistics and Information Systems, Crime Prevention, Criminal Policy, New Crimes, Juvenile Delinquency, Crime Victims, Forensic Investigation and Verification, Rehabilitation and Reform in Prisons, Applications of Crime). The programme culminates in a graduation project—either a professional or research project that is both scientific and practical—in a format of approximately 15 to 50 pages, with the potential for publication (notably, 2 out of 6 alumni have published their research project).

The master's programme is publicised through official communication channels, particularly with scholarship-granting organisations, and via an official website. The curriculum recognises not only the competencies acquired within the programme but also acknowledges skills developed outside the academic context (such as volunteer work and professional development), as documented in a "Skill Record". Overall, this programme is highly satisfactory and encompasses the diverse fields necessary for comprehensive skill acquisition.

**In accordance with institutional policy and to foster student engagement, the study programme actively promotes interactive pedagogical approaches.** These include flipped classrooms, project-based learning, serious games, active learning methodologies, self-directed learning strategies, simulation exercises, and collaborative tools. The implementation of an indicator to assess the "quality and effectiveness of active learning" has yielded notable improvements in student satisfaction, with evaluation scores rising from 3.21/5 in 2021-2022 to 4.6/5 in 2023-2024.

**In addition, the programme offers a range of pedagogical methodologies—including total or partial distance learning—to accommodate diverse audiences and ensure flexibility.** It varied teaching environments that effectively integrate theoretical knowledge with practical application. These environments comprise traditional classrooms (where lectures and discussions provide an in-depth understanding of core concepts), specialised laboratories (such as criminology statistics, and crime pattern mapping and spatial analysis laboratories), fieldwork opportunities (including visits to research centres, border control facilities, and penal institutions), virtual learning platforms (offering video lectures, discussion forums, and self-paced modules), simulated environments (facilitating investigative techniques through crime scene simulations and role-playing exercises) and comprehensive library resources. Furthermore, a robust mechanism for monitoring students' progress is in place, whereby faculty members guide, counsel, and closely monitor academic development.

**Regarding the international accessibility of the programme, the Master is inherently open to international students from AIMC member countries.** Furthermore, the programme facilitates the development of English language proficiency as a second language. Looking ahead to the 2025-2026 academic year, an enhanced mobility programme will be introduced to both welcome incoming students and facilitate outgoing student exchanges. The faculty members, originating from diverse countries including Algeria, Tunisia, Sudan, Egypt, Morocco, Netherlands, and Saudi Arabia, bring a wealth of expertise, having been educated at prestigious universities in France, Egypt, the United States of America, and leading Arab institutions. The Programme has established cooperation agreements with prestigious universities through NAUSS External Relations. A key outcome of this initiative has been the organisation of the international summer school, titled "Cybercrimes and Community-Based Protection", in collaboration with institutions such as the College of Law at Princess Nourah bint Abdulrahman University, the Cybercrime Center at the Korean University, Boston University, and the Faculty of Law at Ain Shams University. This event successfully engaged 80 students in person (an average of 27 students per day) and 127 students virtually, including participants from this Master's programme.

**Concerning the correlations between the study programme content and the requirements of the socio-economic sector, there is significant value in engaging students in international and national events** (research projects, conferences, etc.) and providing students with opportunities to engage with experts and faculty members specialised in various domains. Designed primarily for practitioners, the programme fosters strong partnerships with key institutions such as the Ministry of Interior, crime research centres, AI legislation and governance bodies, and Public Security agencies. Although internship opportunities are available through these partnerships, their implementations remain limited in practice. To supplement practical partnerships, the programme incorporates targeted initiatives such as field visits to key legal and security institutions (for instance, prisons, rehabilitation centres, and courts). NAUSS has also expanded its network of strategic partnerships, increasing from nine in 2021-2022 to eleven in 2023-2024.

**In conclusion, the pedagogical organisation of the study programme is consistent with the aim of the master's degree and adapts to the specificity of the field of criminology. The programme incorporates diverse research approaches—ranging from laboratory work and field visits to hands-on projects—and forges strong links between academic theory and practical education through strategic partnerships. Although internship placements are included in the programme; their practical implementation remains relatively infrequent.**

**Nonetheless, the study programme is distinguished by its coherence, comprehensiveness, and contemporary orientation. Its inherent international dimension, underscored by the multinational backgrounds of both the teaching staff and the student body, further enhance its standing as a leading initiative in the field of criminology.**

### FIELD 3 – STUDENTS' PATHWAY

**The programme ensures a high standard of student recruitment through substantial demand and rigorous selection criteria. Comprehensive guidance is provided to students throughout their academic journey, and the programme demonstrates significant appeal to international applicants.**

The university's information system plays a pivotal role in enhancing the programme's visibility and attractiveness for both prospective and newly admitted students. These systems offer a comprehensive overview of the programme for potential students and employers, thereby bolstering its appeal. Notably, 30% of respondents indicated that they learned about the programme through employer recommendation, underscoring its attractiveness to the professional community. In addition, the university's robust social media presence further augments the programme's allure.

A rigorous selection process, even in the face of application fees, ensures that the number of applicants remains significantly larger than the available positions, illustrating the programme's strong appeal. The 2024 cohort, comprising 11.5% international students, confirms that the programme fulfils the university's objective of enrolling students from other member countries of the Arab League.

The programme analyses application trends and evaluates its attractiveness by categorising data according to gender, nationality (students from the host country/international student), and funding-status (nominated/self-funded/prince Naif Scholarship). However, there is currently no admission policy that specifically addresses these categories. Notably, the inclusion of female students began in 2024.

**The programme provides a comprehensive array of high-quality support elements for students, which contribute significantly to ensuring their academic success.**

Each student is assigned a personal academic advisor who monitors their progress and addresses challenges as they arise. In addition, students facing academic difficulties have access to counselling from faculty members and support via e-learning platforms. Psychological counselling services are also available, led by qualified faculty members, and offered either periodically or on an as-needed basis, depending on individual requirements. This tailored support, which is particularly beneficial for international students, is regularly evaluated by the Student Affairs Office to ensure its effectiveness.

Furthermore, the programme closely monitors and analyses the trends in academic performance for each course. After each semester, the academic department council evaluates the cohort's mean results, and courses are modified as necessary for subsequent academic years. These modifications are informed by an investigation into the rationale behind unusually high or low grades, with the relevant faculty member addressing the identified issues. The programme's exceptionally low attrition rates—for instance, the 2023-2024 cohort experienced only three withdrawals after the first semester, followed by a 100% success rate over the final three semesters—demonstrate the effectiveness of these support measures, even though the programme does not to publicly disclose its overall success rate.

**The post-graduation employment rate is high (85%), indicating a substantial level of preparedness among graduates for labour market requirements.**

For over a decade, the university has maintained a university-led alumni association, which collaborates closely with the programme. This long-standing arrangement significantly enhances the programme's appeal to employers, as alumni frequently recommend the programme to their colleagues. Moreover, the consistently high employment rate further demonstrates the programme's alignment with labour market requirements. The programme also implements regular surveys of graduates to identify areas for future improvement.

**In conclusion, the programme demonstrates significant appeal to prospective students who recognise its value in the employment market and its academic rigour. The individualised student services are exemplary, facilitating a highly conducive learning environment, while the thorough analysis of labour market requirements is reflected in the successful professional integration of its graduates.**

## FIELD 4 – ACADEMIC PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT

**The Master of Arts in Criminology programme is effectively implemented and well-established within the academic framework of the University.**

As the sole offering from the Department of Criminology within the College of Criminology at Naif Arab University for Security Sciences, the programme benefits from a clearly defined hierarchical structure and established procedures for selecting external collaborators. However, further details regarding the specific roles and responsibilities of the teaching team have not been provided.

**The institution's human resources are highly proficient. This programme features faculty from diverse nations, aligning with the international composition of the student body.**

The teaching staff comprises 5 full professors and 4 associate professors, supporting a student cohort that has grown from 25 in 2020-2021 to 69 in 2023-2024. This favourable supervision ratio, along with high-quality administrative and pedagogical resources—including state-of-the-art facilities, advanced technical programmes for administrative staff, and a specialised library—ensures a robust academic environment.

Furthermore, the study programme delineates an effective internal and external evaluation process. Internally, student participation in course evaluations is facilitated through questionnaires prepared by the Measurement and Evaluation Unit. These questionnaires cover five key areas: general information, teaching performance, learning resources and facilities, classroom activities, and assessments and feedback. This feedback is then discussed within the NAUSS-Level Student Advisory Council, which comprises representatives from all academic programmes and chaired by the NAUSS Vice President. Additionally, regular external evaluations are conducted through reports from independent reviewers.

**The study programme is predicated on a quality-driven and ethical approach,** ensuring a transparent and selective student recruitment process. Priority is given to candidates from Arab interior ministries and official agencies, while remaining vacancies are offered to individuals who meet the admission criteria and are willing to self-fund their studies. The programme boasts a high student success rate, ranging from 88.46% in 2021-2022 to 90.63% in 2023-2024. Assessment of knowledge and validation of skills are clearly communicated to students, with a structured evaluation process in place. A variety of assessment methods are employed, including dissertations (written examinations), multiple-choice questions, oral examinations, and open-book examinations. Both mid-term and final examinations are integral to the assessment framework. Post-graduation follow-up is conducted systematically, with data reflecting strong employment outcomes: 5.1% of graduates pursue doctoral studies, 85.9% secure employment, and 8.9% are actively seeking job opportunities. Furthermore, the Programme adheres to NAUSS's Programme Ethical Policies, incorporating strict measures to combat plagiarism.

**In conclusion, the management of the academic programme and its continuous improvement are effectively ensured. The favourable teacher-student ratio (9 faculty members for 69 students) supports high-quality education, and multiple indicators are extensively used to evaluate programme outcomes. Notably, the strong emphasis on the ethical dimension of research is a distinguishing feature of the programme and merits particular attention.**

## VI. CONCLUSION

The Master of Arts in Criminology is fully aligned with its established objectives and the University's pragmatic and realistic strategy. It serves as a specialised, high-level programme designed to equip students with extensive and diverse competencies in criminology, addressing the expectations of the professional security sector.

The administration of the programme is handled by a dedicated, competent, and engaged faculty drawn from various countries represented by the consortium members. The level of supervision is exceptionally high, and the University provides students with state-of-the-art facilities, including well-equipped classrooms, modern computers, a specialised library, laboratories, cafeterias, a stadium, a gymnasium, a swimming pool, and a small medical clinic. Furthermore, psychological and social support services are available for students experiencing difficulties.

The programme benefits from substantial support for both applied and fundamental research, with strong encouragement for research activities conducted by faculty members who are active researchers themselves. Instructional methodologies and assessment procedures are rigorous and closely aligned with the course content.

A key strength of the programme lies in its robust network of significant, diverse, and prestigious partnerships, including collaborations with a UN body.

Regarding future developments, the proposed merger of the Criminology and Criminal Law colleges is seen as a positive step, given the previous ambiguity in their distinction. Additionally, the reinstatement of the PhD programme, following a period of suspension, is considered beneficial, both in terms of meeting student expectations and aligning with the broader strategic vision of the University.

However, certain areas for improvement remain. The lack of international mobility policy is regrettable, particularly given NAUSS's diplomatic and international standing. Additionally, the absence of a structured internship policy, particularly for self-funded students, is a notable shortcoming.

## STRENGTHS

- Exceptional alignment with regional security requirements
- An interdisciplinary approach consistent with the field of criminology and the Arab organisation
- Robust research and practical training
- Exemplary student supervision by faculty members
- Optimal balance between research and teaching

## WEAKNESSES

- Limited opportunities for external mobility
- A lack of internship placement policy

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### Enhancing cross-border student mobility

The promotion of international student mobility warrants further consideration. NAUSS would benefit from the establishment of a comprehensive international mobility framework. This initiative is particularly relevant given NAUSS's unique status as an educational institution with diplomatic affiliations and a collaborative network spanning 22 nations. While incoming mobility (reception of international students) is satisfactory, there is a lack of measures encouraging outgoing mobility for graduating and postgraduate students, including those pursuing doctoral studies. The diversification and strengthening of international partnerships could facilitate new mobility opportunities for interested students, particularly for 'non-nominated' students who are not required to return immediately to their home institutions.

### Formulation of an Internship Placement Strategy

It would be advantageous for NAUSS to establish a structured internship placement strategy. This initiative would strengthen the institution's ties with industry professionals while enhancing the career prospects of self-funded students. While visits to specialised institutions and professional meetings are beneficial and should be

maintained, a more structured, long-term internship programme would allow students to gain practical experience, supervised by both a professional mentor and an academic supervisor, culminating in the submission of an internship report. The development of a comprehensive internship policy would necessitate the recruitment of dedicated personnel responsible for establishing contacts with host organisations, facilitating student placements, and ensuring continuous monitoring throughout the internship period.

#### **To continue and finalise the creation of the PhD**

The visit highlighted a strong interest among the students in the PhD programme. While the university has temporarily suspended its doctoral degrees, its anticipated reinstatement in the near future should be encouraged. Restoring the PhD programme would address the expectations of a substantial number of motivated students. This initiative would also facilitate the development of a highly qualified faculty body and respond to the needs of institutional partners seeking experts with advanced research skills in security studies. The successful reimplementation of the PhD programme would require a reassessment of faculty roles and service obligations to ensure that lecturers can dedicate the necessary time to supervising doctoral candidates. Additionally, the establishment of a dedicated support structure would be necessary to provide students with the necessary academic and research resources.

## VII. COMMENTS OF THE INSTITUTION



**Professor Thierry Coulhon**

**president of the Border of the French High Council for Evaluation of Research and  
Higer Education (Hcéres)**

**France, Paris**

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**Subject: Comments of Criminology Program**

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**Dear Professor Thierry Coulhon,**

The Master of criminology program extend its sincere gratitude for the comprehensive assessment of the program and its educational framework in accordance with the four key standards set by **Hcéres**. We also appreciate the constructive recommendations presented in the report and reaffirm our commitment to upholding the highest standards of quality across all academic activities.

In alignment with NAUSS progressive policies and its 2029 strategy which encompasses a range of developmental initiatives, including the initiative "Building Effective Educational Partnerships to provide Joint Programs and Facilitate Faculty and Student Exchanges" that aims to foster student mobility and provide master's and doctoral students from various institutions with opportunities for exceptional academic enrichment.

Regarding the recommendation on Internship, we emphasize that the Program in its current structure is inherently applied in nature; it includes practical training activities through designated labs sessions, research facilities, and internationally affiliated centers, as discussed in the Self-Study Report.

Another key initiative has been considered to focusing on applied aspects, expand professional development and internship opportunities for Students. This initiative aims to strengthen the professional experience and equip students with the necessary skills to excel in their careers. Further, the program seeks to establish a specialized internship track targeting non-sponsored students through training programs within partnered institutions, beside the Logbook that will be developed to document and enhance the training experience for sponsored students undertaking internships at their respective workplaces.

With respect to the proposal to introduce a PhD program in Criminology, we affirm that this initiative is already an integral part of NAUSS's 2029 strategy.

Your Sincerely,

**Prof. Tareq S. Alrayes**

**Vice President**

**Naif Arab University for Security Sciences**

## ACCREDITATION DECISION

### Master of Arts in Criminology

College of criminology

Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS)

Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

**June 2025**

## SCOPE OF THE ACCREDITATION GRANTED BY HCERES

Hcéres has based its evaluation process on a set of objectives that higher education institution study programs must pursue to ensure recognised quality in France and Europe. These objectives are divided into four areas common to both the evaluation framework and the accreditation criteria.

The Accreditation Commission issues an opinion on the accreditation of the program after examining the application. The Hcéres President takes the decision based on this opinion and the final evaluation report of the program. This accreditation decision, taken in plenary session, is the result of a collegial and reasoned process.

The decision issued by Hcéres regarding the accreditation of the program corresponds to the award of a label, on behalf of Hcéres, to the evaluated entity.

This decision is independent of the accreditations carried out by the French State and therefore does not entail recognition in France of the diplomas delivered by the institution.

**Decision n° EI-2025-13 on the accreditation of the Master of Arts in Criminology  
delivered by Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) - Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.**

**The President of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education,**

Considering the Research Code, in particular Articles L. 114-3-1 to L. 114-3-6;

Considering the Decree No. 2021-1536 of 29 November 2021 on the organisation and operation of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education;

Considering the Board's deliberation No. 2022-5-02 of 29 September 2022 on the accreditation criteria for international study programmes (Except for doctorates/PhDs);

Considering the Decision No. 2023-9 of 16 March 2023 on the international accreditation procedure of the High Council for the Evaluation of Research and Higher Education;

Considering the agreement No. DEI\_2024\_CONV 7\_ Naif Arab University for Security Sciences - for the evaluation/accreditation of Master of Arts in Criminology;

Considering the opinion issued by the Accreditation Commission on June 27<sup>th</sup> 2025,

**Decides:**

**Article 1**

Having determined that the Master of Arts in Criminology delivered by Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) - Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia meets the four accreditation criteria, voted by the Board of the High Council on 29 September 2022, as follows:

**ACCREDITATION CRITERION 1: TEACHING POLICY AND CHARACTERISATION**

The Master's programme in Criminology is in line with the institution's strategic vision. It is designed to equip students with the knowledge and skills needed to understand and analyse criminal phenomena and deviant behaviour, while enhancing their ability to deal with security and criminal justice issues.

Occupying a consistent position within Arab countries, this programme effectively bridges the gap between professional training and university research, an approach that is particularly advantageous in the field of criminology, which encompasses both theoretical and practical dimensions.

**ACCREDITATION CRITERION 2: THE PEDAGOGICAL ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY PROGRAM**

The pedagogical organisation of the study programme is consistent with the objective of the master's degree and is adapted to the specific nature of the field of criminology. The programme integrates a variety of research approaches - ranging from laboratory work and field visits to practical projects - and establishes close links between academic theory and practical training through strategic partnerships. Although internships are included in the programme, their practical implementation remains relatively infrequent.

Nevertheless, the curriculum stands out for its coherence, comprehensiveness and contemporary focus. Its inherent international dimension, underlined by the multinational origins of its teaching staff and students, further reinforces its status as a leading initiative in the field of criminology.

**ACCREDITATION CRITERION 3: STUDENTS' PATHWAY**

The programme attracts a great deal of interest from potential students, who recognise its value on the job market and its academic rigour. The individualised services offered to students are exemplary and foster a highly conducive learning environment, while the in-depth analysis of labour market needs is reflected in the successful professional integration of its graduates.

#### ACCREDITATION CRITERION 4: MANAGEMENT AND CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT OF THE STUDY PROGRAM

The programme is effectively managed and continuously improved. The favourable teacher-student ratio (9 faculty members for 69 students) is conducive to high-quality teaching, and multiple indicators are widely used to assess the programme's results. In particular, the emphasis placed on the ethical dimension of research is a distinctive feature of the programme and deserves special attention.

#### Article 2

The Master of arts in Criminology delivered by Naif Arab University for Security Sciences (NAUSS) - Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is accredited for a period of five years from the date of this decision.

#### Article 3

The decision is accompanied by the following recommendations:

##### **Enhancing cross-border student mobility**

The promotion of international student mobility warrants further consideration. NAUSS would benefit from the establishment of a comprehensive international mobility framework. This initiative is particularly relevant given NAUSS's unique status as an educational institution with diplomatic affiliations and a collaborative network spanning 22 nations. While incoming mobility (reception of international students) is satisfactory, there is a lack of measures encouraging outgoing mobility for graduating and postgraduate students, including those pursuing doctoral studies. The diversification and strengthening of international partnerships could facilitate new mobility opportunities for interested students, particularly for 'non-nominated' students who are not required to return immediately to their home institutions.

##### **Formulation of an Internship Placement Strategy**

It would be advantageous for NAUSS to establish a structured internship placement strategy. This initiative would strengthen the institution's ties with industry professionals while enhancing the career prospects of self-funded students. While visits to specialised institutions and professional meetings are beneficial and should be maintained, a more structured, long-term internship programme would allow students to gain practical experience, supervised by both a professional mentor and an academic supervisor, culminating in the submission of an internship report. The development of a comprehensive internship policy would necessitate the recruitment of dedicated personnel responsible for establishing contacts with host organisations, facilitating student placements, and ensuring continuous monitoring throughout the internship period.

##### **To continue and finalise the creation of the PhD**

The visit highlighted a strong interest among the students in the PhD programme. While the university has temporarily suspended its doctoral degrees, its anticipated reinstatement in the near future should be encouraged. Restoring the PhD programme would address the expectations of a substantial number of motivated students. This initiative would also facilitate the development of a highly qualified faculty body and respond to the needs of institutional partners seeking experts with advanced research skills in security studies. The successful reimplementation of the PhD programme would require a reassessment of faculty roles and service obligations to ensure that lecturers can dedicate the necessary time to supervising doctoral candidates. Additionally, the establishment of a dedicated support structure would be necessary to provide students with the necessary academic and research resources.

#### Article 4

This decision will be published on the Hcéres website.

Paris, June 30<sup>th</sup> 2025



19 rue Poissonnière  
75002 Paris, France

**Coralie Chevallier**  
Présidente

President

signed

Coralie Chevallier

The evaluation reports of Hcéres  
are available online : [www.hceres.fr/en](http://www.hceres.fr/en)

**Evaluation of higher education and research institutions**

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