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Programme accreditation

ASSESSMENT REPORT

Cluster accreditation:

Psychology (B.Sc.)
Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)
Health Sciences for Diagnostic Profile – Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)
Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)

at Kolegji Heimerer - Heimerer College, Prishtina, Kosovo

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Contents

1. Kolegji-Heimerer – Heimerer College Prishtina

Heimerer College is a private higher education institution in Prishtina, the capital of Kosovo, which has its roots in the Institute for Southeast Europe Advancement of Health and Nursing Science, and the German Education Institution Heimerer GmbH. The latter has over 40 years of experience in the field of education.

The college was founded in 2010 with the aim to improve quality of healthcare education, and it offers study programmes at Bachelor's and Master's level. Currently, about 1,000 students are studying at the college, of which 780 are undergraduates. Language of instruction is Albanian, some lectures are held in English, too.

The following Bachelor's study programmes are offered:

- Nursing (B.Sc.)
- Professional Education in Health (B.Sc.)
- Therapeutic Health Science – Profile – Speech Therapist (B.Sc.)
- Therapeutic Health Science – Profile – Occupational Therapist (B.Sc.)
- Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)

The duration of each Bachelor's study programme is three years (six semesters) with a minimum of 180 ECTS.

The college also offers the following Master's programmes:

- Advanced Nursing Practice (M.Sc.)
- Medical Laboratory Science (M.Sc.)
- Management of Health Institutions and Services (M.Sc.) and
- Psychology of Assessment and Intervention (M.A.)

These programmes are designed for a study duration of two years (four semesters) with a total of 120 ETCS.

Table 1 shows an overview of Heimerer College in numbers.

Kolegji-Heimerer – Heimerer College Prishtina	
Founding year	2010
Number of students	998
- Undergraduate students	780
- Graduate students	218
Academic staff	73
Full-time academic staff	52
Part-time academic staff (heads)	21
Administrative and technical staff	47
Number of programmes:	7
Undergraduate programmes	5
Graduate programmes	4

Average annual tuition fee	
Bachelor's programmes	2,400-2,700 EUR
Master's programmes	2,000 EUR
Dropout rate	3.6%
Percentage of international students	2.4%
Percentage of international staff	27%
Annual budget	about 3 Mio. EUR
Share of tuition fees in the total budget	about 80%

Table 1 – Heimerer College in numbers (Academic year 2021-2022)[1]

The academic year starts in October and ends in June of the following year. It consists of 30 teaching weeks in auditorium and 4 to 6 weeks of final exams.

Credit points are the quantitative measure of the overall workload of a student. The overall student workload consists of the time for attending lectures or seminars as well as the time for preparing and taking exams, thesis writing, and semester assignments. A workload of 30 hours equals one credit point. One study year's workload equals 1,800 hours of work.

As a private higher education institution, Heimerer College does not receive any public funding and relies on student fees as its main source of income.

2. The accreditation procedure

The assessment procedure was conducted as a cluster accreditation with all four programmes being assessed together by one expert panel. The assessment took into account that the new Master's programme "Digital Healthcare" has not been offered so far, and therefore a concept assessment had to be performed.

The procedure used the method of an informed peer review based on a self-evaluation report provided by Heimerer College, a two-day site visit of an international expert panel, an assessment report by the expert panel and the accreditation decision made by the **evalag** Accreditation Commission. The site visit was made by two members of the expert panel, while the others participated online in the meetings.[2]

The procedure applies the fitness for purpose approach which assesses to what extent a programme complies with the **evalag** criteria for programme accreditation.[3] These are formulated in coherence with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG).[4]

[1] Source: Heimerer College.

[2] For this purpose, ZOOM was used as technical platform. Only authorised persons had access to the meeting sessions, no discussions during these video conferences were recorded.

[3] https://www.evalag.de/fileadmin/dateien/pdf/akk_international/standards_kriterien/prog_acc_process_criteria_171201.pdf (accessed 28 April 2023)

[4] https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf (accessed 28 April 2023)

The criteria focus, first of all, on the profile of a programme and its curriculum. Furthermore, the criteria cover all aspects of the implementation of a study programme, its quality assurance and its resources. With regard to the criteria of programme profile and curriculum, **evalag** also assesses if the programme meets academic standards that are accepted in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).[5]

The following six criteria are applied:

- Programme profile
- Curriculum
- Student assessment
- Organisation of the study programme
- Resources
- Quality assurance

The experts express the extent of compliance of the criteria with the following assessments: “passed”, “passed subject to conditions”, “suspension of the accreditation procedure” or “failed”. Depending on the degree to which a programme meets the criteria, the programme may be accredited, accredited with conditions or not accredited.

As a first step of the procedure and in preparation for the site visit, Heimerer College provided a self-evaluation report based on guidelines from **evalag**. At the same time **evalag** formed an international expert panel consisting of five experts including one student expert:

Academic experts:

- Prof. Dr. Christiane Hermann, Professor for Clinical Psychology & Dean of Faculty Psychology and Sports at University of Giessen, Germany (Focus on Psychology)
- Prof. Dr. Horst Kunhardt, Vice President Health Sciences at Deggendorf University of Applied Sciences and Campus Management of the European Campus Rottal-Inn (ECRI) (Focus on Digital Healthcare)
- Prof. (FH) Mag. Heidi Oberhauser, Professor at Health University of Applied Sciences Tyrol, Austria & Programme Director Biomedical Sciences (Focus on Laboratory Technology)

Expert from professional practice:

- Beatriz Atienza Carbonell, Quality Assurance Manager at Valencian International University, Spain

Student expert:

- Sebastian Neufeld, recent graduate of Neuroscience (M.Sc.) at Freiburg University, Germany, nominated from the QA pool of the European Students’ Union (ESU)

All experts declared to be free of any conflict of interest.

[5] The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is a group of 49 countries that cooperate to achieve comparable and compatible higher education systems throughout Europe. Member countries of the EHEA follow the directives of the so-called Bologna Process to achieve these goals.

From **evalag**'s side, Georg Seppmann coordinated and carried out the project.

The site visit (annex) took place on 27 March and 28 March 2023 at Heimerer College, Prishtina, Kosovo. The expert panel met the leadership of Heimerer College, academic and administrative staff, several international cooperation partners of the college, employers, students and alumni from current study programmes. A campus tour gave an impression of facilities and equipment. On the first day, Shkelzen Gërxhaliu from the Accreditation Agency of Kosovo attended the sessions as a guest.

After the site visit the expert panel completed the assessment report which was submitted to the university for correction of potential factual errors on 7 June 2023.

The following assessment report is structured along the six assessment criteria, which form the basis for the decision about the **evalag** international programme accreditation. After a short description of the criterion, each chapter starts with a presentation of the current status regarding the criterion which is based on the information from the self-assessment report of the university as well as the information acquired during the site visit. On this basis, the expert panel assesses the criterion. Finally, the experts provide their recommendations for further improvement.

3. Programme assessment

3.1. Programme profile

The profile and objectives of a study programme are essential criteria for the assessment. The experts have to evaluate whether the objectives of the programme are in line with the profile and the strategic goals of the institution. Further, they assess if the intended learning outcomes of the programme are well defined, publicly accessible and whether they correspond to the type and level of qualification provided by the programme. They also consider whether the intended learning outcomes are based on academic or professional requirements (standards), public needs and the demands of the labour market, and if they contribute to the employability of the graduates. The experts have to evaluate the programme's relation to research (procurement of scientific methods in theory and practice, research-based teaching). The experts assess whether the profile and objectives of the programme comply with internationally accepted standards. The experts consider the international dimension of the programme and verify whether the qualification of the academic staff is adequate in terms of the profile and the objectives of the programme.

3.1.1. Psychology (B.Sc.)

Current status

Programme profile and objectives

The study programme "Psychology (B.Sc.)" is a three-year full-time programme. Successful graduates receive a Bachelor's degree. Table 2 shows some statistical information on the programme:

Name of study programme	**Psychology (B.Sc.)**
Final degree	B.Sc.
Duration of study	3 years / 6 semester

Credits (ECTS)	180 / 60 per year
Number of students per semester	80
Full-time academic staff in the programme	11
Part-time academic staff in the programme	7

Table 2 – Data on the study programme

According to the self-evaluation report, the programme provides students with basic knowledge in the field of psychology. The philosophy of the programme is based on the science of engagement and the study of the role of human engagement in the prevention and alleviation of mental health problems. The programme reflects Heimerer College's vision to provide students with a learning environment in which they are challenged to achieve professional excellence, respect for professional ethics, innovation in research and advancement of the profession in Kosovo.

The programme aims to train professional and qualified practitioners with a high level of professional competence to meet the needs of education, prevention, diagnosis and treatment, taking into account:

- a patient-centred approach.
- the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge and skills in everyday practice
- awareness of the social and cultural differences of individuals
- awareness of their own role in the healthcare system.

The overall aim of the programme is to develop professionally and skilfully trained practitioners, who have the work habits and ethics to succeed in academic and professional settings as well as effective self-reflection skills.

The programme integrates the development of theoretical knowledge with clinical skills in a wide range of services.

The specific aim of the programme is to provide students with the necessary knowledge, skills and professional values to work safely, ethically and effectively as psychologists. This includes:

a. Increasing knowledge of the theory, practice and research of psychology
b. Developing analytical, critical evaluation and problem-solving skills in the assessment of psychological problems and the evaluation of research
c. Developing skills specific to the science of psychology
d. Enhancing ethical awareness of the profession
e. Maintaining high standards of quality in psychology and preparing students for entry into higher education.

Learning outcomes

The major areas and key learning outcomes of the programme are drawn from the APA Guidelines for the Undergraduate Psychology Major (version 2.010).[6] The guidelines and recommendations of the European Federation of Psychologists' Associations (EFPA)[7] are also taken into account.

The learning outcomes are described as follows:

Basic knowledge

- Be able to describe key concepts, principles, and major theories of the discipline to account for psychological phenomena
- Be able to describe the application of psychology to everyday life
- Be able to explain the major perspectives of psychology, theoretical perspectives and evaluate different theoretical explanations against each other (e.g., biological, cognitive, behavioural, sociocultural, etc.)
- Be able to understand the main psychotherapeutic approaches
- Will be able to use in a proper way concept and processes of psychology
- Specific knowledge and abilities related to the field of psychology (i.e., cognitive, neuroscience, development, forensic etc)
- Be able to explain the historical trends in the discipline of psychology.

Scientific inquiry / critical thinking

- Will be able to independent on planning and implementing research
- Show a critical approach to current knowledge and practice in the psychological field
- Be able to describe the major empirical finding in psychology
- Be able to describe the basic characteristics of the science of psychology and explain different research methods used by psychologist
- Be able to design, conduct, interpret and evaluate research that address psychological questions
- To demonstrate effective written and oral skills in various formats and for various purposes
- To use critical thinking effectively in evaluating information quality, recognising thinking fallacies, and making connections between observations, facts, and theories
- To incorporate sociocultural factors in science inquiry when appropriate.

[6] American Psychological Association (APA) 2013, https://www.apa.org/ed/precollege/about/psymajor-guidelines.pdf (accessed 28 April 2023)

[7] European Certificate in Psychology (EuroPsy), https://www.europsy.eu/ (accessed 28 April 2023)

Ethical and social diversity

- Working independently, organise and plan own work within given deadlines, and in line with ethical requirements and guidelines of psychology
- Develop ethically and socially responsible behaviours for professional settings in a landscape that involves increasing diversity
- Be able to describe the ethical principles pertaining to all aspects of the science and practice of psychology
- Be able to practice ethical behaviour and apply ethical standards in all aspects of the science and practice of psychology
- Be able to demonstrate social responsibility in a diverse world.

Communication

- Convey key subject material both orally and in writing to various audiences.
- Be able to apply different psychological perspective in the analysis and description of a phenomenon.
- Be able to identify psychological assessment for specific target groups
- Be able to identify adequate psychotherapeutic approaches for specific target groups.
- Be able to apply psychological content and skills to professional work in different settings.
- Will be able to identify main approaches of psychotherapy that work best for specific target groups
- Will be able to identify psychological assessments, appropriate to target groups of children, adolescents, and adults.[8]

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

According to the college, the programme is designed to offer a variety of employment opportunities in the public and private sectors upon successful completion. Graduates will have key skills in communication, statistics, problem solving, analysis and technology. It also lays the foundations for further study (both towards a Master's degree in psychology and in other disciplines).

Research and surveys conducted by the college in the past show that there is a high demand for psychologists in Kosovo. However, according to the current legislation, the Bachelor's degree does not lead to a clinical licence, which requires at least a Master's degree.

Relation between study and research

The Bachelor's programme is primarily concerned with the teaching of applied knowledge. Different teaching methods and techniques (blended learning, practice, research, project, problem-based learning, case study, lecturer, simulation) are used to

[8] Cf. self-evaluation report, annex "Competence and LO Areas"

continuously improve academic and professional work, teaching and learning, practice and research.

To strengthen the research aspect, Heimerer College has established the student-run Interdisciplinary Innovative Research Lab (S2IRL).

In addition, the academic staff of the programme is organised in different research focus groups. Specific research topics include migration and mental health, mental health problems, cognitive biases, cyberchondria, hypochondria, digitalisation of healthcare, emotions, resilience, personality traits, bilingualism, new language, metacognition, standardisation of questionnaires, etc.

As a university of applied sciences, Heimerer College is committed to integrating theory, practice and research in all its programmes. Practical exercises in the own laboratories, in the Multidisciplinary Allied Health Practice Centre (SMAHPC) or in the facilities of external partners play an essential role.

International dimension

The programme was created with direct reference to the international standards of APA and EuroPsy. The college has also been working for many years with a number of higher education institutes in Austria, Belgium, Bosnia, Finland, Germany, Poland, Slovenia and Turkey. Possible areas of cooperation include student exchanges, staff exchanges, research cooperation, partnership in various international projects, etc.

According to the self-evaluation report, Heimerer College encourages mobility of students and staff.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

The programme is taught by psychologists, clinical psychologists and staff from other disciplines. The aim is to give students a well-rounded experience of psychology and to open up as many avenues as possible for future careers and research interests. Of the 18 lecturers, 10 hold doctoral degrees. The majority of lecturers have many years of teaching experience.

Heimerer College offers professional development opportunities through internationally co-funded projects and collaborations with universities and quality organisations in the European Union and beyond. The college supports academic staff to participate in academic programmes offered by international cooperation partners.

Assessment

Programme profile and objectives

According to the expert panel, the programme profile is clear and the overarching objectives are also well defined and described. The discussions with students and employers revealed that there is also clarity from this side about the competences taught in the programme.

The described qualification level corresponds to the Bachelor’s level.

Overall, the curriculum of the BSc Psychology has a strong focus on applied psychology, especially clinical and health psychology and clinical interventions. By contrast, basic areas of psychology such as learning and memory or motivation and emotion are

electives, for other basic areas of psychology (e.g., perception and action) no specific modules exist.

Learning outcomes

As far as can be seen from the translated documents, the learning outcomes of the programmes are clearly defined. Students' learning is regularly assessed using a variety of assessment methods. The intended learning outcomes described in each module description are largely concise, clear and content-related.

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

There is a strong link between the intentions of the programme and the public needs in Kosovo. The portfolio of the Heimerer College meets public needs and requirements. The college makes great efforts in terms of needs analysis and consistently implements the results.

Overall, the experts appreciate the innovative character of the whole institution in a rather difficult social and public environment in Kosovo. The college seems to have a good partner environment and is appreciated by the regional health institutions. Heimerer College students are readily accepted for internships. From many discussions in the field, it is clear that the graduates are well trained and able to apply the acquired skills in their respective fields of work.

Relation between study and research

The study programme refers to research; there are also opportunities for students to carry out their own research projects. Overall, the link between study and research is entirely appropriate for the Bachelor's level. Graduates are well equipped to go on to a consecutive Master's programme and to apply the skills they have acquired to the non-academic labour market.

International dimension

The experts appreciate the Heimerer College's broad and long-standing international partner network. Representatives of the partners took part in some of the online meetings, demonstrating the good cooperation with the college. The implementation of all programmes at the college is accompanied by a continuous dialogue with the international partners as well as with the German parent institution.

During the visit and in all the documents, the importance of the international network, of which the college sees itself as an active part, was repeatedly emphasised. Against this background, the experts could not understand why the website is only available in Albanian.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

According to the experts, the qualification and number of teaching staff is appropriate for the Bachelor's level. It was clear from the interviews that the college is careful in its selection of teaching staff. There are explicit criteria and procedures for recruiting staff, which are widely accepted and meet international standards. Great emphasis is placed on pedagogical skills, but publications and academic reputation are also considered as

highly important. However, the level of language proficiency in English, as observed during the site visit, considerably raised evaluators' concerns.

Areas for improvement

The English language skills of both staff and students should be improved. As sensible and positive as it seems to the experts to conduct the study programme in Albanian and to provide appropriate Albanian teaching materials in the long-term this does not meet the requirements of a study programme, which aims to be internationally competitive. Moreover, good English language skills seem important because the literature listed in the module description as reading material for class is often in English. The actual language skills might be much better than demonstrated during the onsite visit. What is lacking, is the confidence to use them. The college could easily resolve this by offering extra-curricular language courses in English (as they already do for the German language!).

Exchanges and mobility opportunities for students and staff could also play an important role here and could also be strengthened.

In line with the focus on applied psychology, it should be considered to label the programme as B.Sc. in Applied Psychology.

Recommendation

If Heimerer College wants to be perceived internationally, it should improve its external presentation (e.g., English version of the programme descriptions on the website). Moreover, the concrete English skills of staff and students.

3.1.2. Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)

Programme profile and objectives

The study programme "Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)" is a two-year full-time programme. Successful graduates receive a Master's degree. Table 3 shows some statistical information on the programme:

Name of study programme	**Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)**
Final degree	M.Sc.
Duration of study	2 years / 4 semester
Credits (ECTS)	120 / 60 per year
Number of students per semester	50
Full-time academic staff in the programme	18
Part-time academic staff in the programme	-

Table 3 – Data on the study programme

After successful studies, graduates are expected to be competent professionals in the field of Clinical Psychology. The philosophy of the programme follows the institutional

objectives of Heimerer College to prepare and implement advanced study programmes in the health sector.

Graduates must demonstrate competences in

- Integration of psychological science and practice
- Ethical and legal standards
- Individual and cultural diversity
- Professional values, attitudes, and behaviours
- Communication and interpersonal skills
- Assessment
- Intervention
- Supervision
- Consultation and interprofessional/interdisciplinary skills

The programme has been developed according to international standards for clinical psychologists based on the APA and EuroPsy standards. It covers the fields of psychotherapy and diagnostics, practice and research.

Learning outcomes

The programme's learning outcomes are described as follows:[9]

- Analyse critically, reflect on and synthesize complex information, problems, concepts and theories as applied to the psychological functioning of children, adolescents and adults.
- Convey, appraise, interpret and transmit knowledge of clinical psychology skills and ideas to mental health, education, and other specialists and to the public and consumers of clinical psychology services
- Integrate, interpret and synthesize clinical psychological assessment data with the knowledge of psychopathology to inform case formulation, diagnosis and intervention
- Interpret and communicate findings in oral and written formats, including formal psychological reports, using culturally and professionally appropriate language
- Developing new perspectives and criteria for assessing the appropriate psychotherapy approach reviewing and reflecting to the psychotherapy approach
- Evaluating mental disorders with reference to relevant international taxonomies of classification, including disorders of moderate to severe level and complexity
- Monitoring outcomes and modifications based on evolving case formulation, including health and health concerns, family, and support networks, and organisational, cultural or community contexts, with care given to the appropriateness of interventions for the client within their wider context

[9] Cf. self-evaluation report, annex "Learning Outcomes Master Program"

- Comply with the professional, ethical, and legal requirements of psychological practice, recognize and respond appropriately to moral and ethical dilemmas and situations in everyday practice in children and adolescents and adults
- Know different roles, responsibilities and functions of clinical psychologists, and adapt their activities in order to effectively meet the needs of the children and adolescents
- Explain the link between diagnosis, formulation of intervention plans, goals and strategies for disorders typically seen in children and adolescents and adults
- Analyse critically, reflect on and synthesise complex information, problems, concepts and theories as applied to the psychological functioning of children and adolescents and adults
- Design and evaluate psychological interventions
- Research and apply established theories to clinical psychology practice
- Ethically design, conduct, interpret and communicate laboratory and field research that investigates a substantive individual research question relevant to the discipline of clinical psychology
- Conducting evidence-based practice in the understanding and management of psychological disorders, including across the age range and across modalities (such as e-health approaches)
- Employ professional communication skills, in a culturally responsive manner, with a range of socially and culturally diverse clients
- Showing familiarity with legal and professional matters relevant to psychological practice, applying personal moral philosophical positions to novel ethical dilemmas, and practice consistent with the current accepted Code of Ethics for the profession
- Complete an ethically designed, conducted, interpreted and communicated field research that investigated a substantive individual research question relevant to the discipline of clinical psychology
- Implementing appropriate, empirically supported interventions, and monitor clients' progress and intervention outcomes
- Selecting, tailoring and implementing appropriate evidence-based interventions on the basis of an initial case formulation
- Conducting professional interviews and assessments and synthesise information from multiple sources, including assessment of risk, to formulate a conceptualisation of the presenting issues to determine the most appropriate interventions, including management of risk
- Performing appropriate standardised psychological testing, as part of broader assessment, to assess and interpret aspects of functioning
- Using assessment tools and processes related to a wide range of psychological disorders, and including psychometric tests, structured or semi-structured interviews, behavioural observations, measures of functionality and processes that enable collection of collateral information from multiple sources, including groups and systems relevant to the client
- Evaluating symptom reduction, therapeutic outcomes, the therapeutic alliance and client progress throughout therapy

- Evaluating the effectiveness of their professional practice, identifying areas for improvement and implementing changes where needed
- Provide psychological care focused on the basic human needs of children and adolescent clients, with various psychological and health problems
- Apply clinical skills to conduct assessments and identify, select, implement and evaluate a range of empirically validated treatments for disorders typically seen in children and adolescents
- Monitoring outcomes and modifications based on evolving case formulation, including health and health concerns, family and support networks, and organisational, cultural or community contexts, with care given to the appropriateness of interventions for the children and adolescents within their wider context

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

In 2021, the college conducted a survey about the interest of students in a clinical Master's degree. 412 persons (79% female) completed the questionnaire. Almost half of participants who completed this questionnaire had a Bachelor's degree (48.6%) and intended to continue in Master's studies. 47% of students expressed general interest in a Clinical Psychology Master, 22.8% of students had high interest. About 30% of them were interested in continuing their studies in the private higher educational sector.

Another survey conducted with health service providers and healthcare management found that almost 100% reported a need for psychologists, 26.6% in counselling psychologists, 21.9% in graduates of a programme in assessment psychology and about 10% each in clinical psychology for children, adolescents and adults.

Relation between study and research

The teaching strategy at Heimerer College is to combine teaching and research in the delivery of the courses of a programme. Within each course of the Master's programme, staff will provide information on research areas and incorporate information and case studies that will enable students to understand new developments in research and the ongoing process of cooperative learning in the research community. Research is a mandatory part of the teaching and learning process. Students must conduct research before writing their thesis.

As mentioned above Heimerer College has recently established the student-run Interdisciplinary Innovative Research Lab (S2IRL) to strengthen the area of research at the college.

In addition, the academic staff of the programme is organised in different research focus groups. Specific research topics include migration and mental health, mental health problems, cognitive biases, cyberchondria, hypochondria, digitalisation of healthcare, emotions, resilience, personality traits, bilingualism, new language, metacognition, standardisation of questionnaires, etc.

As a university of applied sciences, Heimerer College is committed to integrating theory, practice and research in all its programmes. Practical exercises in the own laboratories, in the Multidisciplinary Allied Health Practice Centre (SMAHPC) or in the facilities of external partners play an essential role.

International dimension

The programme was created with direct reference to the international standards of APA and EuroPsy. As mentioned above, the college has also been working for many years with a number of higher education institutes in Austria, Belgium, Bosnia, Finland, Germany, Poland, Slovenia and Turkey. Possible areas of cooperation include student exchanges, staff exchanges, research cooperation, partnership in various international projects, etc.

According to the self-evaluation report, Heimerer College encourages mobility of students and staff. The experts noted that, with the new regulations for qualifying clinical psychologists in Germany, there might be more difficulties with student mobility due to the specific requirements study programmes have to fulfil.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

In line with the content of the programme, lecturers are primarily clinical psychologists, but also include representatives of other disciplines to ensure the multidisciplinary approach of the programme. The aim is to provide students with a well-rounded experience in clinical psychology and to open up as many avenues as possible for future careers and research interests. The programme is taught by 18 lecturers, 11 (58%) of whom hold a Ph.D. and 4 (22%) of whom hold an M.Sc.

Assessment

Programme profile and objectives

According to the expert panel, the programme profile is clear and the overarching objectives are also well defined and described. The discussions with students and employers revealed that there is also clarity from this side about the competences taught in the programme.

The described qualification level corresponds to the Master's level.

Learning outcomes

As far as can be seen from the translated documents, the learning outcomes of the programmes are clearly defined. Students' learning is regularly assessed using a variety of assessment methods. The intended learning outcomes described in each module description are largely concise, clear and content-related.

Overall, the learning outcomes fulfil Master level criteria.

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

There is a strong link between the intentions of the programme and the public needs in Kosovo. The portfolio of the Heimerer College meets public needs and requirements. The college makes great efforts in terms of needs analysis and consistently implements the results.

Overall, the experts appreciate the innovative character of the whole institution in a rather difficult social and public sector environment in Kosovo. The college seems to have a good partner environment and is appreciated by the regional health institutions.

Heimerer College students are readily accepted for internships. From many discussions in the field, it is clear that the graduates are well trained and able to apply the acquired skills in their respective fields of work.

Relation between study and research

The evaluators are aware that the programme is ultimately more limited in terms of local opportunities than in Western Europe, especially with regard to research opportunities. The study programme includes research which is topic of the programme, esp. in the last semesters. The experts recognise that Heimerer College is making great efforts in this regard. In their view, the programme meets the requirements for a Master's degree.

In any case, the graduates are well equipped for later professional life.

International dimension

The experts appreciate the Heimerer College's broad and long-standing international partner network. Representatives of the partners took part in some of the online meetings, demonstrating the good cooperation with the college. The implementation of all programmes at the college is accompanied by a continuous dialogue with the international partners as well as with the German parent institution.

During the visit and in all the documents, the importance of the international network, of which the college sees itself as an active part, was repeatedly emphasised. Against this background, the experts could not understand why the website is only available in Albanian.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

According to the experts, the qualification and number of teaching staff is appropriate for the Master's level. It was clear from the interviews that the college is careful in its selection of teaching staff. There are explicit criteria and procedures for recruiting staff, which are widely accepted and meet international standards. Great emphasis is placed on pedagogical skills, but more attention is increasingly paid to publications and academic reputation. Nevertheless, even in the Master's programme, the level of English language proficiency observed during the site visit was not fully convincing.

Areas for improvement

The English language skills of both staff and students should be improved. As sensible and positive as it seems to the experts to conduct the study programme in Albanian and to provide appropriate Albanian teaching materials in the long-term this does not meet the requirements of a study programme, which aims to be internationally competitive. A good knowledge of English is essential for a Master's degree in clinical psychology, as the entire scientific literature in this field is in English. This is important because the literature listed in the module description as reading material for class is often in English. The actual language skills might be much better than demonstrated during the onsite visit. What is lacking, is the confidence to use them. The college could easily resolve this by offering extra-curricular language courses in English (as they already do for the German language!).

Exchanges and mobility opportunities for students and staff could also play an important role here and could also be strengthened.

Recommendations and conditions

If Heimerer College wants to be perceived internationally, it should improve both its external presentation with English descriptions on the website and the actual English language skills of staff and students.

For the Master's programme (students and staff), courses for scientific English – comparable to the existing extracurricular German language courses – must be established.

3.1.3. Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)

Current status

Programme profile and objectives

The study programme "Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)" is a three-year full-time programme. Successful graduates receive a Bachelor's degree. Table 4 shows some statistical information on the programme:

Name of study programme	**Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)**
Final degree	B.Sc.
Duration of study	3 years / 6 semester
Credits (ECTS)	180 / 60 per year
Number of students per semester	60
Full-time academic staff in the programme	25
Part-time academic staff in the programme	9
Previous accreditations	2015, 2018, 2020

Table 4 – Data on the study programme

The aim of the Bachelor's programme "Health Sciences for Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician" is to develop students' individual abilities to acquire knowledge and apply it for the benefit of the individual and society. This field is relatively less established compared to other medical professions, and therefore the number of laboratory professionals in Kosovo and Balkan region is relatively small. Medical laboratory diagnostics is a field related to the operation of clinical laboratories for the diagnosis, treatment and prevention of disease. It is based on the principles of cellular and molecular biology used to understand the functions of the human body. It is a starting point for making diagnoses, from the simplest to the most complex.

Based on local and international standards, the aims and objectives of the programme are:

Aims:

The primary aims of the programme are as follows:

- The curriculum of the programme is comparable with European curricula for similar programmes within this profile
- The achievement of competencies, skills and knowledge of graduated Senior Laboratory Technicians at Heimerer College, consistent with the local and international market
- Ensuring that practical professional knowledge in the field of the laboratory is applied in the Republic of Kosovo.

Objectives:

- Provision of qualified professional staff for teaching in each module of "Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician"
- Provision of modern infrastructures for quality teaching
- Provision of contemporary literature in Albanian and foreign languages (English and German)
- A student-centred ethos with accessible services
- Annual review and updating of syllabuses, regulations and terms of reference.

The core competencies of the programme aim to develop key practical skills, a thorough understanding of the underlying scientific principles and research skills. The programme aims to produce graduates who are competent and equipped with the appropriate skills, experience and attitudes to work as exemplary professionals.

Learning outcomes / competencies

The following competencies are taught within the framework of the programme:[10]

- Organise, collect, transport and store biological materials;
- Organising and understanding the tasks and activities according to the regular work programme in the analysis of biological materials.
- Apply appropriate procedures for the maintenance and calibration of specific equipment.
- Ability to work with microscopes and interpret results.
- Preparation of haematological samples.
- Carry out hemograms (CBC, RDW, MCV, MCH, MCHC) to count leucocytes, reticulocytes and platelets;
- Determination of haemoglobin and other cytochemical and haematological tests, including coagulation tests;
- Carry out tests in all medical fields using knowledge of the operation of simple and complex equipment, including electrophoresis techniques, ELISA techniques, chromatographic techniques;

[10] Cf. self-evaluation report, annex "Competences"

- Determine the amount of substrates, metabolites, enzymatic activity, levels of hormones, vitamins, trace elements, herbs and their metabolites in biological material;
- Isolation of bacteria, viruses, fungi, parasites at all stages of diagnosis;
- Demonstration of molecular diagnostic methods: PCR, RT-PCR, conventional and capillary electrophoresis;
- Preparation of histological, histopathological and cytological slides at all stages.
- Carry out analyses of cerebrospinal fluid, gastroduodenal fluid, amniotic fluid, seminal fluid, synovial fluid, etc.
- Understand the principles of cytogenetic techniques and methods.
- Organise and understand immunohematology research in transfusion: ABO and Rh blood grouping, antiglobulin test (coombs test), serological testing of donors and recipients in transfusion, control of post-transfusion reactions and all necessary blood tests for donors and pregnancies
- Apply the basic techniques of immunological reactions (agglutination, precipitation, haemolytic reactions, complement binding reactions), immune enzymatic tests.
- Know how to work under special conditions – working under sterile conditions, sterilisation, decontamination.

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

The programme was developed after an assessment of the country's need for this programme and in recognition of the need for laboratory technicians in health facilities. Only two higher education institutions in Kosovo offer Bachelor's programmes for the training of laboratory technicians. There are either laboratory technicians who have completed secondary education to become laboratory technicians or graduates from these two institutions. According to the self-evaluation report, the programme meets the growing need for more laboratory technicians with quality tertiary education to improve the performance of the medical laboratories in the country.

Since 2015, 132 students have graduated from this programme: 19 in 2018, 26 in 2019, 11 in 2020, 44 in 2021, and 32 so far in 2022.

Heimerer College tracks how professionals trained at Heimerer College fare on the job market. To this end, the college's Centre for Education and Careers conducts ongoing surveys of the graduates. One notable finding from the graduate surveys is that the percentage of graduates in employment is very high. Comments from former students indicate employer satisfaction with the level of knowledge, skills and competencies acquired during their studies.

Relation between study and research

Heimerer College promotes various teaching techniques and methods to enhance academic and professional work, teaching and learning, practice and research, and professional and intercultural knowledge and skills. The teaching and learning process in this programme is carried out using the following methods: Lecture-based learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, simulation-based learning, practice-based learning, reflection-based learning, research-based learning, internet-based

learning, blended learning, etc. For the Bachelor's programme, this means accompanying the student's learning process as well as providing initial support for self-defined learning processes.

Practice is a crucial part of this programme, which is planned for the entire duration of the study and accounts for almost 25% of the course. As research is an important part of the academic process, it is compulsory to include research in the teaching and learning process and each student has to undertake a research project for the final thesis.

International dimension

The university has developed the degree programme in exchange with international partners and also coordinated its content, namely with the University of Applied Health Sciences in Zagreb (Croatia), the Metropolia University of Applied Science in Helsinki (Finland) and the University of Applied Sciences FH Joanneum in Graz (Austria).

Besides, international standards from the IFBLS (International Federation of Biomedical Laboratory Science) and the European Declaration of Bologna were used in the design of the programme.

Heimerer College invests significantly in building a broad network of local and international governmental and non-governmental organisations, as international cooperation is a critical component of its sustainability strategy and business model. It has been able to enter into various international partnerships with leading European universities aimed at capacity development, promotion of research, development of missing competence profiles and professional standards, exchange of staff and students, etc., mainly funded by the European Commission through the TEMPUS and ERASMUS+ programmes and by the German government. In addition, the college is continuously involved in the creation and redesign of new and existing curricula and training modules.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

Among the teaching staff, 14 have Ph.D. degrees, 6 are Ph.D. candidates, 7 have M.Sc. degrees, 4 are M.Sc. candidates. 25 of the 34 academic staff have a full-time position at the college.

Assessment

Programme profile and objectives

According to the expert panel, the programme profile is clear and the overarching objectives are also well defined and described. The discussions with students and employers revealed that there is also clarity from this side about the competences taught in the programme.

The described qualification level corresponds to the Bachelor's level.

According to the experts, the college should reconsider the designation of the programme profile as "Laboratory Technician". Instead, "Laboratory Technology" would be more in line with international practice and better reflect the academic level.

Learning outcomes

As far as can be seen from the translated documents, the learning outcomes of the programmes are clearly defined. Students' learning is regularly assessed using a variety of assessment methods. The intended learning outcomes described in each module description are largely concise, clear and content-related.

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

There is a strong link between the intentions of the programme and the public needs in Kosovo. The portfolio of the Heimerer College meets public needs and requirements. The college makes great efforts in terms of needs analysis and consistently implements the results.

Overall, the experts appreciate the innovative character of the whole institution in a rather difficult social and public environment in Kosovo. The college seems to have a good partner environment and is appreciated by the regional health institutions. Heimerer College students are readily accepted for internships. From many discussions in the field, it is clear that the graduates are well trained and able to apply the acquired skills in their respective fields of work.

Relation between study and research

The study programme refers to research; there are also opportunities for students to carry out their own research projects. Great emphasis is placed on teaching methods of investigation and analysis.

The experts welcome the high proportions of laboratory work and practical studies

Overall, the link between study and research is entirely appropriate for the Bachelor's level. Graduates are well equipped to go on to a consecutive Master's programme and to apply the skills they have acquired to the non-academic labour market.

International dimension

The experts appreciate the Heimerer College's broad and long-standing international partner network. Representatives of the partners took part in some of the online meetings, demonstrating the good cooperation with the college. The implementation of all programmes at the college is accompanied by a continuous dialogue with the international partners as well as with the German parent institution.

During the visit and in all the documents, the importance of the international network, of which the college sees itself as an active part, was repeatedly emphasised. Against this background, the experts could not understand why the website is only available in Albanian.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

According to the experts, the qualification and number of teaching staff is appropriate for the Bachelor's level. It was clear from the interviews that the college is careful in its selection of teaching staff. There are explicit criteria and procedures for recruiting staff, which are widely accepted and meet international standards. Great emphasis is placed on pedagogical skills, but also paid to publications and academic reputation. Nevertheless, the level of English observed during the site visit was rather problematic.

Areas for improvement

The English language skills of both staff and students should be improved. As sensible and positive as it seems to the experts to conduct the study programme in Albanian and to provide appropriate Albanian teaching materials in the medium term, this no longer meets the requirements of study programme, which aims to be an internationally competitive. The actual language skills at Heimerer College are probably much better than is perceived on the ground – what is lacking is the confidence to use them. The college can very well compensate for this by offering extra-curricular language courses in English (as they already do with German!).

Exchanges and mobility opportunities for students and staff could also play an important role here and could also be strengthened.

Recommendations

If Heimerer College wants to be perceived internationally, it should improve both its external presentation with English descriptions on the website and the concrete English skills of staff and students.

The experts recommend renaming the programme to “Laboratory Technology” instead of “Laboratory Technician”.

3.1.4. Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)

Current status

Programme profile and objectives

The study programme “Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)” is a two-year full-time programme. Successful graduates receive a Master’s degree. Table 5 shows some statistical information on the programme:

Name of study programme	**Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)**
Final degree	M.Sc.
Duration of study	2 years / 4 semester
Credits (ECTS)	120 / 60 per year
Number of students per semester	60
Full-time academic staff in the programme	17
Part-time academic staff in the programme	5

Table 5 – Data on the study programme

The planned Master’s programme “Digital Healthcare” aims to transform traditional healthcare systems throughout Kosovo and the South-East European region into digital and intelligent environments, while enabling professionals with diagnostic and therapeutic backgrounds to deliver digital therapy and rehabilitation services using a patient-centred approach.

Future graduates will also be prepared to assess and implement stakeholder requirements to develop marketable digital health services.

The programme aims to recruit students from diverse backgrounds, who are at an early stage of their professional development and who aspire to make a breakthrough into the future and digital health practice.

Learning outcomes

The planned Master's programme aims to expand the know-how and technical skills in digital health services, evidence-based patient monitoring, public health, digital transformation, health policy implementation, virtual hospital managing, patient data governing, and virtual communication. The programme is categorised in the following areas:

- digital health, therapeutics and rehabilitation (divided into service provision and assessment, and patient monitoring)
- research
- healthcare systems.

The learning outcomes are described as follows:

- Build digital healthcare services that comprise best practices and stakeholders' use cases
- Prepare reports on the milestones, performances, and business impacts of digital assistive technology for therapeutics and rehabilitation
- Illustrate objectives for improving health and changing behaviour towards digitalization
- Apply effective communicative and interactive strategies on healthcare issues
- Present medical reports to patients considering challenges on the emotive and intellectual aspects of the patient-doctor relationship
- Apply statistical analysis to provide suggestions to improve digital health systems
- Design and implement assistive healthcare systems to aid patients and improve their life quality
- Operate modern assistive systems to support health and social care rehabilitation over large-scale patient data sources
- Use evidence-based management principles to solve problems, plan, and make decisions
- Employ advanced knowledge of health and well-being to develop assistive systems for therapeutics and rehabilitation
- Categorise the needs of stakeholders to plan, design, and manage digital health products
- Monitor and improve health safety, quality, access, and care delivery processes
- Interpret anomalous events on remote patient monitoring systems

- Sketch and formalise requirements to assess viable solutions for migrating traditional healthcare to digital systems
- Investigate social and behavioural health determinants and analyse how digital healthcare systems meet the needs of vulnerable patients
- Associate the soft skills of the healthcare personnel with their technical counterparts to ensure organisational, professional, and ethical compliance in digital hospitals
- Organise technological aspects in digital healthcare following data provision and privacy regulations.[11]

Table 6 shows how the learning outcomes are distributed across the three main content areas.

	Area			
	Digital health, therapeutics, and rehabilitation (55%)		Research (20%)	Healthcare Systems (25%)
	Service provision and assessment	Patient monitoring		
Subject knowledge and understanding skills	Design and implement assistive healthcare systems to aid patients and improve their life quality Use evidence-based management principles to solve problems, plan, and make decisions Employ advanced knowledge of health and well-being to develop assistive systems for therapeutics and rehabilitation Categorize the needs of stakeholders to plan, design, and manage digital health products	Monitor and improve health safety, quality, access, and care delivery processes Interpret anomalous events on remote patient monitoring systems	Sketch and formalize requirements to assess viable solutions for migrating traditional healthcare to digital systems Investigate social and behavioral health determinants and analyze how digital healthcare systems meet the needs of vulnerable patients	Organize technological aspects in digital healthcare following data provision and privacy regulations
Practical skills	Build digital healthcare services that comprise best practices and stakeholders' use cases. Illustrate objectives for improving health and changing behavior towards digitalization Associate the soft skills of the healthcare personnel with their technical counterparts to ensure organizational, professional, and ethical compliance in digital hospitals	Apply effective communicative and interactive strategies on healthcare issues	Apply statistical analysis to provide suggestions to improve digital health systems	Prepare reports on the milestones, performances, and business impacts of digital assistive technology for therapeutics and rehabilitation Operate modern assistive systems to support health and social care rehabilitation over large-scale patient data source Present medical reports to patients considering challenges on the emotive and intellectual aspects of the patient-doctor relationship

Table 6 – Learning outcomes (Source: self-evaluation report, annex)

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

The Master's programme prepares students for a variety of digital service delivery and project management roles in the healthcare sector. Graduates may work in the following senior roles, just to name a few: digital health advisor, digital health assistant, digital clinical safety lead, digital health and wellness analyst.

It is known that most students at Heimerer College are Kosovar citizens. However, the Master's programme aims to attract students from South-East European countries by relying on a curriculum that combines theoretical and practical field studies to emphasise the development of consolidated digital health practitioners.

[11] Cf. self-evaluation report, p. 43-44

Relation between study and research

The academic staff at Heimerer College promotes teaching methods and techniques that continuously improve academic and professional work, teaching and learning, practice and research. Therefore, lecture-based learning, problem-based learning, project-based learning, simulation-based learning, practice-based learning, reflection-based learning, research-based learning, online-based learning, blended learning, etc. come to use. Students are supported in creating their self-defined learning processes.

Throughout the programme, students learn to work with evidence-based practice, a continuous, accurate and measured use of evidence to make therapeutic decisions with the client. Decision-making is based on the integration of individual clinical expertise and the best available external evidence from systematic research. The client's movement problems, preferences and expectations as well as the internal and social environment have a significant impact on evidence-based practice.

The practical parts of the programme take place both internally in the student-run Multidisciplinary Allied Health Practice Centre (SMAHPC), in the student-run Interdisciplinary Allied Health Digital Practice Centre (SIAHDPC) and in the Future Care Lab (FCL)[12].

The FCL was developed as part of the Innovation, Care and Robotics project funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Science to promote the use of digital and robotic care in the Western Balkans. The FCL is a mirror laboratory of the FCL at the University of Halle. It has a futuristic feel and several robots are used to practice the use of social assistive technologies.

International dimension

The programme design follows international, including ISO/TC 304 Healthcare Organization Management[13] standards. In addition, this programme is aligned with the Digital Competence Framework for Citizens (DigComp)[14] to provide a digital professional development environment for all future graduates of the programme. The development process considered several existing international programmes from the US, Italy, UK, New Zealand. To facilitate collaboration, Heimerer College has made several international agreements that allow students to work abroad and conduct research in foreign research groups. Further expansion of these opportunities is planned.

As already mentioned before, Heimerer College invests significantly in building a broad network of local and international governmental and non-governmental organisations, as international cooperation is a critical component of its sustainability strategy and business model. It has been able to enter into various international partnerships with leading European universities aimed at capacity development, promotion of research, development of missing competence profiles and professional standards, exchange of staff and students, etc., mainly funded by the European Commission through the TEMPUS and ERASMUS+ programmes and by the German government. In addition, the

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[12] The FCL was developed as part of the Innovation, Care and Robotics project funded by the German Federal Ministry of Education and Science to promote the use of digital and robotic care in the Western Balkans. The FCL is a mirror laboratory of the FCL at the University of Halle. It has a futuristic flair and several robots are used to practice the use of social assistive technologies.

[13] Cf. https://www.iso.org/committee/6131376.html (accessed 28 April 2023)

[14] Cf. https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC128415 (accessed 28 April 2023)

college is continuously involved in the creation and redesign of new and existing curricula and training modules.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

The programme has a total of 13 Ph.D.'s and 6 Cand. In addition, people with an M.Sc. are also involved to provide specific digital expertise. 77% of the staff are full-time, while 23% are part-time.

Assessment

Programme profile and objectives

According to the expert panel, the programme profile is clear and the overarching objectives are also well defined and described. From the experts' point of view, the planned programme is very innovative and up to date.

The described qualification level corresponds to the Master's level.

Learning outcomes

As far as can be seen from the translated documents, the learning outcomes of the programmes are clearly defined. Students' learning will be regularly assessed using a variety of assessment methods. The intended learning outcomes described in each module description are largely concise, clear and content-related.

The Master's level is maintained.

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

Without any doubt, there is a strong link between the intentions of the programme and the public needs in Kosovo. The whole portfolio of the Heimerer College meets public needs and requirements. The college makes great efforts in terms of needs analysis and consistently implements the results.

A new digital healthcare offer could make the college more attractive to the entire Balkan region. In terms of digital cooperation, it would also be possible to cooperate with the few internationally available programmes of the same type.

Overall, the experts appreciate the innovative character of the whole institution in a rather difficult social and public environment in Kosovo. The college seems to have a good partner environment and is appreciated by the regional health institutions. Heimerer College students are readily accepted for internships. From many discussions in the field, it is clear that the graduates are well trained and able to apply the acquired skills in their respective fields of work.

Relation between study and research

The study programme refers to research; research is also made topic of the programme, esp. in the last semesters. The experts recognise that Heimerer College is making great efforts in this regard. In their view, the programme meets the requirements for a Master's degree.

In any case, the graduates are well equipped for later professional life, also in terms of exposure to research and research methods.

International dimension

The experts appreciate the Heimerer College's broad and long-standing international partner network. Representatives of the partners took part in some of the online meetings, demonstrating the good cooperation with the college. The implementation of all programmes at the college is accompanied by a continuous dialogue with the international partners as well as with the German parent institution.

During the visit and in all the documents, the importance of the international network, of which the college sees itself as an active part, was repeatedly emphasised. Against this background, the experts could not understand why the website is only available in Albanian.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

According to the experts, the qualification and number of teaching staff is appropriate for the Master's level. It was clear from the interviews that the college is careful in its selection of teaching staff. There are explicit criteria and procedures for recruiting staff, which are widely accepted and meet international standards. Great emphasis is placed on pedagogical skills, but more attention is increasingly paid to publications and academic reputation.

Those responsible for the programme have excellent expertise and a strong international profile. However, the university should ensure that the success of the programme is not too dependent on individuals and that, in the medium term, the necessary competence is built up throughout the university. There is already a great deal of interest in the subject, particularly among junior staff and students from other courses.

Areas for improvement

The English language skills of both staff and students at Heimerer College should be improved. The "Digital Healthcare" Master's programme will inevitably be taught primarily in English, which means that both the expected students and the faculty from other disciplines will need to develop their English competencies.

The actual language skills at Heimerer College are probably much better than is perceived on the ground – what is lacking is the confidence to use them. The college can very well compensate for this by offering extra-curricular language courses in English (as they already do with German!).

Exchanges and mobility opportunities for students and staff as well as online cooperation (which is to be expected) could also play an important role here and could also be strengthened.

Recommendations and conditions

If Heimerer College wants to be perceived internationally, it should improve both its external presentation with English descriptions on the website and the concrete English skills of staff and students.

For the Master's programme (students and staff), courses for scientific English – comparable to the existing extracurricular German language courses – must be established.

3.2. Curriculum

The second criterion concerns the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning methods. The expert panel evaluate, whether the curriculum of the programme is adequately structured to achieve the intended learning outcomes and whether the curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and methodological expertise of the relevant discipline(s). The experts also evaluate the organisation of the learning process, especially if there are appropriate student-centred teaching and learning methods, if students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process and whether the diversity of students and their needs is taken into account.

3.2.1. Psychology (B.Sc.)

Current status

Programme structure

The study programme "Psychology (B.Sc.)" is a three-year full-time programme with a total of 180 ECTS credits. The programme emphasises the acquisition of basic knowledge, problem solving, critical thinking, communication skills, ethical and social diversity perspectives, research methods and the latest practical and scientific findings related to psychology.

The curriculum is designed so that students can orient themselves in related disciplines in order to acquire both epistemological and interdisciplinary foundations as well as specific knowledge in various subfields. The curriculum provides basic training in all psychological specialties and in the major theories and techniques of psychology, and provides a basic introduction to the skills of psychologists and to research in psychology. Throughout the programme, students are exposed to both explanatory and technological or intervention theories. The content and weighting of the courses in the Bachelor's programme are shown in table 7.

Year I – Psychology (B.Sc.)						
Semester I				Hours		
No.	**O/E**	**Module**	**Lecture**	**Practice/ Exercise**	**Self-study**	**ECTS**
1	O	Introduction to Psychology	30	0	180	7
2	O	History of psychology	30	0	120	6
3	O	Developmental psychology	30	30	120	6
4.	O	Academic writing	30	15	135	6
5	E	Industrial/Organisational Psychology	30	15	90	5
5	E	Multicultural Psychology	30	15	105	5
Total semester I						30
Semester II						

1.	O	Social psychology	30	15	135	6
2	O	Introduction to counselling psychology	30	30	180	8
3.	O	Biological Psychology	30	15	135	6
4.	O	Research methods I	30	30	120	6
5.	E	Evolutionary Psychology	20	10	90	4
5.	E	Motivation and Emotion	20	10	90	4
Total semester II						30
Total Year I						60
Year II – Psychology (B.Sc.)						
Semester III						
1.	O	Theories of Personality	30	15	135	6
2.	O	Psychopathology	30	30	120	6
3	O	Client – centred therapy	30	30	180	8
4.	O	Educational Psychology	30	15	135	6
5	E	Differential psychology	30	15	75	4
5	E	Psycholinguistics	30	15	75	4
Total semester III						30
Semester IV						
1	O	Introduction to Clinical Psychology	30	30	180	8
2	O	Research Methods 2 (Statistic)	30	30	120	6
3	O	English writing (English for psychology)	30	15	105	5
4	O	Assessment Psychology	30	30	120	6
5	E	Human Learning and Memory	30	15	105	5
5	E	Neuropsychology	30	15	105	5
Total semester IV						30
Total Year II						60
Year III – Psychology (B.Sc.)						
Semester V						
1.	O	Health Psychology	30	15	135	6
2.	O	Cognitive Behavioral Psychology	30	30	180	8
3.	O	Ethics	30	15	105	5
4.	O	Research Methods 3 (Qualitative)	30	30	120	6
5	E	Sport Psychology	30	15	105	5
5	E	Forensic Psychology	30	15	105	5

5	E	Innovation and Entrepreneurship in Psychology	30	15	90	5
Total semester V						30
Semester VI						
1	O	Introduction to Psychoanalysis	30	30	180	8
2	O	Thesis in psychology		40	320	12
3	O	Practicum in Psychology		240	60	10
Total semester VI						30
Total Year III						60
Total						180

Table 7 – Study plan (Source: self-evaluation report, p. 30-31)

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

The education process consists of lectures, seminars, practical lessons and clinical practice, individual students' work with participation of mentors and other extracurricular and curricular activities. All is described in the course syllabus. Each evaluation method is also listed in the syllabus of the respective course.

Table 8 shows an example of a syllabus.

Module title: Biological Psychology

ECTS credits: 6

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Module Description:
Biological Psychology is the study of behavioral neuroscience. During this lecture-based course, students will be introduced to this dynamic field, which investigates the brain, its structure and function, and the ways in which the brain drives behaviors and other psychological processes.

Outcomes and Objectives:
1. Understand classic and current developments in the field of biological psychology.
2. Be an informed consumer of biological psychology information.
3. Knowledge about the effect of the biological and neural system in mental health.
4. The interconnection between psychological and biological processes

Teaching and learning methods:
- Lectures
- Group Work
- Self-reflecting Exercises
- Research based learning
- Project based learning

Assessment Method:
- Written Exam,
- Seminar work,
- attendance,
- Peer evaluation

IT:
LCD Projector, PowerPoint, Projector

The ratio between the theoretical and practical part of the module study:

Lecture	Seminar	Exercises / Clinical Practice	Self-study	Total hours
30	15		135	180

Basic Literature:
1. Biological Psychology. Cengage Learning. James W. Kalat. 2018.
2. Discovering Behavioral Neuroscience: An Introduction to Biological Psychology. Cengage Learning. Laura A. Freberg. 2018.
3. Handbook of psychology. Biological psychology. Wiley. Irving B. Weiner. 2003.

Table 8 – Example from the syllabus (Source: Heimerer College)

Organisation of students' learning experience

The programme curriculum contains 34 modules, from them 23 are mandatory modules and 11 elective modules. Before starting the semester, students are informed about the elective module for the corresponding semester and are asked to choose one of the proposed modules. After the students finish the courses, the credits are awarded, and the students complete a course with a passing grade.

The curricula have been designed to give students the opportunity to build on their previous knowledge, to gain a broad understanding of psychotherapy and to become familiar with current issues in research. The research project in the final semester allows them to gain experience in designing, planning, conducting and evaluating research. The process is supervised and assessed by supervising staff. Assessment is based on a proposal, a submitted protocol, ongoing evaluation of the work and the thesis itself. This allows students to gain practical experience and work independently.

The psychology placement is an independent study opportunity. The aim of the programme is to provide students with the opportunity to gain experience directly relevant to their study of psychology, including human factors, health psychology, clinical psychology, etc. Students will be placed as volunteers in health institutions, private organisations, schools, University Hospital of Kosovo, etc. The group consists of 8 students and this distribution is done in full accordance with the institutional capacities and specifications in the services offered, as foreseen in the programme.

Another aim of this undergraduate programme is to provide students with a structured experience to introduce them to an environment where basic psychological principles are applied. The specific learning outcomes will be determined individually for each student. The internship is expected to comprise 12 ECTS, 160 hours of practice and 80 hours of independent study. Different cooperating institutions provide such placements. 10% of these placement hours must be used by students for a humanitarian activity that allows them to develop and express their will to work with marginalised groups in society.

Assessment

Programme structure

The expert panel assess the curriculum as well structured and logical. The subjects and modules are well defined and cover the relevant content and competences to meet the programme's prescribed objectives and learning outcomes. In the experts' opinion, the course arrangement generally considers the competencies and skills later required in the professional occupation in different areas.

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

Heimerer College has broad experience with both appropriate and innovative teaching methods. Students and teaching staff with whom the experts had the opportunity to talk to reported a good learning atmosphere combined with a general policy of openness which makes it easy to solve difficulties and problems fast and sustainable. The experts had the impression that teachers see themselves to be more learning supporters rather than instructors.

A variety of teaching methods are used. The teaching methods are described in the syllabi, which also describe in detail which assessment forms are used during the semester. In sum, the curriculum and the actual courses seem to be well planned.

Organisation of students' learning experience

The combination of theory and practice and the structure of the degree programme seem logical and sensible. Students are well advised by the college staff. The experts were impressed by the family atmosphere and the open-door policy. In the syllabus, in most cases it is clearly described what prior knowledge is required before taking a module.

Areas for improvement

The descriptions in the syllabi sometimes show considerable differences. Here, the college should continuously take editorial action, preferably under the leadership of Quality Assurance. The literature references should also be regularly checked and updated. Random checks showed some publications from the 1990s or 2000s, of which there are certainly more recent editions.

Recommendations or conditions

None.

3.2.2. Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)

Programme structure

The study programme "Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)" programme is a two-year full-time programme with a total of 120 ECTS credits. The programme emphasises problem solving, critical thinking, research methods and the latest practical and scientific findings related to the clinical field. The following three areas are covered:

- Psychotherapy and Diagnostic (40%)
- Practical Exercises (30%)
- Research (30%).

The content and weighting of the courses in the Master's programme are shown in table 9.

Year I – Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)						
Semester I				Hours		
No.	**O/E**	**Module**	**Lecture**	**Practice/ Exercise**	**Self-study**	**ECTS**
1	O	Statistic and Advanced methodology in scientific research	30	30	90	5
2	O	Psychology of Counselling	30	30	90	5
3	O	Test Development	30	15	75	4
4.	O	Psychopathology and Classification Manuals	30	30	120	6
5.	E	Developmental and Diversity Psychology	30		90	4
5.	E	Health Psychology	30		90	4

6.	O	Practice/Internship		120	60	6
Total semester I						30
Semester II						
1.	O	Psychological disorders of children and adolescents	30	30	90	5
2.	O	Neuropsychological Assessments and Interventions	30	30	90	5
3.	O	Cognitive Behaviour Psychotherapy	30	30	90	5
4.	O	Client Centeredness Therapy/Rogerian Therapy	30	30	90	5
5.	E	Interprofessional Collaboration	30	15	75	4
6.	E	E-Health Interventions in Mental Healthcare	30	15	75	4
7.	O	Practice		120	60	6
Total semester II						30
Total Year I						60
Year II – Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)						
Semester III						
1.	O	Adults' psychological disorders	30	30	90	5
2.	O	Psychoanalytic Therapy	30	30	120	6
3.	O	Personality and IQ tests – Test Application	30	15	75	4
4.	O	Integrative Psychotherapy	30	30	120	6
5	E	Psychology of Career and Career Assessment	30	15	45	3
5	E	Psycho-traumatology	30	15	45	3
6.	O	Practice		120	60	6
Total semester III						30
Semester IV						
3.	O	Family Psychotherapy	30	30	120	6
4.	O	Practice		120	60	6
5.	O	Thesis		20	520	18
Total semester IV						30
Total Year II						60
Total						120

Table 9 – Study plan (Source: self-evaluation report, p. 41-42)

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

The education process consists of lectures, seminars, practical lessons and clinical practice, individual students' work with participation of mentors and other extracurricular and curricular activities. All is described in the course syllabus. Each evaluation method is also listed in the syllabus of the respective course.

A sample syllabus is shown in chapter 3.2.1.

Organisation of students' learning experience

The programme curriculum contains 19 modules, from them 13 are mandatory modules and 6 elective modules. Before starting the semester, students are informed about the elective module for the corresponding semester and are asked to choose one of the proposed modules. After the students finish the courses, the credits are awarded, and the students complete a course with a passing grade.

The practical component allows students to become familiar with working in clinical settings and with techniques and methods of psychotherapy, including assessment and treatment. Clinical practice is gained outside and inside the college and the Heimerer Therapeutic Centre with a group of 4 students, this group size is fully in line with the institutional capacities and specifications of the services provided as foreseen in the study programme.

Clinical practice is supervised by licensed psychologists in the field of clinical psychology who are appointed throughout the Kosovo health system. In the second year, students will have a focus on clinical practice (18 ECTS; see ECTS distribution above) in healthcare institutions and psychotherapeutic clinics in Kosovo. About 10% of the practicum hours each semester (18 hours), students have to be devoted to humanatarian activity in the field of clinical psychology that enables them to develop and promote their will to work with marginalised groups in society.

Students will be evaluated by mentors and lecturers at the end of the clinical practice period using practical assessments based on the evaluation form and a test to verify that they have reached the required standard of competence in terms of knowledge, practical skills, personal development and professional practice. During the student's clinical practicum, documentation for each placement period is required to demonstrate that the environment in which completed their practicum was appropriate to the student's educational needs. Clinical placements expose students to different areas of study and give them an idea of where they would like to work after graduation. At the same time, the clinical staff can evaluate whether the students have acquired good clinical skills and competencies that can be used to predict their future work potential. Clinical practice (as the credits show) is the main focus of the programme. Heimerer College works with a range of appropriate healthcare facilities and clinics for placements.

Classes and peer supervision are also offered as part of the placement, where students have the opportunity to discuss their cases during the off-campus placement as professionals.

Assessment

Programme structure

The expert panel assess the curriculum as well structured and logical. The subjects and modules are well defined and cover the relevant content and competences to meet the programme's prescribed objectives and learning outcomes. In the experts'

opinion, the course arrangement generally considers the competencies and skills later required in the professional occupation in different areas.

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

Heimerer College has broad experience with both appropriate and innovative teaching methods. Students and teaching staff with whom the experts had the opportunity to talk to reported a good learning atmosphere combined with a general policy of openness which makes it easy to solve difficulties and problems fast and sustainable. The experts had the impression that teachers see themselves to be more learning supporters rather than instructors.

A variety of teaching methods are used. The teaching methods are described in the syllabi, which also describe in detail which assessment forms are used during the semester. Taken together, the curriculum and its actual courses seem to be well planned.

Organisation of students' learning experience

The combination of theory and practice and the structure of the degree programme seem logical and sensible. Students are well advised in the college. The experts were impressed by the family atmosphere and the open-door policy. In the syllabus, in most cases it is clearly described what prior knowledge is required before taking a module.

The practical guidance is well described.

Areas for improvement

The descriptions in the syllabi sometimes show considerable differences. Here, the college should continuously take editorial action, preferably under the leadership of Quality Assurance. The literature references should also be regularly checked and updated. Random checks showed some publications from the 1990s or 2000s, of which there are certainly more recent editions. The staff involved in teaching clinical competencies might provide more documentation about their clinical training, especially with regard to the different therapeutic approaches which are taught,

Recommendations or conditions

None.

3.2.3. Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)

Programme structure

The study programme "Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)" programme is a three-year full-time programme with a total of 180 ECTS credits. In line with the aim of having a programme with a strong practical component that provides graduates with a good foundation and professional experience, the leaders of this programme have designed a curriculum that covers four main areas of competence: scientific competencies (24 ECTS), professional competencies (72 ECTS), interdisciplinary competencies (40 ECTS) and practical competencies (44 ECTS). As this is a diagnostic Bachelor's degree that also includes multidisciplinary diagnostic ar-

eas, it is necessary to include academic credits and hours of professional clinical practice. The content and weighting of the courses in the Bachelor's programme are shown in table 10.

Year I – Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)						
Semester I				Hours		
No.	**O/E**	**Module**	**Lecture**	**Practice/ Exercise**	**Self-study**	**ECTS**
1.	O	Anatomy with Physiology	30	15	75	4
2.	O	Cell Biology	30	15	75	4
3.	O	Physics and Mathematics	30	15	75	4
4.	O	Chemistry and Stoichiometry	45	15	90	5
5.	O	Medical Informatics	15	15	60	3
6.	O	Professional English	15	15	60	3
7.	O	Clinical Practice I		135	15	5
8.	E	Health Psychology	15		45	2
9.	E	Communication skills	15		45	2
Total semester I						30
Semester II						
1.	O	General biochemistry	45	15	150	7
2.	O	General Microbiology	30	15	105	5
3.	O	Histology with Embryology	15	15	90	4
4.	O	Pathophysiology	30	15	75	4
5.	O	Research Methods and Academic Writing	15	15	60	3
6.	O	Clinical Practice II		135	15	5
7.	E	Emergency Medicine	15	15	30	2
8.	E	Public Health	15	15	30	2
Total semester II						30
Total Year I						60
Year II – Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)						
Semester III						
1.	O	General hematology	30	30	90	5
2.	O	Molecular biology	15	30	45	3
3.	O	Clinical Biochemistry	30	30	90	5
4.	O	Immunology	30	15	75	4
5.	O	Pathology with Immunohistochemistry	30	15	75	4

6.	O	Sterilization and Disinfection Procedures in Medicine (Basics of Hygiene)	15	15	60	3
7.	O	Clinical Practice III		105	15	4
8.	E	Functional diagnostics	15		45	2
9.	E	Nuclear Medicine	15		45	2
Total semester III						30
Semester IV						
1.	O	Clinical Hematology	30	15	105	5
2.	O	Human Genetics	30	15	105	5
3.	O	Clinical Cytology	30	15	105	5
4.	O	Professional Practice from Clinical Biochemistry		150		5
5.	O	Professional Practice from Pathology		150		5
6.	O	Basics of Medical Statistics	15	15	60	3
7.	E	Epidemiology with Ecology	15		45	2
8.	E	Measurement Techniques and Automation	15		45	2
Total semester IV						30
Total Year II						60
Year III – Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)						
Semester V						
1.	O	Professional Practice from Hematology		150		5
2.	O	Quality control of work in the Laboratory	15	15	90	4
3.	O	Clinical Microbiology	30	15	105	5
4.	O	Hemostasis	30	15	75	4
5.	O	Professional Practice from Clinical Cytology		150		5
6.	O	Transfusion Medicine	30	15	105	5
7.	E	Toxicology with Pharmacology	15		45	2
8	E	Medical Ethics and Legislation	15		45	2
Total semester V						30
Semester VI						
1.	O	Innovation and Entrepreneurship	30		120	5
2.	O	Clinical Practice in Clinical Microbiology		150		5

3.	O	Clinical Practice in Transfusion and Hemostasis		150		5
4.	O	Clinical Chemistry	30	15	105	5
5.	O	Diploma thesis	15		285	10
Total semester VI						30
Total Year III						60
Total						180

Table 10 – Study plan (Source: self-evaluation report, p. 20-22)

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

The education process consists of lectures, seminars, practical lessons and clinical practice, individual students' work with participation of mentors and other extracurricular and curricular activities. All is described in the course syllabus. Each evaluation method is also listed in the syllabus of the respective course.

A sample syllabus is shown in chapter 3.2.1.

Organisation of students' learning experience

Graduates must be able to work in a variety of contexts, including healthcare, prevention and education, carrying out diagnostic and therapeutic tasks, coordinating, reporting, documenting and carrying out tasks related to their professional development. Clinical placements are organised by the programme's Placement Supervisor, who draws up lists, informs students and takes care of other logistical aspects. Students are informed in good time about the placement schedule, tasks, responsibilities and rules of the placement and are distributed throughout the primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare system in Kosovo.

The first-year placement will take place in the laboratories of the Heimerer College. These laboratories have the necessary equipment and materials to acquire basic skills and knowledge.

The second- and third-year placements will be carried out in the laboratories of health institutions with which appropriate agreements have been made. The internship is supervised by clinical mentors. Prior to each semester of the academic year, the health institutions will be informed in good time of the placement schedule. During the student's placement there is a supervision process organised in two academic semesters.

Students also have a placement notebook, which lists the activities to be completed for each placement module and is checked by the placement supervisor at the end of each semester. This booklet is scanned and archived each term.

At the end of the clinical placement, the students are assessed by the placement supervisors in collaboration with the clinical mentors, through direct assessment by recording their performance in an assessment form (placement booklet) and through an examination to assess (check) whether they have achieved the required standard of competence in terms of knowledge, practical skills, personal development and professional practice.

Clinical practice is carried out in the form of rotations. Students are divided into groups in order to reduce the load on each laboratory and to provide a rewarding experience for the students.

Assessment

Programme structure

The expert panel assess the curriculum as well structured and logical. The subjects and modules are well defined and cover the relevant content and competences to meet the programme's prescribed objectives and learning outcomes. In the experts' opinion, the course arrangement generally considers the competencies and skills later required in the professional occupation.

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

Heimerer College has broad experience with both appropriate and innovative teaching methods. Students the experts have been talking to reported a good learning atmosphere together with a general policy of openness which makes it easy to solve difficulties and problems fast and sustainable. The experts got the impression that teachers see themselves to be more of learning supporters than instructors.

A variety of teaching methods are used. The teaching methods are described in the syllabi, which also describe in detail which assessment forms are used during the semester. All in all, the curriculum and its concrete implementation in the courses seem to be well planned.

Organisation of students' learning experience

The combination of theory and practice and the structure of the degree programme seem logical and sensible. Students are well advised in the college. The experts praise the family atmosphere and the open-door policy. In the syllabus, in most cases it is clearly described what prior knowledge is required before taking a module.

The practical guidance is well described

Areas for improvement

The descriptions in the syllabi sometimes show considerable differences. Here, the college should continuously take editorial action, preferably under the leadership of Quality Assurance. The literature references should also be regularly checked and updated. Random checks showed some publications from the 1990s or 2000s, of which there are certainly more recent editions.

Recommendations or conditions

None.

3.2.4. Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)

Programme structure

The study programme “Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)” is a two-year full-time programme with a total of 120 ECTS credits.

The curriculum covers three main areas of competencies: digital health, therapeutics and rehabilitation, research methods, and healthcare systems. The modules for each area of competence are divided into mandatory (bold-faced) and elective (underlined). Hence, students can personalize their learning plan according to their interests.

The content and weighting of the courses in the Master’s programme are shown in table 11.

Year I – Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)						
Semester I				Hours		
No.	**O/E**	**Module**	**Lecture**	**Practice/ Exercise**	**Self-study**	**ECTS**
1	M	Foundations of Health and Wellbeing	30	0	120	5
2	M	Evidence-based Practices in Digital Health	60	30	210	10
3	M	Advanced Research Methods	30	15	105	5
4	M	Health Information System	30	15	105	5
5.a	E	Healthy Aging	30	15	105	5
5.b	E	Persuasive Technologies for Behavioural Change	30	15	105	5
Total semester I						30
Semester II						
1	M	Remote Services in Hybrid Healthcare Systems	30	10	110	5
2	M	Emerging Technologies in Rehabilitation	60	30	210	10
3	M	Digital Guidance and Interaction	30	15	105	5
4	M	Theory and Practice of Strategic Planning and Management in Health Services Organisations	45	15	150	5
5.a	E	Bioinformatics	25	20	105	5
5.b	E	AI in Healthcare	25	20	105	5
Total semester II						30
Total Year I						60
Year II – Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)						
Semester III						
1	M	Introduction to Biostatistics	30	15	105	5

2	M	Sensing Technologies for Diagnostics and Patient Monitoring	60	30	210	10
3	M	Health Data Analytics	30	15	105	5
4	M	Critical Incident Report Systems	30	10	110	5
5.a	E	Change Management	30	15	105	5
5.b	E	Health Governance, Ethics and Law	30	15	105	5
Total semester III						30
Semester IV						
1	M	Master's Thesis	5	5	590	20
2	M	Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Healthcare	30	15	105	5
3	M	Perspectives in Assistive Technology	25	20	105	5
Total semester IV						30
Total Year II						60
Total						

Table 11 – Study plan (Source: self-evaluation report, p. 48-49)

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

Many learning methods will be used to ensure a positive, student-centred learning experience. In line with the structure of the proposed programme, teaching will take the form of lectures, seminars, practical classes and clinical practice, individual student work involving mentors and other extra-curricular and curricular activities.

All is described in the course syllabus. Each evaluation method is also listed in the syllabus of the respective course.

A sample syllabus is shown in chapter 3.2.1.

Organisation of students' learning experience

To be used:

- Blended Learning: Heimerer College will use a blended model where teaching will be delivered through the traditional method of lectures on topics of interest as well as online seminars and other online learning opportunities. The aim is to continue to work in an unpredictable global environment without interruption, to allow flexibility when needed and to ensure that students have optimal time management and benefit from face-to-face interaction with their peers and lecturers, but also have the opportunity to focus on specific seminars and exercises delivered online. This type of learning has the added advantage of allowing students to work more independently and, where appropriate, research and study on their own, providing a more student-centred experience as opposed to a more didactic, teacher-based approach.

- Practice-based Learning: Through the College's links with a number of psychological centres in Pristina and internationally, candidates will have the opportunity to gain extensive practical experience of working in clinical settings.
- Research-based Learning: Every student will undertake a supervised research project, where they will have the opportunity to develop their own research question in collaboration with one of the teaching staff, and be assisted to carry out the project. Some of these projects will involve statistical research, including meta-analysis, while other projects will be carried out in collaboration with external partners.
- Project-based learning: Students will work on a project over a period of time – from a week to a semester – that involves solving a real-world problem or answering a complex question. They will demonstrate their knowledge and skills by developing a product or public presentation for a real audience.
- Problem-based learning: Students will learn about a subject by working in groups to solve an open-ended problem. These problems act as a catalyst, accelerating the learning process and facilitating peer collaboration. This method enhances certain skills such as teamwork, leadership, communication, critical thinking and problem solving.

Assessment

Programme structure

The expert panel assess the curriculum as well structured and logical. The sub-subjects and modules are well defined and cover the relevant contents and competences to achieve the specified objectives and learning outcomes of the study programme. The curriculum is innovative and challenging.

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

Heimerer College has broad experience with both appropriate and innovative teaching methods. Students from other subjects with whom the experts had the opportunity to talk to reported a good learning atmosphere combined with a general policy of openness which makes it easy to solve difficulties and problems fast and sustainable. The experts had the impression that teachers see themselves to be more learning supporters rather than instructors.

Against this background, it is to be expected that this study programme will also work. A variety of teaching methods will be used. The teaching methods are described in the syllabi, which also describe in detail which assessment forms are used during the semester. All in all, the curriculum and its concrete implementation in the courses seem to be well planned.

Organisation of students' learning experience

The combination of theory and practice and the structure of the degree programme seem logical and sensible. In general, students are well advised in the college. The experts praise the family atmosphere and the open-door policy. In the syllabus, in most cases it is clearly described what prior knowledge is required before taking a module.

The extensive use of media will be a challenge - the 'field test' of the programme will be interesting!

Areas for improvement

The descriptions in the syllabi sometimes show considerable differences. Here, the college should continuously take editorial action, preferably under the leadership of Quality Assurance.

Recommendation

As soon as the Master's programme "Digital Healthcare" has started, it should be monitored; the experiences are certainly worth publishing later!

3.3. Student assessment

The third criterion focuses on the organisation of student assessments. The expert panel evaluates how the assessment of intended learning outcomes is organised and whether the amount and requirements of assessments are adequate. They also decide whether the requirements of the thesis reflect the level of the degree.

Overall, it is assessed whether the assessment criteria are transparent and used in a consistent way. It is also evaluated if the staff undertaking assessments is adequately qualified. Last but not least, it should be verified if examination regulations exist and if they provide clear and fair regulations for student absence, illness and other mitigating conditions.

Current status

Organisation of assessment of intended learning outcomes

Heimerer College has implemented procedures for ensuring the fulfilment of teaching and learning standards and learning outcomes. All processes are formally described and regulated in the following documents:

- Regulation for Teachers
- Regulation of Studies
- Guideline for Academic Staff

The teaching process, the exercises and all practices are monitored and monthly reported. Teaching methodology, assessment instruments and methodology as well as the literature and other didactic resources are regularly reviewed, whether they are adequate to the intended learning outcomes and compatible with the level of degree.

Students will be graded through a mix of examinations and class work as described in each module's syllabus. Typical forms of examinations are: assignments, projects, written tests, case studies, written exams, opinion papers, team projects, online discussions, peer assessments, individual reports, oral presentations, quizzes, individual research projects, weekly reaction paper, an internship report etc. Class participation can also be taken into account.

Adequacy of the amount and requirements of assessments with regard to the intended learning outcomes

All study programmes at Heimerer College have been developed against the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) and the European Qualifications Framework for Higher Education Area (EQFHEA).

The college takes all efforts to make the assessment in line with the expected results of each course to ensure the provision of quality teaching that leads to the predefined competences. There are filter mechanisms established, such as an ongoing monitoring of its implementation and ongoing evaluations of knowledge, skills and competencies. Besides ongoing evaluations of academic staff, Heimerer College undertakes an extra evaluation from other two bodies within the college, the Vice–Rector for Teaching and Quality Assurance Office. At the end of the academic year, those offices together with Dean's office organise the "quality week", where students from all study programmes and all years of study are subject to an overall evaluation. The evaluation data clearly shows the achieved progress as well as problems that would require solution, by exposing students to different tasks: individual interviews, questionnaires testing students' professional skills and other tasks, like writing a substantial essay, are the methods used to test students' professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired from the institution. To evaluate students' technical and social skills, two methods are used: solving of different professional problems and role play. Findings from these activities are used for further advancement of didactic methodology and teaching/learning processes in general.

Correspondence of the requirements of the thesis to the level of the degree

At Bachelor's degree, the thesis usually counts 15 credits that is half of a semester's credits. The remaining 15 credits mostly are final practice and one or two modules that mostly are related to thesis. The criteria for the subject of the thesis are that it has to address a core topic as well as a research question of value.

The Master thesis counts 30 credits; the last (usually fourth) semester is reserved just for working on the thesis. The topic is in direct connection to a student's personal focus (e.g., geriatrics, health management etc.). Heimerer College supports students in choosing a topic that would improve their later work opportunities.

Transparency and consistency of assessment criteria

Applicants and new students are informed through open-doors days and the orientation week. All new students are provided with an usb-stick which contains all study related regulations, syllabuses, and detailed information about the processes in the institution as well as about the assessment (methods and criteria): Each syllabus contains the assessment criteria. The methodology of the assessment is presented to students before starting the semester, during the first lecture. For the transparency, the syllabuses are placed in Heimerer College's MOODLE platform and is electronically accessible during the whole academic year.

Moreover, the first page of each exam always describes the criteria to avoid all misunderstanding with students. Students are evaluated with the following grades which are unified and used in a consistent way:

(A) – (EXCELLENT, from 91 to 100 points)
(B) – (VERY WELL, with some mistakes, from 81 to 90 points
(C) – (WELL, with some mistakes from 71 to 80 points)
(D) – (SATISFACTORY, with significant errors from 61 to 70 points)
(E) – (ENOUGH, minimum fulfilment of criteria, from 51 to 60 points)
(F, FX) – (failure to fulfil the minimum criteria, under 51 points)

Throughout the academic year ongoing assessment is organised. There are six exam deadlines organised by the Heimerer College:

- Term of January
- Term of June
- Term of April
- Term of September
- Term after the module
- Term with commission Students' success on the exam or other assessment of knowledge.

Adequacy of the qualifications of the staff undertaking assessments

Different assessment mechanisms and instruments of student achievement are dedicated to the measurement of different levels of knowledge, according to Bloom's taxonomy. On annual basis the college organises workshops and trainings with international, external, and internal evaluation experts to support the teachers of Heimerer College. In particular in 2020 there were three trainings organised with teachers whereby two of them covered the topic of the assessment methodologies. The assessment instruments are reflected in each of teacher's syllabus before they begin their course. Likewise, assessment techniques depend on the modalities of subjects and disciplines, but the core methodology is based on Bloom taxonomy, as well as how and in what form the teacher finds it as the most appropriate assessment methodology.

The academic staff is supported in the process of the preparation of exams: each exam has to be submitted to the Dean's Office at least 10 days prior to the exam for approval, and consultation is done with the Vice-Rector on Teaching and Learning and the Quality Assurance Office.

Availability of examination regulations

Heimerer College has a Regulation of Studies which defines the evaluation mechanisms, modalities and other characteristics in relation to assessment and exams, Article 9, article 10, article 11 Article 12, Article 13 Article 14 and Article 15. Whenever the need arises to make changes based on certain situations, specific guidelines are prepared which are approved in advance by the Academic Council. For instance, this year, in the period of Pandemic, the Heimerer College has organised exams in the institution but electronically through MOODLE under the prevention measures for Covid-19. For the situation, the Vice-Rector for Teaching and Learning has developed specific guidelines on how to adapt to the new online assessment methodology and all academic staff were trained in advance.

The Regulation of Studies, in particular Article 15 "Complaints for Evaluation", also clearly sets out the steps and procedures to be followed in case of dissatisfaction and non-consistency with the assessment of students. Furthermore, the academic staff is obliged by regulations to hold consultations with students before and after the exams, where any constrain and dilemma regarding the exam is addressed.

Availability of clear and objective regulations for student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances

According to the self-report Heimerer College ensures that the rights and obligations of students are regulated by the Study Regulation, which is public to students on the college intranet, the SIMS and MOODLE platform and is physically delivered to each student at the beginning of studies (see above). In Particular, the Article 9 “preliminary procedures before the exams” and Article 13 “Exceptions” also defines the time limit for taking the exam and eventual absences. Students’ absence, illness and other mitigating conditions are mainly addressed after the request of the student is delivered and the request is recorded by the dean’s office. According to the Study Regulation – besides the standard forms of assessment according to the foreseen timeframe, at the student’s request, a student’s entrance to examination may be allowed only if the dean of the academic unit approves her/ his request to enter the exam before the foreseen timeframe. This is permissible when the student is part of international exchange-study programmes when she/he is pursuing practical teaching abroad.

Above all, the following are some of the student’s rights for complaints provided by the Study Regulation:

a) Students have the right to complain about violations of the exam development rules. The appeal is submitted to the dean within 48 hours, from the moment of the completion of the exam.

b) The responsible programme officer makes a final decision after verifying the violations in cooperation with the Quality Committee and the Vice-Rector for Teaching.

c) If the complaint is fair, the examination shall be cancelled within three days from the day of the appeal and another exam takes place within that examination period.

Assessment

The expert panel appreciates the organisation and transparency of assessment in all the programmes. The amount and requirements of assessments with regard to the intended learning outcomes seem to be appropriate. They are fully in-line with international practice.

Defined assessment criteria exist and are transparent for students as well as for staff.

The students the experts talked with were well aware of the assessment criteria, they know what is expected and they know whom to contact in the case of problems or questions.

According to the experts, the staff undertaking the assessments is adequately qualified. The expert panel appreciates that Heimerer College undertakes great efforts to improve the assessment capabilities.

All examination regulations are available online. There are clear and objective regulations for student absence, illness and other mitigating circumstances.

A wide range of assessment tasks is used, which, however, are not in every case really comprehensibly assigned to the competences or knowledge to be tested.

Recommendations or conditions

None.

3.4. Organisation of the study programmes

Furthermore, the implementation of the programme has to be evaluated. The expert panel assesses the appropriateness of entry qualifications and the regulations for the recognition of qualifications (i.e., Lisbon Convention). It has to be reviewed whether the organisation of the study process allows the programme to be carried out in such a way that the intended learning outcomes will be achieved and whether the organisation of the study process also takes the diversity of students and their needs into account. It is evaluated how the implementation of the programme is managed (roles and responsibilities) and even whether the workload of the programme is adequate with respect to the necessity to reach the intended learning outcomes in the scheduled time frame. The organisation of the student life cycle (i.e. all (organisational) relationships between the student and the institution from enrolment to graduation) is also part of this criterion. The experts check whether the care services and student advisory services are suitable and – in case of a cooperation with internal and external partners – how the cooperation is organised.

Current status

Entry qualifications

The entry and application processes are regulated by the Regulation of Studies, which also define the target group for each study programme. All information on study opportunities is published on the website of the college[15] and other means of information such as social networks, to notify everyone about the possibility of registration.

For the application to a Bachelor's programme at Heimerer College, applicants must have at least 12 years school education, which is completed with a secondary school degree or Matura examination.[16]. Candidates must issue also the transcript as a record of grades showing their high school success, issued by the school and recognized by Ministry of Education and Science (MES) of the Republic of Kosovo. Besides, applicants have to pass the entry exam. Further completed basic studies, verified by a certificate or diploma might be acknowledged.

For application acceptance, the exam counts 40 %, Matura 30 % and the documented school grades another 30 %.

To start a Master's programme, students have to provide a diploma (at least Bachelor level). The average grade from the Bachelor's studies count 20 %, a personal interview is obligatory which counts another 60 %, knowledge in English language may count up to 20 %, too.

Enrolment is possible for each winter term. The application period is about 3 months (in 2021 from July 5 to October 5).

Specific criteria for "Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)"

All candidates who have successfully completed a Bachelor's degree in Psychology or relevant medical and social field can apply for the programme.

15 https://kolegji-heimerer.eu/ (accessed 28 April 2023)

16 Before 2008 Matura exam was not organised.

Specific criteria for "Digital healthcare (M.Sc.)"

Applicants must have completed a Bachelor's degree in either healthcare-related field, computer science/engineering, social sciences or other relevant medical fields. Their entry exam (consisting of prepared questions in the related fields through interviews) must have a score of at least 50% points.

Regulations for the recognition of qualifications

Heimerer College recognises educational achievements of students, which have been acquired at other higher education institutions. The recognition of qualifications (i.e., Lisbon Convention) is sufficiently regulated in the study regulations of the college.

Organisation of the study process

Heimerer College uses MOODLE as its e-learning platform as well as several digital resources (e.g., Google Meet). Especially during the current pandemic, virtual teaching and learning is conducted for lectures, seminars, classes, assignments, and communication. Even assessment had to be newly organised. The college has an extensive counselling system for students, which support students in different situations. Students are assisted in arranging their internships. Monitoring processes signal when students are at risk of falling behind in their study progress. Furthermore, the lecturers are also easily approachable for the students.

The teaching and learning forms, qualification goals of the programme, pedagogical concept, admission requirements, selection procedures, internships, study and examination requirements, recognition of achievements at other higher education institutions, regulations for student absence, illness and other mitigating conditions etc. are described in detail in the study regulations and module handbooks of the programme. The rules and regulations as well as the handbooks of all current programmes are available on the college's MOODLE system, are updated regularly and are adapted to changed requirements.

Information on the new study programme has not yet been published since they have to be accredited before.

Management of the study programme

The responsibilities are clearly regulated. Each faculty is organised with dean, vice dean, several assistants for organising teaching and research projects as well as responsible persons for organising practice. Responsibilities are defined in Terms of Reference. Their work is interrelated, and they cooperate to achieve the study programmes outcomes.

The direct responsibility for the implementation and the management of the study programme lies with dedicated persons for each programme.

Student workload

The allocation of credits at Heimerer College for a study programme or educational component is carried out according to the estimated student workload needed to achieve the defined learning outcomes. The overall student workload consists of a time for attending lectures as well as the time for preparing and taking exams, thesis writing, seminars and semester assignments. An effort of 30 hours is taken as a basis to

earn one credit point. One study year's effort equals 1,800 hours of work. Consequently, a Bachelor's programme corresponds to 5,400 hours of work, Master's programmes correspond to 3,600 hours of work.

The theoretical and practical classes vary on the content of each study programme but in general they must include at least 1/3 of the total number of hours, while the practical part of at least 1/2 of the total number of hours. Clinical exercises, again depending on the study programme, are conducted in average, with 10-12 students in the college, in simulated conditions in modern equipped cabinets for practicing training. Outside the college, clinical practice is conducted in groups of 8 students. According to the self-report, this division is fully in line with the institutional capacities and specifications of the services provided, as foreseen in the study programme.

For students who are already working in a health institution where the practice of certain competencies should take place, their work experience is recognized by Heimerer College for those competencies they have achieved as part of their job.

Student life-cycle and student support system

Clinical practice is supervised by clinical mentors who are appointed throughout the Kosovo health system, primary, secondary and tertiary. Students in the first-year start practicing in the primary sector (outpatient clinic); in the second year they continue in the secondary sector (regional hospitals) and in the third year in the tertiary sector at the (University Clinical Centre of Kosovo – UCCK). Students are evaluated by mentors and lecturers after the end of the clinical practice period, with a direct practical assessment based on the assessment form and with a test to verify that they meet the required skill standard in terms of knowledge, practical skills, personal development and professional practice. During the period when the student is in practice, documents must be created for each period of student practice to show that the environment where the practice has been held has been appropriate for the student's educational needs. It is intended that during the clinical practice students get acquainted with different areas of studying and get the first idea of where they would like to work after graduation. At the same time, employees at the clinic can identify students with good skills and competencies that will in the future calculate their potential for work.

Student life-cycle is organised in a lot of steps starting from the application for registration where the candidates meet with registration officers and after that they apply and wait for the enrolment exam. During this period the registration office informs candidates (future students) of the subjects and materials needed to prepare for the exam. After the exam and enrolment procedure the college organises the open-doors day and the integration week for all first-year students, led by the Dean Office and supported by the Pro-Rectorate for Teaching and the Centre of Heimerer Students. On the open doors day first year students are informed with the structured regulation of the institution. A welcome cocktail is organised to know each other, the academic staff and to get familiar with the institution. After that students are invited in groups to inform them about teaching methods, curriculum, methodology of implementation of the study program, including lectures, exercises, and practical part, also how to use official emails, System of Managing Data of Students (SIMS), MOODLE etc.

During the further academic year with formal lectures, exercises, and practice are invited to participate in extracurricular activities, when they become more experienced. They may even become a tutor and help new students to integrate.

Students are regularly informed via e-mail, MOODLE, social media, and internet sources, and they may participate in democratic processes with the Student Council and the Academic Council. In the final study period of writing the thesis, students get

full support from the institution (with seminars on how to write a thesis and even for related topics) as well as a personal mentor.

The college has implemented a model of dedicated study advisors during the whole study period. These advisors are appointed at the beginning of the first year, each responsible for about 20 to 30 students. They will hold regular meetings with students (about every two weeks) with the purpose to encourage and motivate them to participate in various activities like research, projects, humanitarian activities, debates, trainings, and more. Study advisors also discus student concerns (addressing them to the Dean and addressing issues depending on the student's concern) and connect students to the resources of the college for addressing and solving problems and eventual difficulties. The study advisor herself/ himself is a teacher, she/he is assisted by student tutors.

Cooperation with internal and external partners

In 2018, Heimerer College (HC) has adopted an institutional strategy 2018-2023 which sets the strategic and specific objectives, including those pertaining to the international/ institutional cooperation. It serves as the reference document in terms of allocating the actual resources in line with the institutional strategic objective of internationalization.

The HC has developed specific internal processes that define the specific roles and responsibilities of relevant institutional units with regard to these priority areas of internationalization:

- Exchange of staff and students
- Development of international projects/events
  - Joint academic programmes
  - International projects
  - International seminars/ conferences/ symposiums
- Cross border cooperation
- Integration at international relevant organisations/associations/networks

Currently, Heimerer College has a rather diverse and unique network of partners. It has successfully accomplished expanding its list of partners with whom it has signed formal agreements, containing clear terms of cooperation. The college is partner in three ERASMUS+ projects, two of them focused on capacity building (leading applicant in a project and member in the other) and one on a strategic partnership project.

Assessment

Entry qualifications

In the view of the experts, the entry qualification and regulations are appropriate, transparent and sensible. All information on the requirements and procedures can be found on the university website.

Regulations for the recognition of qualifications

Prior qualifications from other universities are recognised according to the Lisbon Convention. Corresponding regulations and a clear and transparent procedure exist. Recognition of prior professional work practice is also practiced.

Organisation of the study process and management of the study programme

The roles, obligations and responsibilities in the management are clearly defined and appropriately structured, people involved the experts could talk to are highly motivated and professional. Besides, the college has established methods and means for student involvement, both in giving feedback and in decision-making.

Student workload

Having heard the students, the expert panel assumes that the workload of the programmes is manageable. The college observes the students' workload regularly. However, the college itself reports quite high dropout rates (9 %). Besides, only 40 % of students complete their studies within the standard period of study. The college must conduct more detailed research into the causes of this. A high percentage of students was working at the same time that they were studying, so this might be a reason.

Organisation of the student life cycle

The experts note that there is excellent communication between students and teachers: learning groups are small, there seem to be lots of formal as well as informal contacts between teachers and students. The students the expert team could interview were very positive on the good organisation and atmosphere of the study process.

Student support system

According to the interviews with students, care services of Heimerer College and student advisory services are highly developed and both known and favoured by the students. Web information and communication services offered by the college play an important role and are frequently used.

Cooperation with external and internal partners

According to the experts' view there are robust cooperation links with both local organisations and institutions and higher education institutes from abroad. Within the college, the different departments and subjects also seem to harmonise excellently with each other, which the expert panel was able to perceive very clearly during the various interview sessions with changing compositions of persons.

Recommendations or conditions

None.

3.5. Resources

Central to the criterion "resources" is whether there are appropriate resource endowment and deployment in the involved faculties. The experts evaluate the existence of sustainable funding and financial management. They also evaluate whether the staff is adequately qualified and sufficient to ensure the intended learning outcomes and which strategies and processes for staff recruiting and staff development are used.

The experts examine if the amount and quality of facilities and equipment (library, laboratories, teaching rooms, IT equipment, etc.) allow the provision of the programme and if the resources are adequate to reach the programme's objectives.

Current status

Financial management and funding

Based on past years as well as strategic planning for the next six years, Heimerer College demonstrates sustainability based on proper planning, consistency of enrolled students over the years as well as international projects involving key benefits and activities are dedicated to study programmes, including the planned "Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)" programme. Within the strategic planning as well as the planning of the programme itself, there is also a financial plan that ensures the sustainability of programme implementation for the next six years.

Together with the self-evaluation report the college provided an income-expenditure overview.

Staff

Heimerer College has policies, procedures and guidelines adopted in accordance with the applicable legislation on higher education and as required by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). The academic staff of the college is registered with the KAA in accordance with the criteria set by the KAA in terms of teaching positions.

Staff are supported to continue their professional development. This includes ongoing training in important areas such as teaching methods, advancement in research, and most importantly in progressing in academic qualifications.

Staff recruiting process

As mentioned before and with all other programmes of the college, academic staff recruitment and selection follows the "Regulation on the Grading and Engagement of Academic Staff" which is included in the "Guidelines for Academic Staff". The regulation ensures that the selection, appointment, and promotion of academic staff is made according to the relevant qualifications and relevant workplace experience, thus effectively ensuring that all candidates are treated equally. The regulation on the degrees, titles, selection and promotion of academic staff is based on Law no. 04 / l-037 on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo and in the Status of Heimerer College.

Facilities

Heimerer College has a modern well-equipped campus in Prishtina with laboratories, teaching rooms, a library, IT equipment with a total area of 5,030 square meters. The college is constantly expanding opportunities for independent student learning, access to contemporary literature, and access to scientific journals. At the same time Heimerer College has spaces for extracurricular and social activities.

Dedicated cabinets are used for teaching and learning in the three profiles, all equipped with corresponding learning material.

Besides, the college offers its students and staff a range of electronic services for communication and efficient management of teaching and learning processes:

- the Student Management Information System (SIMS) which is the college's internal platform in which students have the opportunity to perform their services more easily, be informed, submit exams, see grades, schedule of lectures exercises, exams, different events as well as are able to submit requests for services provided by the student service
- a MOODLE e-learning system for facilitating the work of students and academic staff, the development of learning and access to literature
- equipment for teleconferences for online lectures
- E-library for use within the campus.

The whole teaching facility infrastructure is suitable for students with special needs. There are two elevators in the building of a capacity of 1,000 kg or 13 persons each. The entrance of the college building is wide and suitable for people with disabilities. In addition, the halls and cabinet halls are of enough width for students with disabilities. Also, as far as personal needs are concerned, the college has a well-equipped toilet, according to the highest standards, considering the needs of students with special needs.

Future Care Lab (FCL)

The focus of FCL is the development of complex use cases for the application of humanoid robotics (social assistive robotics). It is oriented towards care-centred value-sensitive design in order to integrate these adaptive technologies into the care process and into different settings under the guidance of care research. By aiming to train young professionals in the field of digital and robotic healthcare, the FCL will create a more attractive environment for them to stay in Kosovo instead of seeking employment elsewhere and attract new foreign investment, innovation and development. The German Federal Ministry of Education and Research is funding the lab as part of the Berlin Process.[17] As part of the same project, the German government is also supporting three young Kosovar scientists in their doctoral studies at the Medical Faculty in Halle.

Library

The library has 26 working places for students and is open during business days. In addition to the library, students have access to the classrooms which are free after the class schedule and at the period of the exams. These rooms can be used individually as well as for group preparation. Another 30 places for group work are implemented in the computer cabinet which is part of the library.

Heimerer College's library is equipped with 916 books, research and other materials that are also accessible electronically. Most of the printed material (approx. 150 copies) is not older than 20 years. Material in Albanian, English and German is provided.

Heimerer College has full membership in JSTOR,[18] a shared digital library created in 1995 that includes more than 2,000 academic journals. JSTOR was founded to help

[17] The Berlin process was set up in 2014 as a platform for high-level cooperation between high official representatives of the Western Balkan Six (WB6) and their peers in Berlin Process host countries. The Process also involves the EU institutions, international financial institutions and the region's civil society, youth and businesses.

[18] https://www.jstor.org/ (accessed 28 April 2023)

libraries and academic publishers transition their activities from print to digital operations, to expand access to scholarly content around the world and to preserve it for future generations. Every member of Heimerer College staff can have access to JSTOR's collections by browsing for the needed content and can download several articles periodically.

Staff publications in scientific journals are sent to students to be informed of the novelty occurring in their profession and encouraged to conduct research on therapeutic health sciences, as well as to be presented in local and international conferences.

All students and the university academic and administrative personnel are members of the library. They can borrow library materials in accordance with the rules.

Assessment

Financial management and funding

In the view of the experts, the financial management of the college is professional. The planning on which the new Master's programme is based, also seems comprehensible. However, the expert panel points out that the target numbers of new students are set very high, possibly even too high for adequate supervision to be possible. Alternative calculation models that assume fewer new entrants should therefore also be calculated.

Staff

From the point of view of the expert panel, the qualification of the teaching staff at Heimerer College seems adequate for study programmes at Bachelor's as well as Master's level. The college is continuously improving its staff.

The experts assess the recruiting procedures of the college as appropriate and in line with international academic practice. There were also reported cases of teachers being contacted and recruited directly by the college. According to the experts, this can be justified in individual cases, but care must be taken to ensure that job offerings and recruitment are always transparent. The current staff/ student ratio allows the college to maintain relatively small groups and a close contact between teachers and students.

The relation between full-time and half-time staff seems appropriate. The experts note from the interview sessions that teaching is carried out by dynamic and motivated lecturers. Some of them have international working and educational experience which is appreciated by the expert panel. The experts note that the academic output of the teaching staff (publications) still needs to be further developed in order to ensure the academic level in the long term.

As mentioned in chapter 3.1, the English language skill must be improved.

Facilities

The facilities of the college are outstanding for a higher education institute of this size and fully meet international standards. The equipment the experts saw during the site visit is all modern and up-to-date and allows a high quality of teaching.

The experts noticed that access to the internet via eduroam is not available on the whole campus. This is a limitation for foreign exchange for incomings as well as for outgoings.

Recommendations and conditions (cf. chapter 3.1)

If Heimerer College wants to be perceived internationally, it should improve its ex-ternal presentation (e.g., English version of the programme descriptions on the website). Moreover, the concrete English skills of staff and students.

For the Master's programmes (students and staff), courses for scientific English – comparable to the existing extracurricular German language courses – must be established.

3.6. Quality assurance

The criterion "quality assurance" focuses on the internal and external mechanisms used by the institution to monitor and improve the quality of the study programme: how the study programme is designed and implemented and how improvements are organised. The experts evaluate the existing quality assurance concept of the programme, and what kind of quality assurance processes and instruments are implemented, which indicators are used for monitoring the achievement of the programme's objectives, and how the institution and the persons responsible for the programme collect, analyse and use relevant information about their activities. Moreover, the experts examine whether quality assurance is used regularly, systematically and effectively for quality enhancement. and if quality feedback loops are closed. It is also evaluated how stakeholders (students, teachers, administration, employers) are involved in quality assurance and whether relevant programme information for students and prospective students is provided.

Current status

Quality assurance concept of Heimerer College

According to the self-report, quality development is seen as a common obligation, which involves all members and internal and external stakeholders of the college. The main responsibility for quality management lies with the Rector and the Academic Council. The deans and the Programme Commission on programme level are responsible for the quality assurance of the study programme they are responsible for.

To assure and enhance its quality, Heimerer College uses internal and external quality assurance instruments which are coordinated by the Quality Office which is established by the Rector and Academic Council. The quality assurance instruments and processes are implemented and described in the "Regulation on the Quality Assurance System" which aims to build a mechanism for promoting and achieving the highest level of quality and standards in educational and scientific activities, as well as the professional activities, administrative services and other support services of Heimerer College. The "Regulation on the Quality Assurance System" covers the area of quality assurance continuous improvement and routines. It specifies the processes and mechanisms which are focused on the analysis of the actual situation and reviewing the vision in relation to the strategic developments of the college, collecting weaknesses that were noticed during the quality assurance process; drafting the strategic plan for improving the weaknesses noticed during the year; foreseeing the innovations and need for changes during the self-evaluation process.

The most important quality circle at Heimerer is the five-year "Strategic Plan of the College" which sets strategic and specific objectives, including those related to quality assurance. Each academic unit develops its own strategic plan in alignment with the objectives of the college. The strategic plan contains measurable outcomes of strategic

planning goals and objectives and these measurable outcomes comprise of internal targets, which the college management agreed with academic and administrative units. The results contribute in defining improvement actions. These actions result in further improvement of the study programmes as well as administrative and support services.

All the academic and administrative units are included in the quality assurance process according to the planning. All internal and external participants within the educational process and scientific-research and professional activities of Heimerer College, participate in the design and development of the quality assurance system and make use of the results.

Internal participants are the students and teachers, associates, administrative, technical and support staff of Heimerer College. External participants are legal representatives and organisations related to the activities of Heimerer College (e.g., educational institutions, healthcare, businesses, local and national government bodies, employers and alumni).

Quality assurance processes and instruments

All study programmes offered by Heimerer College are subject to regular internal and external evaluation (review) prior to their accreditation. The self-report describes self-evaluation measures conducted periodically. The results are regularly published on the website.

The model for self-evaluation adapted by Heimerer College is focused on three most important aspects for a higher education institution, including: quality of teaching, quality of learning and student support. For these three aspects, the college's own group for quality drafted effective evaluation methods, based on the Total Quality Management model (TQM).[19]

Heimerer College applies a 360-degree assessment process and within the assessment are several processes including the monitoring of the teaching conducted by the Quality Office. The office in cooperation with each deans' offices monitors teachers regarding the methodology, atmosphere, assessment and other components. The data is used to evaluate the teachers as well as the programmes and to look for comparisons over the years to assess whether the institution has made progress and achievement in the teaching process.

At the end of each semester, various regular evaluations are organised. The results of the internal and external quality assurance system are ensured by the following processes and instruments that are common to all academic units of the college:

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[19] The TQM model was developed in the 1950s by W. Edwards Deming and Joseph M. Juran. TQM follows 8 principles:

- Customer focus
- Total employee commitment
- Process approach
- Integrated system
- Strategic and systematic approach
- Continual improvement
- Fact-based decision-making
- Communications

- Evaluation of module and teacher performance (e.g., class visits)
- Evaluation of knowledge, skills and competences (e.g. through personal interviews)
- Evaluation of student support services (through questionnaires)
- Regular surveys among alumni
- Survey with employers
- Staff performance evaluation in cooperation with the Quality Office and with 4 instruments:
    1) Quality of work and satisfaction level of the staff
    2) Evaluation of the supervisor's performance by the employees.
    3) Staff Evaluation by the supervisors
    4) Agreement for further professional development

Feedback loops

After each evaluation, reports are prepared including recommendations and activities for quality improvement both in the teaching/ learning and administrative processes. These reports and analyses identify the needs for change, bring innovative ideas for implementation, based on them recommendations are given that are then included and implemented, either in programme development or in the teaching process, and in other important processes of the profile in order to increase the quality. The reports are shared with all members of Heimerer College.

Involvement of stakeholders

All academic and administrative units are included in the quality assurance process according to the planning. All internal and external participants within the educational process and scientific-research and professional activities of Heimerer College participate in the design and development of the quality assurance system and make use of the results.

On programme level, staff members participate in self-evaluations in all the areas and cooperate with the reporting processes arising from these evaluations. Also, at least weekly meetings are held to reflect the quality of work, based on quality reports, related co-teaching and learning process, the quality of the research and scientific aspects, as well as the quality of the various supporting and administrative services. All proposed activities are initially included in the strategic planning. They are then reflected in annual plans and are monitored in quarterly, monthly and weekly bases. Additionally, planning processes are continually completed, depending on the new needs identified by the quality assurance processes.

Students, lecturers, administrative staff are involved during the preparation of the self-assessment report in the framework of the first and periodical accreditation of the institution and the study programmes. Current students' feedback as well as alumni feedback obtained through the respective questionnaires is used as an input for the improvement of the study programme. At the same time student feedback for the supporting services is also used as an input for improving and assisting academic units such as library, IT and other services.

Quality assurance in research

The functions of the Vice-Rector for Research principally focus on promoting the college's research activities, as well as on education and research with particular reference to the Ph.D. programmes, evaluation of the quality of research, the development of competitive projects in collaboration with other institutions and national and international public partners, and promotion of the internationalization of research together with the Vice Rector for International Relations and the deans. This is best explained by the fact that the College has been organising the International Symposium of Health Sciences for 11 years now. This event includes oral presentation sessions and poster presentations addressing important health areas in order to advance and increase knowledge in the field of diagnostics, psychology, nursing, medicine and digitalization of health services.

To increase the involvement of staff and students in research activities, the research office employs support staff who are directly involved in the research. According to the self-report and to the interview sessions substantial improvements have been made in relation to the engagement of staff in research. Each deanery has created "research groups" with internal and external members from various fields of expertise. The aim of the group is to focus on one area of research in the long term, to be able to provide relevant, original, and advanced research studies in this field.

The Vice-Rector for Research and Quality organises regular monthly trainings for staff advancement in the field of research and quality improvement of Heimerer College publications. Some of the topics covered are: statistical analysis, writing of academic papers, publication process and other trainings in this field.

In order to advance the quality of scientific research at the institutional level and provide financial support, the Vice Rectorate for Research and Quality has formulated the document for financial support. The document sets out the criteria that scientific research must contain to gain support with one of these criteria being that only publications in journals with an impact factor greater than one will be financially supported. The financial remuneration is clearly regulated, and the application process is modernised.

A list of all the topics covered for the thesis work of students already exists within the IT infrastructure, which is searchable, and full documents are integrated with links. The list contains which topics, mentors, types of students, and which methodologies have produced higher quality research. This then will be used to guide the establishment of a catalogue for future topics for thesis.

Heimerer College is developing fast towards having a fully functional internal anti-plagiarism system. First, a database of electronic versions of all the submitted thesis of students in the college for all years already exists within the Vice-Rectorate of Research and Quality. Secondly, the relevant research staff have been recently introduced to the use of special anti-plagiarism software.

Assessment

The experts acknowledge a well-developed quality assurance system based both on formal and informal processes. The academic and administrative staff are very dedicated, act professionally and ambitiously and demonstrate that they have internalised all QA processes.

The experts assess the instruments employed as well adapted for a small institution as Heimerer College, professionally designed and coordinated by its quality assurance officer.

The college uses internal and external instruments in a professional way in order to assess their activities from different point of views and to get external feedback and expertise where necessary. They use the external support systematically to improve the internal capacities of the college, and further to manage its quality independently.

The quality assurance activities focus on teaching and learning as well as on research and administrative processes related to the well-being of students. During the online meetings the students confirmed that they are very satisfied with the education and the student services at the college. Students receive feedback on their comments given in the student evaluation surveys.

The quality assurance concept used by Heimerer College seems to be appropriate to assure and improve the quality of teaching and learning at the college. Moreover, the quality assurance instruments, which are currently in place, seem to be accepted and implemented throughout the institution and are used for further improvement.

Areas for improvement

More formal involvement of external experts in the college's internal quality assurance should be considered. These can be experts with an academic background as well as healthcare professionals.

Recommendations or conditions

None.

4. Final assessment

The experts would like to thank all participants and the organisers for the opportunity to gain insights into Heimerer College. The on-site visit gave many impressions of the institution. The open and constructive atmosphere was very much appreciated.

The expert panel confirm that the all four study programmes show clearly defined profiles, fully in line with the profile and the strategic goals of Heimerer College. Based on the self-report, the syllabus and the site visit, the expert panel conclude that the presented programmes fit well into the portfolio of the college, esp. in view of the college's overall vision of improving the healthcare system in Kosovo.

The learning outcomes of each programme and of each module are clearly defined. The combination of theory and practice and the structure of the programmes seem logical and sensible.

Students are well advised in the college. The experts appreciate the family atmosphere and the open-door policy.

The expert panel consider all shown curricula as well structured and logical. The subjects and modules are well defined and cover the relevant content and competences to meet the programmes' pre-defined objectives and learning outcomes. In the syllabi, in most cases it is also clearly described what prior knowledge is required before taking a

module. Minor weaknesses in the wording can be remedied relatively easily, according to the experts.

The course arrangements generally consider the competencies and skills later required in the professional occupation in different fields. There is a strong link between the intentions of the programme and the societal needs in Kosovo: Heimerer College makes big efforts to meet public needs and requirements – locally and abroad.

The qualification of the teaching staff involved in the programmes fulfil the requirements of higher education. However, the experts noted that English language skills of both staff and students should be improved. As sensible and positive as it seems to the experts to conduct all study programmes in Albanian and to provide appropriate Albanian teaching materials, in the long-term, this does meet the requirements of study programmes, which aim to be an internationally competitive. The actual language skills might be much better than it was shown during the site visit, but the college should take action and systematically offer extracurricular language courses in English (as they already do with German!).

Exchanges and mobility opportunities for students and staff (even online mobility) could also be further strengthened.

The study processes are well organised, roles, obligations and responsibilities in the management are clearly defined and appropriately structured. The people involved are highly motivated and professional. Moreover, the college has established methods and instruments for student involvement, both in giving feedback and in decision-making. Student progress is regularly assessed using a variety of assessment methods.

The facilities of the college are outstanding for a higher education institute of this size and fully meet international standards. The equipment the experts saw during the site visit is all modern and up-to-date and allow a high quality of teaching.

The quality assurance system is well-developed and based both on formal and informal processes. The academic and administrative staff are very dedicated, act professionally and ambitiously and demonstrated that they have internalised all QA processes.

Overall, everything that was presented fully convinced the experts and they recommend accreditation.

Assessment grades

No	Assessment criteria	Assessment
1	Programme profiles • Psychology (B.Sc.) • Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.) • Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.) • Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.) *Condition:* • (Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.), Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)) For the Master's programme (students and staff), courses for scientific English – comparable to the existing extracurricular German language courses – must be established.	A-B
2	Curriculum	A
3	Student assessment	A

4	Organisation of the study programme	A
5	Resources *Condition:* (Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.), Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)) For the Master's programme (students and staff), courses for scientific English – comparable to the existing extracurricular German language courses – must be established.	B
6	Quality assurance	A

Assessment levels

Level	Assessment	Description
A	**Passed.**	The programme fulfils or exceeds all criteria. All activities are in line with the profile and objectives of the programme and provided at a high academic level.
B	**Passed subject to conditions**	The programme does not fulfil some relevant criteria. However, the institution should be able to remedy the shortcomings within nine months after the assessment.
C	**Suspension of the accreditation procedure**	The programme does not fulfil relevant criteria, but it is likely, that it will be able to remedy the shortcomings within 18 months after the assessment. The HEI may apply for a resumption of the accreditation procedure.
D	**Failed**	The programme does not fulfil relevant criteria, and is not expected to be able to meet all assessment criteria within 18 months' time.

5. Accreditation recommendation of the expert panel to the evalag Accreditation Commission

According to the expert panel, the study programmes "Psychology (B.Sc.)", "Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)", "Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)" and "Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)" meet the evalag criteria for international programme accreditation. Therefore, the panel recommends them for accreditation and recommends awarding the evalag label for international programme accreditation.

The expert panel recommends Heimerer College to consider and implement the following conditions (C) and recommendations (R) in this report to further im-prove the study programmes.

Programme profile

R 1 **(All programmes)** If Heimerer College wants to be perceived internationally, it should improve its ex-ternal presentation (e.g., English version of the programme descriptions on the website). Moreover, the concrete English skills of staff and students.

C 1 **(Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.), Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.))** For the Master's programmes (students and staff), courses for scientific English – comparable to the existing extracurricular German language courses – must be established.

R 2 **(Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.))** The experts recommend renaming the programme to “Laboratory Technology” instead of “Laboratory Technician”.

Curriculum

R 3 **(Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.))** As soon as the Master’s programme “Digital Healthcare” has started, it should be monitored; the experiences are certainly worth publishing later!

Resources

Cf. **R 1, C 1**

6. Statement of Heimerer College to the assessment report

Programme Profile, Resources	
R 1 (All programmes) If Heimerer College wants to be perceived internationally, it should improve its external presentation (e.g., English version of the programme descriptions on the website). Moreover, the concrete English skills of staff and students.	Our webpage has been designed from the beginning in both languages Albanian and English. However, the webpage is undergoing some reconstruction and a new design is being made and therefore the English version is not completed. We will do it as soon as possible. Regarding the English skills of students, it is required from our students (in particular Master students) to have English skills, as a criteria in the recruitment process (not exclusionary). The same criteria applies for the staff. In addition, we offer various possibilities (language courses, exchange opportunities) for both staff and students, to increase their English skills. These possibilities will be further elaborated in the Implementation Plan.
C 1 (Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.), Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)) For the Master’s programmes (students and staff), courses for scientific English – comparable to the existing extracurricular German language courses – must be established.	Both these programmes are new and a pre-assessment of English skills will be made of students by competent persons and based on the outcome, the college will prepare extra courses and activities. These will be further elaborated in the Implementation Plan.
R 2 (Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)) The experts recommend renaming the	It is a good suggestion and we will consider it for the future but for the time be-

programme to "Laboratory Technology" instead of "Laboratory Technician".	ing we are bound by the licensing process of this and other professions and any change would cause complications.
Curriculum	
R 3 (Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)) As soon as the Master's programme "Digital Healthcare" has started, it should be monitored; the experiences are certainly worth publishing later!	Monitoring process is very much regarded and welcomed by our institution and we are open to any suggestion. Just as an information, as you have seen in SER, we have our internal monitoring process and Kosovo Accreditation Agency has starts also the external monitoring process.

7. Accreditation decision of the evalag Accreditation Commission

In its meeting on 29 June 2023, the **evalag** Accreditation Commission unanimously decides to accredit the study programmes "Psychology (B.Sc.)", "Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)", "Health Sciences of Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)" and "Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)" with the condition (C) and recommendations (R) mentioned in Chapter 5.

Annex: Site visit schedule

Sunday, 26 March 2023

Afternoon	Arrival
18:30 – 20:00	Preparatory meeting of the expert panel (online)

Monday, 27 March 2023

<table>
<tr><td>09:00 – 09:30</td><td colspan="3">Meeting with:
• Rector of Heimerer College
• General Secretary
• Prorector of Office for Studies and Teaching
• Prorector for Research and Quality Assurance
• Prorector for Human Resource
• Prorector for International Cooperation
• Prorector for Finance
• Coordinator of Office for Clinical Practice
• Leader of Quality Assurance Office</td></tr>
<tr><td>09:30 – 09:45</td><td colspan="3">Short break</td></tr>
<tr><td>09:45 – 10:30</td><td colspan="3">Parallel sessions: Meeting with responsible staff</td></tr>
<tr><td></td><td><u>Group 1:</u>
Psychology (B.Sc.)/ Clinical Psychology (M.Sc.)</td><td><u>Group 2:</u>
Health Sciences for Diagnostic Profile: Laboratory Technician (B.Sc.)</td><td><u>Group 3:</u>
Digital Healthcare (M.Sc.)</td></tr>
<tr><td>10:30 – 11:00</td><td colspan="3">Internal meeting of the expert panel</td></tr>
<tr><td>11:00 – 11:30</td><td colspan="3">Meeting with quality management</td></tr>
<tr><td>11:30 – 12:30</td><td colspan="3">Campus tour with lecture rooms, laboratories, library, etc….</td></tr>
<tr><td>12:30 – 14:00</td><td colspan="3">Lunch break</td></tr>
<tr><td>14:00 – 14:15</td><td colspan="3">Internal meeting of the expert panel</td></tr>
<tr><td>14:15 – 15:45</td><td colspan="3">Meeting with academic staff: Teachers and mentors/tutors representing all programmes</td></tr>
<tr><td>15:45 – 16:00</td><td colspan="3">Short break</td></tr>
<tr><td>16:00 – 17:30</td><td colspan="3">Meeting with students of all programmes</td></tr>
<tr><td>17:30 – 18:00</td><td colspan="3">Internal meeting of expert panel: review of the day</td></tr>
<tr><td>Evening</td><td colspan="3">Dinner with representatives of Heimerer College</td></tr>
</table>

Tuesday, 28 March 2023

08:30 – 09:30	Meeting with alumni
09:30 – 09:45	Internal meeting of the expert panel
09:45 – 10:30	Meeting with employers
10:30 – 10:45	Internal meeting of the expert panel
10:45 – 11:30	Meeting with administration (e.g., registrar, library management, laboratory management, …), technical staff
11:30 – 13:00	Internal meeting of the expert panel / lunch break
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 16:00	Internal meeting of expert panel: review of the sessions, assessment along the assessment form, first draft of recommendations and conditions
16:00 – 16:45	Closing meeting with representatives of Heimerer College and of the study programmes
Evening	Departure