

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



Assessment Report

**for the Application of
the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice,
for the Accreditation of the Bachelor's Program
"Nursing Care" (Registered Nurse, RN)**

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1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency for Study Programs in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organization. Its mission is to evaluate Bachelor and Master's programs in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in related domains, such as law or economics. By implementing accreditation and recommendation procedures, the AHPGS contributes to the improvement of the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, the higher education institutions remain responsible for fulfilling the quality assurance, too.

Since 2004 the AHPGS has been a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). In 2006, the AHPGS also joined the ENQA and became a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) in 2009. Since 2012, the AHPGS has been a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). Starting from 2009, the AHPGS has been listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR).

In carrying out the following procedure, namely accreditation of a study program at the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice, Slovenia, the AHPGS follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), "Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programmes and for System Accreditation" (Resolution of the Accreditation Council of 8 December 2009 as amended on 10 December 2010), as well as the Accreditation Criteria adopted by the AHPGS. Consequently, the decision regarding the accreditation of the Bachelor's study program "Nursing Care" is carried out by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission based on the following accreditation criteria¹:

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

¹ Approved by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission

The external assessment procedure is carried out in four steps:

I. The University's application

The AHPGS verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the University, namely the self-evaluation report and its corresponding annexes. These are to fulfill the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS standards. As a result, the AHPGS produces a summary (see Sections 2-5), which is to be approved by the University and subsequently made available for the expert group, together with all other documentation.

II. Written review

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

III. On-site visit (peer-review)

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

Following the on-site visit, the expert group issues the expert report. This report is based on the results of the visit, the written review of the study programs, and the documents submitted by the University. Finally, the report is made available to the University so that it can issue a response opinion.

The expert report as well as the University's response opinion – together with the provided documents – is submitted to the accreditation commission of the AHPGS.

IV. The AHPGS accreditation decision

The accreditation commission of the AHPGS examines the documentation made available in the process of application, namely the University's self-evaluation report, its annexes, the summary comprised by the AHPGS, the expert report, as well as the University's response opinion. These documents represent the basis for the commission's decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

2 Overview

2.1 Procedure-related documents

The decision regarding the accreditation of the Bachelor study program “Nursing Care” of the educational institution Faculty of Health Care Jesenice, Slovenia (further referred as ‘the FHCJ’ and ‘the Faculty’) is carried out by the Accreditation Commission of the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (the AHPGS). The contract between the College of Health care Jesenice (reorganized into the Faculty of Health Care in 20 February, 2014) and the AHPGS was signed on the 19 March, 2014.

The Self-Evaluation Report for accreditation (without the awarding of the official seal of the Accreditation Council of the Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany) and the accompanying documents were submitted to the AHPGS in electronic format on the 25 August, 2014. On the 30 September, 2014, the AHPGS forwarded open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter OQ) pertaining to the Self-Evaluation Report to the University. On the 20 October, 2014, the University submitted the answers to the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter AOQ) to the AHPGS in electronic format.

The following document presents the summary of the AHPGS for the Bachelor’s study program “Nursing Care”.

The application documentation submitted by the FHCJ follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Together with the Self-Evaluation Report, the University provided documents specific to the Bachelor’s level study program “Nursing Care”:

Annex	Description
1	Module description
2	Study Plan
3	Diploma supplement
4	A supplement to a diploma thesis
5	CV of the teaching personnel
6	Clinical practice competences
7	Admission into the next year of study and the duration of studies- 1 st cycle

Table1. Documents for “Nursing Care” Bachelor Program

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

Annex	Description
A	Criteria for transnational higher education
B	The Bologna Declaration of 19 June 1999
C	Examination procedures and regulations
D	Criteria for the allocation of credits to study programs under ECTS
E	Declaration on the safety of premises, facilities and equipment
F	Criteria for the accreditation and external evaluation of higher education institutions and study programs, determined by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education
G	The list of all events "Moja kariera – Quo vadis" (My Career)
H	Minimum standards for the appointment of higher education teachers, researchers and faculty assistants at higher education institutions
I	EU directive on professional qualifications
J	Executive summary
K	Courses and training for clinical mentors

Table2. Documents common for "Nursing Care" of both Bachelor's and Master's levels

The Self-Evaluation Report, the open questions (OQ) and the answer to the open questions (AOQ), as well as the additional documents, build the basis for the present summary. The layout bears no significance as it solely reflects the standards agreed within the University.

2.2 Study program

2.2.1 Structural data

Educational Institution	Faculty of Health Care Jesenice (FHCJ)
Title of the study program	"Nursing Care"
Degree awarded	Registered Nurse (RN)
Language of instruction	Slovenian
Form of studies	Full-time and part-time
Organisational structure	Monday-Friday for full-time students Monday-Saturday for part-time students
Period of education	3 years/6 semesters, for both full-time and part-time forms of studies

Credit Points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)	180
Hours/CP	1 ECT = 25-30 hours
Workload	Total: 5,400 hours Contact hours: 1,750 hours Individual work: 1,350 hours Practice/training: 2,300 hours
CP for the final paper	10 credit points
Beginning of the study program	Academic year 2007/2008
Previous accreditations	In 2013 national reaccreditation by SQAA (Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency)
Time of admission	Each winter semester
Number of available places on the program	70 for the full-time students 60 for the part-time students
Number of enrolled students in the academic year 2014/2015	314
Number of graduates by July 2014	123
Particular enrollment conditions	- general secondary school-leaving exam ("matura") - the vocational secondary school-leaving exam, or the final examination results of any four-year secondary school program
Enrollment fees in the academic year 2014/2015	76.29 EUR – 1st year 67.50 EUR – 2 nd year 67.50 EUR – 3 rd year
Tuition fees in the academic year 2014/2015	For full-time students: no fees For part-time students: 2,929.97 EUR – 1 st year 3,096.44 EUR – 2 nd year 2,929.97 EUR – 3 rd year

Table3. Structural data of "Nursing Care" Bachelor's Program

The Bachelor's level study program "Nursing Care" constitutes the 1st cycle of studies in the medical sphere, according to the requirements of the Bologna

system. The regular study time of the 1st cycle in this program is three years, during which students have to obtain 180 CP.

Since the academic year 2007/2008, the program is offered on a full-time (five days a week) and a part-time (six days a week) basis. Distance or e-learning have been introduced for some seminars in the academic year 2012/2013 and, among others, is applied for tutoring and diploma thesis writing (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.1.5). E-learning is conducted through the Moodle learning platform (version 2.0). Due to the clinical training requirements of the program "Nursing Care", distance learning is not applicable in all subjects and classes.

2.2.2 Qualification objectives and employment opportunities

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, section 1.3, the general objective of the program is to educate and train students for the profession in nursing where they have to be able to offer nursing services at all levels of health care provision and to apply the latest inventions of the field. On the official website of the Faculty it is stated that general qualifications of the program include processing needs of a patient, performing tasks of diagnostic and therapeutic nature, coordination, reporting and documenting as well as conducting tasks connected with practice development.

As holders of the title of a registered nurse, students are envisaged to obtain the following competencies:

- the ability and knowledge to perform work according to modern nursing principles, with an emphasis on individuality, active participation, partnership and a holistic approach to patients as individuals, to their family or a group;
- the ability to recognize the needs for nursing at the level of patients and the population, to set goals, plan, implement, and evaluate them;
- the ability to be part of a nursing team and to lead the team in practice, as well as the ability to act on all the levels of health care;
- the ability to plan and implement assignments and duties in diagnostic and therapeutic patient treatment programs, according to qualifications;
- the ability and knowledge to perform independent work in the fields of health and education with the focus on both healthy and ill populations;

- the ability and knowledge to successfully communicate with patients and other members of nursing and medical teams;
- awareness of risk factors and risk population groups causing the spread of chronic diseases, the role of nurses in prevention, diagnosis and treatment of such diseases;
- the ability to integrate new discoveries in related sciences (medical science, social sciences and natural sciences) into the work of a registered nurse
- the ability to conduct research work in nursing and understanding its importance for the development of nursing². Clinical practice competences are outlined in detail in Annex 6.

The Faculty claims that the general competences obtained through the study program correspond to the sixth level of the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). Furthermore, the program objectives are designed according to the national standards of the Slovenian Classification System of Education and Training (KLASIUS).

The Faculty informs that program graduates can apply for employment in a range of health care institutions, spas and wellness centers, and also in the business sector. As holders of the first cycle degree, they can also continue their studies at the Master's level programs in nursing care offered at the Faculty. The Faculty admits that graduates with a Bachelor's degree in nursing do not have solid and clearly set out career opportunities in Slovenia. These limitations evidently exist due to lacks in the systematization of medical positions and also due to insufficient implementation of quality and safety requirements in Slovenian health care institutions (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.4.1).

The FHCJ ascertains its commitment to the intensive development of nursing in Slovenia by offering relevant study programs and organizing conferences, research schools and courses for clinical mentors. The main purpose of these events and activities is to increase public awareness of trends in health care system and to establish a more solid position for nurses in it. Besides, the Faculty contributed to the introduction of advanced practice in clinical settings. Jesenice faculty claims to employ various methods to create better and more

² For more information on objective competencies of the program, see the official website of the Faculty: <http://www.fzj.si/en/mainmenu-2/study-programs/1st-Bologna-Cycle-Nursing-Care-Study-program/competences/>

extensive career opportunities for its graduates. The FHCJ Alumni Association was founded in the year 2012 and includes by now 24 graduates. These members of the Association are said to actively participate in international scientific conferences and events organized by FHCJ, to serve as advisors and co-advisors of bachelor's theses, and to publish scientific papers, research reports, monographs and submissions (see AOQ, Annex 1). Annually, the Faculty arranges seminars and conferences for its students under the title "Moja kariera" (My career) (see Annex G).

With regard to the current situation in nursing profession in Slovenia, it is said that out of 16,000 nursing professionals employed, only 5,500 have a higher education degree whereas the rest have only a secondary school degree. It is further emphasized that shortage of registered nurses has been constant since the country gained its independence in 1991 (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.4.2). At the same time though, there is a large number of currently unemployed nurses as a result of economic recession and austerity measures in health care. The FCHJ maintains contact with its graduates through the Alumni Association in order to gather information on their work status within the initial six months after the completion of the program, and thus monitors the employment rate of its former students. According to this statistical data, the employment rate of FHCJ nurses is gradually decreasing from 100% in 2011 to 93.5% in 2014, though the general level is quite high (see AOQ, 7).

The Faculty emphasizes that the increase of nursing workforce and establishment of nursing postgraduate study programs is necessary for the improvement of Slovenian public health care services. This includes management of demographic changes of the society, such as population ageing, reduction of illnesses among marginalized groups, which has increased as a result of economic recession, availability of health care in rural areas, and promotion of health care among the population.

2.2.3 Modularization and exam system

Academic year at the FHCJ starts on 1 October and ends on 30 September of the following year. As seen from the documents submitted by the University, each year of study includes four modules: Nursing Care, Basic Sciences, Social Sciences, and the Elective Module. All modules have to be completed within 3 years, or 6 semesters (90 weeks). In the first year of the program, students gain basic knowledge and skills necessary to continue their education. The second year is

dedicated to the acquisition of knowledge in surgical and internal medicine nursing. The final third year envisages close engagement with particularly nursing specialty.

The total amount of ECTS credit points in the program is 180; one academic year is worth 60 and each semester is worth 30 credit points. Out of total 180 credits, 158 are awarded for 26 compulsory subjects, 12 credit points are given for elective courses (students have to choose 4 out of 12 offered), and 10 credit points are assigned for the diploma thesis. It is noteworthy that practical training comprises 50% of the entire curriculum of the program. There are 10 compulsory and one elective subject in the first year, 10 compulsory in the second year, 6 compulsory and 3 elective subjects in the third year of studies (see Annex 2).

List of subjects for the 1st year:

Subject title	L	S	CE	CP	ISW *	EC TS
Nursing Care Module						
1. Clinical Nursing Care I	100	30	70	390	100	21
2. Ethics and Philosophy in Nursing Care with Health Care Legislation	50	15	-	-	35	4
3. Teaching Strategies for Health Education and Health Promotion	30	15	-	-	35	3
4. Introduction to Research and Informatics in Nursing Care	50	10	15	-	75	5
Basic Science Module						
5. Anatomy, Physiology, Pathology	75	-	10	-	75	5
6. Biochemistry and Biophysics	35	-	10	-	45	3
7. Diagnostic – Therapeutic Program	65	-	-	65	80	7
8. Nutrition and Medical Dietetics	30	15	-	-	35	3
9. Public Health I	30	10	-	-	40	3
Social Sciences Module						
10. Psychology	30	15	-	-	35	3
Elective Subject Module (students elect 1 subject)						

11. English Language/ German Language	30	15	-	-	35	3
Total:	525	125	105	455	590	60
* Contact hours: L – Lectures, S – Seminar, CE – Clinical Exercises, CP - Clinical Practice; Self-study hours: ISW – Individual Student Work Credit points: ECTS – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System						

Table 3. Overview of the 1st year of studiesList of subjects for the 2nd year:

Subject title	L	S	CE	CP	ISW	EC TS
Nursing Care Module						
1 Optional Clinical Training in Nursing Care areas of the 1 st and 2 nd years	-	-	-	270	-	9
2. Nursing Care of Internistic Patients with Internal Medicine	90	-	-	180	30	10
3. Surgical Patient Nursing Care with Surgery	90	-	-	180	30	10
4. Elderly Nursing Care with Gerontology and Rehabilitation	60	-	-	160	30	8
5. Oncology Patient Nursing Care with Oncology and Palliative Care	30	-	-	135	30	6
Basic Science Module						
6. Urgent Medical Help and Health Care in Special Circumstances	30	-	15	80	30	5
7. Public Health II	30	-	15	-	40	3
8. Microbiology with Parasitology	30	-	15	-	30	3
Social Sciences Module						
9. Sociology of Health and Disease	30	15	-	-	40	3
10. Organization, Management, and Leadership in Health and Nursing Care	30	15	-	-	40	3
Total:	420	30	45	100 5	300	60
Contact hours: L – Lectures, S – Seminar, CE – Clinical Exercises, CP - Clinical Practice ; Self-study hours: ISW – Individual Student Work						

Credit points: **ECTS** – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System

Table4. Overview of the 2nd year of studies

List of subjects for the 3rd year:

Subject title	L	S	CE	CP	ISW	EC TS
Nursing Care Module						
1. Optional Clinical Training in Specialist Nursing Care Areas of the 3rd Year	-	-	-	120	-	4
2. Child and Adolescent Nursing Care with Pediatrics	60	-	60	180	50	11
3. Women's Health Nursing Care with Gynecology and Obstetric	60	-	-	170	40	8
4. Community Nursing Care and Dispensary	40	-	-	160	35	7
5. Nursing Care and Mental Health	60	-	-	160	40	8
Social Sciences Module						
6. Process Methodology of Work-Health and Nursing Care Quality	30	15	-	-	35	3
Elective Subject Module (students elect 3 subject)						
1. Leadership in Nursing Care	30	15	-	-	30	9
2. Communication in Supervised Health and Nursing Teams						
3. Informatics in Nursing Care						
4. Nursing and Prevention of Hospital – Acquired Infections						
5. Evidence-Based Nursing Care						
6. Palliative Care						
7. Alternative Nutrition						
8. Public Health Aspects of Nutrition						
9. Managing Medicinal Products in Nursing						
10. Anesthesiology and Resuscitation						
11. Ethics and Religion in Postmodern Society: Patient's Personal beliefs in the						

Nursing Care Proses						
DIPLOMA THESIS		40		50	170	10
Total:	340	100	60	840	460	60
Contact hours: L – Lectures, S – Seminar, CE – Clinical Exercises, CP - Clinical Practice; Self-study hours: ISW – Individual Student Work Credit points: ECTS – European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System						

Table5. Overview of the 3rd year of studies

The curriculum of the study program is designed according requirements of the EU Directive from 2005 and the Bologna Declaration, which is obligatory in Slovenia from 2009. Following these requirements, one third of the program is dedicated to theoretical learning, whereas the total amount of self-study time has been increased to 1,350 hours, which is also awarded with ECTS credit points (see AOQ, 2). Clinical training (2,300 hours) and clinical exercises (219) together constitute almost half of the total study program.

The program consists of compulsory course units designed and performed in the form of lectures, seminars, clinical exercises, clinical training and self-study. The curriculum encompasses the core subjects for each year of study separately. According to the documents, students can also attend courses offered by other study programs, provided that the content of the course unit complies with the study program "Nursing Care". Hence, students can transfer at the least 10 credit points from either the mandatory or elective courses within the University (Self-Evaluation Report 1.2.2).

As for exchange opportunities with other educational institutions, students have the option to choose one elective subject at any other university in Slovenia of the EU countries. In order to receive credits for the subject, students have to apply for its recognition to the Student Affairs Committee. Then, documentation for recognition of the course is submitted to the instructor of the relevant course so that he/she can compare it with the curriculum and the material taught at the FHCJ.

The University sees cooperation with clinical centers as a crucial prerequisite for practical training of its students. Hence, it has signed cooperation agreements with a number of clinical learning centers (see the Self-Evaluation Report, page 11) for the purposes of training implementation as well as the realization of research and development projects. It is emphasized that particularly close cooper-

ation has been established with the Jesenice General Hospital, the University Clinic of Respiratory and Allergic Diseases Golnik, and the Institute of Public Health Kranj. On the international level, the University has established cooperation with international educational institutions through Erasmus exchange agreements (the Self-Evaluation Report, page 11).

Among its main didactic concepts and methods of instruction applied at the program, the Faculty names lectures, seminars, clinical training, clinical exercises, e-learning through the Moodle learning platform, participation in research projects and humanitarian projects (see AOQ, 5). In lectures, teachers follow the principle of problem-based learning when they provide students with examples from clinical setting and students are encouraged to actively exchange opinions and experience. In seminars, students work in groups under the guidance and supervision of instructors. The purpose of seminars is to expand students' understanding of theoretical concepts, to solve concrete problems, and to prepare a seminar paper, thereby developing their skills of reading and writing research articles in nursing. Clinical exercises provide students with opportunities to learn the basic nursing interventions required for direct implementation of nursing care on patients, and they also serve as a preparation phase for clinical training. These classes are conducted through demonstrations (see AOQ, 5).

Concerning the integration of electronic and multimedia forms of instruction and learning, the Faculty applies the e-learning platform Moodle for the course units such as Basics of Management and Quality in Health Care and Nursing Care. This platform enables communication between students and instructors and serves also for the tutoring purposes (the Self-Evaluation Report 1.2.5). There are training courses offered to instructors where they can enhance their knowledge in electronic forms of teaching.

Clinical training plays an important role in the didactic and teaching methods of the program because it comprises half of the study program hours and is implemented in an on-going manner throughout all 3 years of studies. Students have to pass their clinical exercises before they can enter the clinical setting. Clinical training is conducted under the supervision of faculty and clinical mentors. The supervisors assess students' progress in stages and organize student self-assessment surveys. The FHCJ has a central clinical training system that allows coordinators to prepare a plan of training for the entire academic year (the Self-Evaluation Report 1.2.6). Clinical training coordinators organize meetings with

peers and clinical mentors. For foreign exchange students, the Faculty offers clinical training in English in a vast number of fields³.

The Self-Evaluation Report clarifies in section 1.2.8, that in Slovenia a program can be implemented in a foreign language in the following cases: for study programs of foreign languages, if a visiting instructor from abroad participates in their implementation, if a significant number of foreign students is enrolled in the program, and if the same program is offered also in Slovenian. In the first cycle program "Nursing Care" teaching is conducted only in Slovenian, except for language courses. Nevertheless, the Faculty continuously invites visiting instructors as part of Erasmus exchange programs.

From October 2010 to May 2014, FHCJ hosted 22 visiting instructors from 10 foreign higher education institutions and signed bilateral agreements with them⁴. In the mentioned period, there were 11 students from 5 foreign higher education institutions who received clinical training at the FCHJ on the basis of a 3-month Erasmus exchange program. Thus, to the aspect of internationality of the curriculum content, the Faculty states that the clinical training module is offered in English in a number of fields (for details, see the Self-Evaluation Report 1.2.8, page 26). Besides, foreign students have the option to write their seminar papers in English.

It is emphasized in the Self-Evaluation Report, section 1.2.9, that international cooperation has been one of the main strategic goals of the Faculty since its establishment. The Faculty has been awarded the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) for the program Erasmus Plus (2014-2020), which enables it to conclude bilateral agreements, conduct student exchange programs, as well as instructor exchange programs with foreign partners, and cooperate in joint international life-long learning programs. The FHCJ has signed so far 17 bilateral agreements with other EU countries⁵. FHCJ is also a member of a number of international societies/associations, for example The Association of Schools of Public Health in the European Region (ASPHER), Euro-Mediterranean University (EMUNI University), the EU project group "Development and Coordination of a Network of Nurse Educators and Regulators" (SANCO/1/2009) and other (for details, see the Self-Evaluation Report, page 28). At the moment, the FHCJ is

³ See the official website of the Faculty: <http://www.fzj.si/index.php?page=clinical-practice>

⁴ A list of all international exchanges of Slovenian and foreign instructors at FHCJ can be seen on the website: <http://www.fzj.si/index.php?page=staff-international-exchanges>.

⁵ see the list on the website: <http://www.fzj.si/index.php?page=bilateral-agreements>

preparing a joint doctoral nursing program with Nova Southeastern University located in Florida, United States.

The first cycle of the study program “Nursing Care” offers a course in the introduction to research and informatics. According to documents, students can participate in research work through seminars offered at the program and also in the process of writing their diploma thesis. It is claimed that each year, the best diploma theses are presented at student conferences and at nursing congresses, and further published as original articles in scientific and research journals. Thus, there were 7 such works (2.4% of students) published and submitted at a conference in the academic year 2013/14 (the Self-Evaluation Report 1.2.7). Besides, students can participate in professional research and development projects implemented by the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Education, Science, and Sport. Up to now, 114 students have participated in 19 development projects. In these conferences and projects students are required to prepare and give a presentation, interact with participants having assumed the position of a specialist in a given area. Students with outstanding achievements in scientific research and with the best graduate results are presented with the “Angela Boškin” award.

In designing and implementation of examination procedures, the FHCJ relies upon examination regulations defining the assessment methods, grading system and criteria for obtaining ECTS credits (see Annex C). Types and methods of examinations as well as preconditions for admission to examinations have to be outlined in a syllabus of each study program. Exam system is claimed to be designed according to the curriculum of the course, its learning purposes, and practical competences. Furthermore, the University ensures the public nature of examination through a number of measures, such as posting examination dates for the current academic year by September 15, allowing the presence of other students in an oral exam and other (see Annex C, article 8).

Assessment methods applied at the University include examinations, partial examinations, mid-term examinations, assessment of seminar papers and presentations as well as assessment of clinical exercises and clinical training. Examination forms, which are also mentioned in the overview of subjects (see Annex 1), include written or oral, or combined, as well as individual and group assessment forms.

Examination periods are precisely defined for each academic year in the academic calendar adopted by the Senate. Each academic year at the University has three examination periods: winter, summer, and autumn exam periods (for details see the Self-Evaluation Report 1.2.3, page 19). There are 4 examination dates scheduled for each subject, whereas subjects that are required for enrollment into the following year of study have 5 examination dates. Examination periods for the academic year 2014/2015 are the following:

Winter exam period	Summer exam period	Autumn exam period
26 January – 20 February	15 June – 10 July	17 August – 11 September

Table6: Exam Sessions in Academic Year 2014/2015

Students of the program are allowed to retake an examination for a specific study unit up to 4 times in one academic year. They may take a specific examination up to 8 times during the whole course of studies. If a student fails an examination for the 8th consecutive time, he/she will automatically be dropped out of the study program for failing to meet the requirements for advancement to the following year of study (see AOQ, 6).

A maximum of 2 examination dates can be scheduled outside the exam period. The period between failing and retaking an examination should not exceed 14 days (Annex C, article 12). At the end of each academic year the Student Office is required to submit a list of courses and their respective instructors for which exams had been taken 6 times or more to the Faculty Dean and the Faculty Student Council.

Academic feasibility of student workload and the examinations is assessed by means of student questionnaires. Other methods of such assessment include talking to instructors and class tutors, student tutor meetings, suggestions of the Student Council representatives, and discussions of the levels of the University Senate and the department meetings (the Self-Evaluation Report, page 5). These methods serve as the basis for preventive measures and corrective actions to take at the program.

Regarding the grading system, the FHCJ applies the following grades for assessment at the Bachelor's program (see Annex C, Article 30a):

Grade	ECTS grade	Grading scale
10 (excellent)	A (excellent)	95.6-100%

9 (very good)	B (very good)	84.3-95.5%
8 (very good)	C (good)	70.8-84.2%
7 (good)	D (satisfactory)	59.6-70.7%
6 (satisfactory)	E (sufficient)	55.5-59.5%
5 (fail)	F (fail)	50.5-54.9%
1-4 (fail)	F (fail)	Less than 50.5%

Table 7: Grading system

The FHCJ claims that the grading scale applied at the institution is designed according to the established criteria of the Bologna Declaration (Annex B) and the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (Annex D). In Annex D, the Faculty describes the credit structure and the general design of the first and the second cycle programs in 10 articles, which are meant to reveal the compliance of the institution with European standards.

Article 9 of the criteria for the allocation of ECTS credits (Annex D) states that the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice implements student exchange and transfer of credits on the European level. Thus, students have the opportunity to complete a course or a clinical training module through the international exchange program at another higher education institution. For recognition of their studies and practical activity abroad and in order to be awarded the necessary amount of credit points, students have to submit all the required documents to the Senate Committee (see 1.2.1). The Student Affairs Committee reviews the material submitted by students and takes a decision on the recognition of studies; this decision has to be further confirmed by the FHCJ Senate.

The University ensures that it guarantees equal study opportunities for students with disabilities by taking their specific needs into account. Thus, for example, adjustments can be made with regard to the extent of time for written and oral examinations, they are provided with specific printed material with bigger font and greater spacing between lines, organization of additional clarification of the subject matter, taping of attended classes etc. Furthermore, it can be decided not to subtract points for spelling and grammar mistakes (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.2.3 and 1.6.7). In terms of space facilities, adjusted locations and access to clinical training, seminars and exercises as well as elimination of architectural barriers are claimed to be provided at the Faculty. As stated in the documents (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.7), the plan of required adjustments is prepared by the instructor administering the course and is further confirmed by the Senate.

2.2.4 Admission requirements

In order to be admitted to the program, candidates have to have completed 9 years of elementary school education (basic education) and 4 years of secondary school education (upper secondary education) (see the structure of the education system in Slovenia in Annex 4). Thus, candidates have to provide the results of the general secondary school-leaving exam ("matura") and the vocational secondary school-leaving exam, or the final examination results of any four-year secondary school program. For candidates who did not complete a four-year secondary school program in the field of health care, there is a mandatory 100-hour introductory course.

If the number of candidates is larger than the number of available places at the program, they will be selected on the basis of

- their overall score in the general secondary school-leaving exam ("matura"), vocational secondary school-leaving exam or the final examination of a four-year secondary school program (60% of points)
- their grade point average in the 3rd and 4th years of secondary school (40%).

Applicants with disabilities are required to submit a medical certificate issued by the Clinic of Occupational Health, Traffic and Sports (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.5.2) confirming their performance abilities. Candidates with special medical needs are accepted to the program if they meet the enrollment requirements and if they obtain at least 90% of the minimum number of entry points (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.5.1). In the academic year 2013/2014, there were 3 students with disabilities studying at the program.

In order to be admitted to the second year of studies at the program, students have to acquire at least 45 credits out of obligatory 60 credits for the first academic year. Besides, they have to complete clinical exercises, clinical training and seminars, which means fulfillment of the mandatory attendance requirements and writing seminar papers. For the enrollment to the third year of studies, students have to obtain the 15 credits from the first year and 43 credits for the second year together with completed clinical exercises, clinical training and seminars.

All students have to pay enrollment fees, which is 76.29 EUR for the first year, and 67.50 EUR for the second and third years of studies including the repeated

years. As for tuition fees, full-time students are exempt from them, whereas part-time students are charged 2,929.97 EUR, 3,096.44 EUR and 2,929.97 EUR for the first, second and third years, respectively. Information on the amount of applicable at the program fees is claimed to be available for students in the FHCJ Student Office (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.1.10).

2.3 Study conditions and quality assurance

2.3.1 Human resources

In the academic year 2014/2015, the teaching staff of the 1st cycle program "Nursing Care" comprised in total 20 instructors, of whom 9 are full-time employees and 11 lecturers hold a secondary employment position. Among full-time instructors, there is 1 associate professor, 2 assistant professors, 3 lecturers, 1 professional support staff member, and 2 assistants. There are 58 instructors who are employed under the copyright contract or a work contract (see AOO, 10). Between full-time/part-time and contractual teachers, the Faculty is said to favor the former; thus, 65% of all instructors are employed by the institution. As for the non-teaching staff, 7 people are employed on a full-time basis to perform administrative work at the Student Office, General Administrative Office, Dean's Office and the library.

The students of the program are expected to complete their studies in 6 semesters (3 years). In the academic year 2014/2015, 314 students have been admitted to the first cycle program "Nursing Care" (see AOO, 1). Provided that there are 78 instructors in total (including 20 FHCJ and contract instructors), the student-teacher ratio for the time being constitutes approximately 4:1, i.e. there are 4 students per 1 teacher. CVs of the teaching personnel are provided in Annex 5.

It is emphasized that all instructors employed at FHCJ must hold the appropriate habilitation to teach a specific subject. Appointment of full professors and research fellows is permanent, meanwhile higher education teachers and researchers are appointed to a position for a period of five years. Assistants are appointed for a period of three years (Annex H). If an instructor fails to meet the promotion requirements after the respective period of employment, then he or she has to apply for re-qualification of the title he or she already has. In order to obtain a title at FHCJ and also to successfully pass re-qualification, applicant instructors have to comply with the minimum standards for employment outlined

by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (see Annex H). It is also claimed that promotion of instructors is conducted at the Faculty in correspondence to the Decree on the promotion of civil servants to salary grades (the Self-Evaluation Report, 2.1.3, page 51). In 2014, six employees of the Faculty have obtained promotion in accordance with this decree.

Since the teaching staff at the Faculty is relatively young, the institution seeks to offer them opportunities to advance their career by taking part in events (international scientific conferences, professional conferences, summer research schools and other) organized by FHCJ Center for Life-Long learning, Career Counselling, Tutoring and Mentoring. Furthermore, the Faculty promotes academic activity among the teaching staff by providing financial support in terms of tuition fees to its young full-time employees to enroll in a postgraduate degree program. Four such employees were placed in degree programs; three of them already completed their studies. All instructors are urged to participate in international research and development projects as well as exchange programs (see Self-Evaluation Report, Paragraphs 2.1.1 and 2.1.3).

2.3.2 Facilities

According to the Faculty, premises of both Bachelor's and Master's programs in nursing care are all located in one address, at Spodnji Plavž 3, 4270 Jesenice, Slovenia. The building is said to be owned by the Municipality of Jesenice and managed by FHCJ. The Faculty building is situated in the vicinity of the main clinical learning centers. The Faculty claims to provide sufficient space and all necessary equipment for the implementation of clinical exercises and preparation of students for the professional clinical environment (the Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.1).

Clinical practice premises are said to be located on the ground floor of the building: there are three rooms designed for introductory courses and clinical exercises, a laboratory for research practices in microbiology and biochemistry, a special room to conduct tests and clinical trials in laboratory medicine and physiology. Lecture halls, library with the e-learning room and the Student Office are to be found on the first floor of the Faculty. Two larger halls can be divided into 4 separate seminar rooms equipped with whiteboards, removable boards, and computers, power outlets for laptops, sound system, projectors and overhead projectors. The final second floor contains one lecture hall whereas other premises are used for administrative purposes.

As written in the Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.1, the Faculty provides special premises for students with disabilities. Thus, there are lifts and toilet facilities on all floors, and also lecture halls with sufficiently wide entrances. However, the Faculty underlines that nursing services can only be performed by individuals with a sufficient level of physical fitness.

Students of both first and the second cycle programs can use equipment and premises of the Study Centre Ljubljana. The FHCJ library (including the funds of the library in the Study Center Ljubljana) offers in total 3,924 units of library material, of these 3,568 are books and monographs, 265 are serial publications, 91 are CDs and other units (see the Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.2). 3,284 units of library material are available to first-cycle nursing students, and 640 to second-cycle nursing students. The FHCJ has a subscription to printed journals that are not available in full-text articles through databases (JONA, Nurse Education Today, Nursing Science Quarterly, Nursing Studies, International Journal of Nursing Education Scholarship and other).

Regarding the program-related acquisition of learning material, the FHCJ complies each year a list of required and recommended reading based on the program curriculum. These books and periodicals are usually obtained by the beginning of each academic year, although a specific title can also be acquired during the year. The Faculty's own publications constitute a part of the library material; for example two higher education textbooks in nursing.

The Faculty library is open from 12:00 till 16:00 for 4 days a week: Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Fridays. It is closed on Wednesdays and on weekends. A reading room is equipped with 8 computers and when necessary they can also use additional 15 computers in the in the e-learning classroom. Each student and instructor holds a password in order to use Windows OS and to access various databases. It is emphasizes that students have to learn how to use Slovenian as well as international databases, such as CINAHL, SpringerLink, ProQuest, Human Anatomy Online – ATLAS, as a part of their study program. There is a transportation of units organized between Jesenice and Ljubljana libraries.

As stated in the Self-Evaluation Report, 2.3.4, Slovenian Government and the EU are the main sources of funding for the Faculty of Jesenice. However, the Faculty does not expect any increase in the state funding of higher education due to the continuous economic recession in the country. Consequently, the Faculty

tries to cover the needs of the Master's program "Nursing Care" and to obtain new financial resources for the Master's degree program "Health Promotion" currently undergoing the accreditation procedure.

2.3.3 Quality assurance

Quality management of the Faculty applies quality assurance measures and standards outlined by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (SQAA). According to the requirements of the SQAA (Annex F, art.6), accreditation of the institution and study programs have to be conducted every 7 years. In 2013, the FHCJ has obtained positive re-accreditation valid until 2021. The Faculty has obtained the international standard ISO 9001:2008 and the national standard Quality for Future Education (QFE) in 2012. The study program "Nursing Care" (first cycle professional degree program) received first accreditation in 2006; it was amended in 2009 and then re-accredited in 2013.

According to the FHCJ, quality assurance is integrated into all processes taking part within the institution and all stakeholders participate in quality assurance processes in order to ensure its continuous quality improvement. With this purpose, the Faculty established the Centre for Quality and Evaluation as a separate organizational unit in May 2014. The Centre includes the Quality and Evaluation Committee and the Continuous Quality Improvement Group. The function of the Committee is to recognize the necessity of corrective measures, consequently propose and implement them. Student representatives are included into the Committee (see Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.1 and 1.6.2).

As stated in the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.1 and 1.6.2, the Faculty conveys annual self-evaluation and produces self-evaluation reports which constitute the framework necessary to define the desirable quality level, assess strategic achievements, and design an action plan for the upcoming academic year. Data for such a report is collected with the help of anonymous questionnaires that serve to monitor and evaluate different aspects of the Faculty's functioning. All gathered monitoring results are then discussed at the sessions of the Quality and Evaluation Committee and the Faculty Senate, as well as at the September session of the Academic Assembly.

Students are claimed to be integrated into the internal quality assurance process through evaluation procedures, results of which constitute a part of the final evaluation report. At the end of the academic year, students are required to fill in

written questionnaires where they express their satisfaction with the quality of the study program, teaching staff, and their workload of courses (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.3). After the completion of clinical training unit at a clinical learning center, students have to assess their satisfaction with the training procedure, clinical mentors, and the clinical center itself (for the examples of questionnaires, see AOO, Annex 2). It is said that until the academic year 2013/14, questionnaires were distributed in paper form; starting with the academic year 2014/15, all surveys will be electronic.

According to the overview of students' questionnaires in the academic year 2012/2013, the University reports that the response rate for the total number of distributed questionnaires was 87.1%. Response rates are said to be the highest among students who concluded their clinical training at community health centers, such as the Gynecology and Obstetrics Hospital Kranj, and at Jesenice General Hospital. The overall satisfaction level of students with the clinical training ranged from 3.92 to 4.43 (in the assessment scale 1-5), and is evaluated by the Faculty as a constant high quality index (for details, see AOO, 9).

Clinical training is also evaluated from the perspective of the Faculty mentors who supervise students during this period. Upon the conclusion of the training, they have to complete a questionnaire on their pedagogical and organizational performance. Furthermore, FHCJ continuously assesses knowledge and skills of clinical mentors (AOO, Annex 3 provides detailed self-assessment research results obtained from anonymous questionnaires completed by clinical nurse mentors). By such means, the Faculty claims to ensure and maintain the quality of the teaching level as well as practical relevance of the study program. Students can participate in the evaluation of the Faculty by sharing and commenting on current issues at meetings with mentors, at Senate sessions, and other.

Among the main methods of evaluating student workload, the Faculty names questionnaires, discussions about student workload with individual mentors and instructors, at department and Senate meetings. For Bachelor's degree students, the mandatory attendance comprises minimum of 30% at lectures and 100% at clinical exercises and clinical training. All workload figures have been specified and confirmed by the accreditation in 2009 from the Council for Higher Education of the Republic of Slovenia (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.5). As for academic feasibility of the student workload and the examinations, they are assessed by means of student questionnaires, discussions with instructors and

mentors at department and Senate meetings as well as suggestions of the Student Council representatives. These methods serve as the basis for preventive measures and corrective actions undertaken at the study program.

Statistics on the admission procedures and the number of students and graduates are provided in the Self-Evaluation Report, section 1.6.6. The total number of enrolled students in the academic year 2013/14 was 345, of which 228 are full-time students and 117 are part-time students. These numbers appear to have decreased in comparison to the previous academic year 2012/13 (see Table 6, page 42 of the Self-Evaluation Report). As can be seen from the figures in the next Table 7, there are 181 (79%) female students and only 47 (21%) male students in full-time program in the year 2013/14. Similar disproportionality can be observed in the previous years of both Bachelor and Master programs. These differences of enrollment by gender reflect the traditional perception of Nursing as a profession primarily for women.

The University claims to provide equal treatment and opportunities for all students, including students with chronic illnesses and disabilities. As an education institution that was awarded the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE), the Faculty of Jesenice accepts and employs the principle of non-discrimination and thus ensures equal access and opportunities to participants of all backgrounds. It is emphasized that the same concept is articulated in the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia, the Higher Education Act of the Republic of Slovenia, and also in the Resolution on the National Higher Education Program 2011-2020 (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.9).

The Faculty assures to provide support and special conditions for students with specific medical needs or disabilities. For example, when applying for a program, they have to produce a medical certificate validating physical status so that necessary adjustments at the time of application as well as during the studies will be prepared for them. These include changes in the examination criteria, adaptation of textual material, and the choice of particular locations and equipment adapted to the needs of these students (the Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.7). It is stated that the plan of required adjustments is prepared by course instructors and is further confirmed by the Senate.

Information regarding the study program, its modular system, exam requirements, subject descriptions, instructors, assistant instructors, learning outcomes, recommended or required reading etc., is available to students on the FHCJ

website in Slovenian and English languages⁶. There are various organizations within the University, such as the Counselling and Career Guidance Centre, Medical Students Association Arad-ASMA whose main function is to support, help, and inform students in the aspects of career guidance, personal development, and learning optimization (The Self-Evaluation Report, 1.6.8). Besides, teachers and tutors have their individual office hours when students can refer to them directly.

2.4 Information about the University

According to the Executive Summary (see Annex J), the College of Nursing Jesenice was founded in 2007. On 20 February 2014, the College received an approval from the SQAA and was reorganized into a Faculty of Health Care Jesenice. The FHCJ is, thus, a relatively young institution of higher education with a total of 310 students in the academic year 2014/2015.

At the moment, the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice offers two accredited higher education study programs "Nursing Care" of the first and second cycle professional degree. Recently, the Faculty has developed a second cycle study program "Health Promotion", which is currently undergoing the process of accreditation. In total, the Faculty is planning to introduce 3 more study programs in the near future.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, page 6, the concession to implement the first cycle study program "Nursing Care" was obtained in December 2006. Since the academic year 2007/2008 the program is offered also for part-time students. The total number of enrolled students in the academic year 2013/2014 amounted to 345 people. In July 2014, there were 123 students who have graduated from the program.

The Faculty emphasizes that research and implementation of development projects constitute the main focus of the institution. The Research Institute for Health Care and Nursing functioning at the FHCJ is claimed to contribute to students' as well as teaching personnel's research activity (for detailed description of its aims, see the Self-Evaluation Report, 3.1.1). It is emphasized that nursing practice skills has to be based on research results; therefore research has to be an indispensable part of professional and intellectual activity of every regis-

⁶ See the website: <http://www.fzj.si/en/mainmenu-2/study-programs/1st-Bologna-Cycle-Nursing-Care-Study-program>

tered nurse as well as of any other health care professional with a higher education.

Another important facility within the Faculty is its Centre for Life-Long Learning, Career Counselling, Tutoring and Mentoring. Established in 2008, the Centre offers courses on higher education didactics to the faculty instructors; it also encourages tutors and the clinical mentors of the first cycle "Nursing Care" program to take part in various educational and didactic education trainings. The significance of the Center is reflected through a wide array of annual events: international scientific conferences, summer research schools, symposiums, and conferences on nursing career development. Through these events the FHCJ can encourage the implementation of evidence-based practice in nursing and necessary changes in health care management.

Among its current developments, the Faculty of Jesenice names its plans to implement a continuous quality monitoring system and also apply the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area. The Faculty undertakes steps to introduce a doctoral nursing program between the years 2013-2020, to obtain accreditation of the program "Health Promotion" by SQAA, and finally to design new second cycle study programs as well as training courses. According to the Self-Evaluation Report, page 59, international comparability of each program of all cycles (Bachelor, Master, and Doctor) is one of the main purposes of the Faculty.

3 Expert report

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3.1 Preliminary remarks

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (hereupon, the AHPGS) was commissioned by the decision of the Faculty of Health Care, Jesenice, Slovenia (hereupon, the Faculty) for the accreditation of the study program "Nursing Care" (Registered Nurse, RN).

The AHPGS is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) and is a full member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE). In 2006, the AHPGS joined the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). Since 2012, the AHPGS is a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA).

The main focus of the following accreditation procedure is the assessment of learning outcomes and objectives of the study program, its curriculum structure, examination system and transparency, sufficiency of teaching forces and the adequacy of learning facilities, implementation of the results of quality assurance in terms of further development of the study program and the implementation of equal opportunities for all University members involved.

The accreditation criteria, which were developed and approved by the AHPGS in compliance with the existing criteria and requirements valid in the Federal Republic of Germany and based on the "Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area" (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA), are divided as follows:

- 1) Program Aims and Learning Outcomes
- 2) Curriculum Design
- 3) Staff
- 4) Facilities and Learning Resources
- 5) Study Process and Student Assessment
- 6) Program Management

The accreditation of the study program "Nursing Care" was carried out according to an agreed structure.

As the first step, the documents submitted by the Faculty were reviewed by all nominated experts with regard to the specified criteria as well as disciplinary and substantive aspects.

The second step was implemented when the expert group carried out an on-site visit at the Faculty in Jesenice. The results of the written evaluation served as the basis for discussions with members of the Faculty and program management during the visit. The objective of the on-site visit was to clarify the remaining open questions and verify the statements provided in the documents submitted by the Faculty.

The third step was the preparation of the Expert Report by the expert group. The report is structured in compliance with the above mentioned accreditation criteria approved by the AHPGS. The documents of the Faculty, the feedback from the experts to the documents and the results of the discussions with the representatives of the Faculty during the on-site visit served as basis for the statements made in the Expert Report.

The last step of the procedure is the decision regarding the accreditation of the study program of the Faculty. The decision is carried out by the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS.

The following experts were appointed by the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS for the accreditation of the study program:

As representatives of higher education institutions:

Ms. Prof. Dr. Renate Stemmer

Professor for Nursing Science and Nursing Administration at the Catholic University of Applied Sciences, Mainz, Germany, Department Health Care

Ms. Prof. Dr. Birgit Vosseler

Professor and Dean of Students at the University of Applied Sciences, Ravensburg-Weingarten, Germany, Department of Social Work, Health and Nursing

As representative from the professional practice:

Ms. Sarah Rubsamen⁷

Nursing Manager at Pflegeheim Landwasser, Freiburg, Germany

As student representative:

Ms. Gyrit Fröhlich

Student of Master program “nursing and healthcare management” at Frankfurt University of Applied Sciences

3.2 The study program to be accredited

The main objective of the bachelor study program “Nursing Care” is to educate students for a profession in nursing. Students have to be able to offer nursing services at all levels of health care provision and to apply the latest inventions of the field. The Faculty states that general qualifications of the program include processing needs of a patient, performing tasks of diagnostic and therapeutic nature, coordination, reporting and documenting as well as conducting tasks related to practice development.

The Bachelor’s level study program “Nursing Care” constitutes the 1st cycle of studies in the nursing sphere, according to the requirements of the Bologna system. The regular study time of the 1st cycle in this program is three years, during which students have to obtain 180 ECTS. One academic year is worth 60 and each semester is worth 30 ECTS. Out of a total of 180 ECTS, 158 are awarded for 26 compulsory subjects, 12 ECTS are given for elective courses (students have to choose 4 out of 12 offered), and 10 ECTS are assigned for the diploma thesis. It is noteworthy that practical training comprises 50% of the entire curriculum of the program.

Upon completion of the program, graduates are awarded with the title of a ‘Registered Nurse’, RN.

The “Nursing Care” bachelor study program accepted the first batch of students in the academic year 2007/2008. By July 2014, 123 students obtained a bachelor’s degree.

⁷ Mrs. Rubsamen was prevented from attending the On-Site Visit, but participated in the written review.

In order to be admitted to the program, candidates have to have completed 9 years of elementary school education (basic education) and 4 years of secondary school education (upper secondary education) (see the structure of the education system in Slovenia in Annex 4). Thus, candidates have to provide the results of the general secondary school-leaving exam (“matura”) and the vocational secondary school-leaving exam, or the final examination results of any four-year secondary school program. For candidates who did not complete a four-year secondary school program in the field of health care, there is a mandatory 100-hour introductory course.

Full-time students are not charged any tuition fees. The amount of the tuition fee for part-time students⁸ is 2,929.97 EUR for the 1st year, 3,096.44 EUR for the 2nd year and 2,929.97 EUR for the 3rd year of studies.

3.3 Expert report

The on-site visit was carried out on the 5th - 6th of February 2015 according to the previously agreed schedule. One representative from the head office of the AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on the 4th of February 2015 for organizational talks prior to the on-site visit. The submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation, as well as the open questions, had been discussed. Furthermore, the plan of the on-site visit of the Faculty had been structured.

In the course of the on-site visit, the expert group conducted discussions with the Faculty management and the teaching staff of the program “Nursing Care” as well as with students currently studying in the program. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises of the program students, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, library, and computer classes. Besides, experts had the opportunity to see the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories.

The Expert Report is structured in compliance with the accreditation criteria approved by the AHPGS. The study program will be discussed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the Faculty, the experts’ feedback to the documents, the observations made during the on-site visit, results of the discussions with the representatives of the Faculty serve as the basis for the statements made in the Expert Report.

⁸ See discussion under Criterion (2)

(0) Introduction and comprehensive remarks

The Faculty was founded in 2007 under the name of "College of Nursing Jesenice". On the 20th of February 2014, the institution received an approval from the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency (SQAA) and was renamed into the "Faculty of Health Care Jesenice". The Faculty is, thus, a relatively young institution of higher education with a total of 310 students in the academic year 2014/2015.

Currently, the Faculty offers two accredited higher education study programs "Nursing Care" of the first and second cycle of professional degree (bachelor and master programs). Recently, the Faculty has developed a second cycle study program "Health Promotion", which is currently undergoing the process of national accreditation. In total, the Faculty is planning to introduce 3 more study programs in the near future.

The concession to implement the first cycle study program "Nursing Care" was obtained in December 2006.

The Research Institute for Health Care and Nursing functioning at the Faculty is claimed to contribute to students' as well as teaching personnel's research activity.

(1) Program aims and learning outcomes

Administrative representatives of the Faculty state that the study program complies with the guidelines specified in the document "Nurses and Midwives for Health" (WHO, European Strategy for Nursing and Midwifery Education; WHO, 2001) as well as the "Munich Declaration on Nursing and Midwifery" (WHO, 2000).

The general objective of the study program is to provide education and training of nurses qualifying them to perform the latest nursing interventions and to offer nursing services at all levels of health care provision in accordance with their professional competences. Upon completion of their studies, students are awarded with the title of a 'Registered Nurse', RN. This profession is indicated in the "List of professions in health care services—health care professionals" (Official Gazette of the Republic of Slovenia, no. 82/2004 and no. 40/2006). Moreover, in Slovenian "Classification of Learning Activities/Outcomes", the Bachelor program "Nursing Care" is classified under Group 7 (Health and welfare), Sub-

group 72 (Health), subgroup 723 (Nursing and caring), and subgroup 7231 (Nursing).

As it can be seen from the above described national requirements, the Faculty has to comply with different framework conditions with regard to the design of the study program. Hence according to the parties involved in the development of the program, changes in its content and structure can only be enacted if they are previously agreed with other faculties of Slovenia offering similar programs in nursing. It is regulated on the national level that 80% of learning content and competences taught in all study programs related to the field of nursing must be identical. Alterations in the design of programs may only be implemented by voting of the faculties of the country, which can take place every 5 years. It would therefore be complicated for the Faculty to take independent decisions with regard to the arrangement of such a program. The experts expressed their ambivalence with regard to the assessment of the aspect of program planning. The module description and the structure of the study program reveal that its traditional approach of teaching ensures the mediation of nursing competences. According to the statements of responsible persons, such compliance with nursing qualifications is possible due to the mentioned processes of coordination among individual faculties of Slovenia. However, the experts concluded that this adjustment policy might be too rigid and thus problematic in the context of ongoing international developments in the field of nursing care. As a matter of fact, teaching methods of nursing-related study content and competences have recently witnessed considerable developments, which can be outlined as following:

It could be thought to adjust the program, stronger away from the subject classification system towards a learning field approach and to extend the program for one semester (see also Criterion 2). It could give the chance to stronger implement methodology aspects and critical thinking for the sake of professionalization and strengthening the academic understanding of nursing science.

From the experts' point of view, the Faculty of Health Care could assume one of the leading roles in questions of development of care programs in Slovenia. The Experts encourage the Faculty to call for the adoption of modern approaches in nursing sciences. In the course of discussions with the program management and the students, it became clear that teaching activities applied in the program go far beyond the described requirements.

At the same time, the experts observed that the duly adapted structure of the study program conveys a tendency towards vocational/school training, whereas the perspective of university level education is not as vividly recognizable. Therefore, the experts underline that a stronger emphasis should be put upon the analyses and critical reflection about the essence of nursing activities and sciences, nevertheless the experts see, that it is a professional bachelor program.

The mandatory coordination among the national faculties of Slovenia creates the opportunity to implement a framework of comparable national standards in nursing training. This fact enables the establishment of a unitary profile of nursing staff with higher education. Such a profile will in turn help to accentuate the recognition of the growing demand for university educated specialists in the given field.

The experts identify a particular potential for further development of the program and the Faculty with regard to the above-mentioned issue on the recognition of academic education as a necessary constituent of nursing profession. For this purpose, the topic of professional identity of university trained nursing staff should be continuously addressed and duly conveyed throughout the studies as well as within each module. Hereby the program could enclose and pre-emptively introduce the so-called "change agents" that students usually encounter during their internship or, at the latest, in subsequent professional life. This means that already during their course of studies, students can learn to reflect about the challenges of the future professional activity and tackle difficulties as expected.

The experts came to the conclusion that the study program "Nursing Care" provides a clear and coherent vision of objectives. Its qualification objectives encompass academic and multidisciplinary aspects and bear reference to scientific qualifications, competences required for employment activities, and skills to exercise social commitment and personal growth.

Thereby, the bachelor thesis serves as the main tool for the improvement and solidification of scientific qualifications in the program. The module "Introduction to Research and Informatics in Nursing Care" envisages students' engagement in scientific work starting with the first semester of studies.

The qualifications enabling to take up a position in the job market are primarily confirmed, according to the program management, through the good employment rates of their graduates. Hence, an alumni survey conducted in October

2014, demonstrates very positive results with regard to the employability of former students.

Modules such as "Public Health I and II" which must be given a lot of consideration in study programs focused on health care broaden students' perspectives on social engagement. The discussion with the students made it clear that the program "Nursing Care" not only assists with the development of professional competences but also contributes to their personal growth. In order to fully realize its objectives, the program should provide its students a smooth shift from the solely clinical practice based education to the academic approach in nursing studies.

To sum up, the experts conclude that the study program fulfills the discussed criteria.

(2) Curriculum design

The "Nursing Care" bachelor program comprises 180 ECTS credit points (ECTS). One academic year is worth 60 and each semester is worth 30 ECTS. Out of total 180 ECTS, 158 are awarded for 26 compulsory subjects, 12 ECTS are given for elective courses (students have to choose 4 out of 12 offered), and 10 ECTS are assigned for the diploma thesis. There are 10 compulsory and one elective subject in the first year, 10 compulsory in the second year, 6 compulsory and 3 elective subjects in the third year of studies.

In accordance with the statements of the program management, the curriculum of the study program is designed according to requirements of the EU Directive from 2005 and the Bologna Declaration, which are obligatory in Slovenia since 2009. Following these requirements, one third of the program is dedicated to theoretical learning, whereas the total amount of self-study time has been increased to 1,350 hours. Clinical training (2,300 hours) and clinical exercises (219 hours) together constitute almost half of the total study program workload.

The study program is offered in both full-time and part-time forms. Full-time students study 5 days a week (from Monday to Friday) within the premises of the Faculty, whereas part-time students' schedule includes also classes on Saturday.

The Faculty states that part-time students are already employed at health care institutions and long-term care facilities. Therefore, their study program with the required number of credits is implemented in the afternoon. Besides, the have

the option of obtaining credits for courses—particularly, those in Clinical Training as a result of prior knowledge and skills, in accordance with the *Regulations for Recognition of Prior Learning* (HEA, EU Directive 2005/36/EC).

From the experts' point of view, this regulation is of little expediency although it is stipulated by the Slovenian Higher Education Act. Nevertheless, the experts consider it reasonable to stretch the total duration of study for part-time students so that those who cannot receive any credits for their previous achievements can also complete the program within a manageable timeframe. Hence it is suggested to extend the length of study by adding 1,5 years, which will eventually prolong the studies up to 4,5 years in total. Students have also welcomed this suggestion because the division between clinical practice classes and theoretical part of the program leads to a high workload. Therefore there should be an opportunity to mitigate the discrepancy through the prolongation of studies. The experts believe that this option should be discussed with other Slovenian faculties in the process of common curriculum development.

In the third year of studies, students have the opportunity to choose 3 out of 11 optional modules. In this regard, the experts believe that the main focus of optional modules should be revised in the process of program development. This revision would clarify which of the optional module objectives (e.g. Palliative Care or Communication skills) could be considered as obligatory components of the content of studies.

The experts assume that the curriculum revision offers a good opportunity to assign a number to each module. This will increase the transparency of information for all stakeholders involved as well as other interested people.

In the process of the on-site evaluation, the question has arisen whether as a result of adaptations of the program to the modern vision of nursing studies in terms of academic specialty, it might be possible to upgrade the program with the following award of 210 or even 240 ECTS. The experts consider such alterations as beneficial taking into account the structure of similar study programs offered at other European higher education institutions and due to the complexity of learning-related requirements (theory-practice-correlation). Furthermore, they underline that it is important for the program to introduce the elements of self-reflection, which will consequently contribute to the development of a unique professional identity of a nurse with an academic education. At the same time, these changes can eventually influence, for instance, the scope of the master

program as well as its content alignment. Hereby, the experts refer to extensive adjustments conducted by the Faculty together with other institutions specialized in nursing.

As it was already mentioned, the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice should take the advantage of space available for independent decisions. Hence, 20% of the content of studies is determined and controlled by the Faculty directly. This opportunity should be used to further enhance the prominence and heighten the rank of the Faculty profile.

The experts positively underlined the internationalization strategy of the Faculty. The Erasmus Extended University Charter was awarded in 2009. In 2013, the Faculty was awarded the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) for the program Erasmus Plus (2014-2020), enabling it to conclude bilateral agreements, conduct student and instructor exchange programs with foreign partners and cooperate in joint international life-long learning programs. The Faculty has signed 17 bilateral agreements with other EU countries, like England, Finland, Scotland, Slovakia, Malta, Poland, Portugal, Belgium, Estonia, the Czech Republic and Croatia and non-EU countries (Norway, Turkey). It also cooperates with higher education institutions in countries to which the Erasmus Charter does not apply (USA, Bosnia and Herzegovina). During the last years, the Faculty hosted more than 20 visiting instructors from different foreign higher education institutions as part of the Erasmus exchange program. At the same time, 11 foreign exchange students from five higher education institutions received clinical training during a 3-month Erasmus exchange program.

The experts conclude that the program fulfills the discussed criterion.

(3) Staff

The Bachelor program "Nursing Care" at the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice is implemented by 24 instructors, of these 9 are full-time employees and 15 hold a secondary employment position. In addition, 54 instructors are implementing the study program under a copyright contract or a work contract. The relationship between full-time/secondary employment workers and contractual workers involved in the implementation of the first cycle study program favors the former, with 65% full-time instructors. In addition, 7 members of full-time non-teaching staff are working within the administrative support units of the Faculty including the Student Office, General Administrative Office, Dean's Office and the library.

During the on-site visit, the experts observed a high level of engagement of the teaching and non-teaching staff in the activities carried out in the study program and at the Faculty in general. Such eagerness was unanimously confirmed also by the students during the discussions.

From the experts' point of view, human resources of the program are sufficient both in quantitative and qualitative terms. The experts give a positive evaluation to the fact that supervisors for practical classes (e.g. Skills Labs) and clinical internship (hospital, retirement home) are required to have gathered certain amount of professional experience in order to be trusted with guidance of students. Moreover, the Faculty offers the teaching staff of the program opportunities for further training in higher education didactics on an obligatory basis.

As a recommendation for the improvement of the teaching staff, the experts encourage the Faculty to establish and promote a self-contained PhD program. This will enable the Faculty to create a foundation to cultivate its own teaching personnel and simultaneously to develop an autonomous profession of a nurse in Slovenia. Furthermore, by offering a PhD program in the field of nursing, the Faculty will at the same time forward its own position in the nursing field among other institutions of Slovenia and thus reinforce its the unique features. Finally, the active internationalization policy undertaken in the Faculty is worthy to mention; hereby the attraction of the institution can also be further intensified through a PhD program and cooperation with foreign universities.

To sum up, the experts evaluate the criterion of human resources to be fully met.

(4) Facilities and learning resources

In the course of the on-site visit, the expert group had the opportunity to observe and evaluate the learning and training premises of the Faculty.

The building of the Faculty is owned by the Municipality of Jesenice. The premises are prepared for the implementation of courses where students gain new knowledge and experience through practical examples and procedures.

The equipment enables the implementation of clinical exercises, allowing students to gain the required competences before entering the clinical setting. Two laboratories are equipped for nursing care provision for adults and one for chil-

dren. The microbiology and biochemistry practice settings are equipped for research purposes.

A special room is equipped for gaining knowledge and skills in laboratory medicine and physiology, especially for conducting tests and clinical trials. All of the clinical practice premises are located on the ground floor of the Faculty.

Lecture halls, library with e-learning room and the Student Office are located on the first floor of the building. Two of the larger lecture halls can be divided into four separate seminar rooms containing whiteboards, removable boards and computers, power outlets for laptops, sound system, projectors and overhead projectors. The second floor contains one lecture hall whereas other premises are used for administrative activities.

The experts look favorably on the fact that the Faculty and the practical part of study programs is realized in close cooperation with the local clinic and other health care institutions. The library of the Faculty in Jesenice offers about 4.000 units of library material to both students and teachers. 3.500 units are classified as books or monographs, 300 are classified as serial publications and are classified as other non-library material units.

The experts recommend reconsideration of the library opening hours; at the moment they include only the timeframe from 12.00 till 16.00 on working days. Although students have expressed their contentment with these opening hours, they are usually busy with practical tasks in the clinical settings during the first half of the day. Therefore, extension of opening hours in the evening would most likely comply with current the tendency in the arrangement of self-study time. The Faculty could in this case first carry out a test phase in order to assess the demand for and the popularity of additional library hours among students.

With regard to financial configurations of the Faculty, it is clear that funding through state subsidies has becomes more difficult. Until now, 60% of the necessary financial support has been supplied by the state, whereas 40% of it have been provided through the tuition fees of part-time students as well as through the third-party funding (research and development projects). The experts are aware of the financial challenges of the Faculty. Taking into account the support of Slovenian government, the experts encourage the development of specific quality criteria on the national level, which will reveal what financial resources are stipulated to higher education institutions. The obtained information can

serve as a basis for the development of a reward system supporting these institutions. Overall, the experts conclude that the requirements of the criterion are fulfilled.

(5) Study process and student assessment

The study process of the program is regulated by general provisions of the Faculty with regard to admission requirements and procedures, rules of examinations, assessment and grading of students' academic performance.

Information about the Bachelor program "Nursing Care", its admission requirements and other details relevant to the program are available on the web-page of the Faculty.

Admission requirements are appropriate to the level of the study program. In addition to that, the aspects of gender equality and admission possibilities for people with disabilities are managed according to national legislation.

The students' support is available through the tutoring system and different forms of mentorship in clinical setting. The Faculty states, that the teachers communicate and cooperate with students through the Student Council and other units of the Faculty. Office hours of the instructors are posted on the Faculty's webpage and are conducted on a face-to-face basis. In addition, students always have the option to contact instructors via e-mail or telephone. Discussions with students revealed that supervision and academic support mechanisms are provided on a good level. It should be mentioned here that such an effective support system is primarily organized thanks to the vivid commitment of the teaching staff and also due to the manageable size of the Faculty. Besides, tutoring also appears as a well-functioning and helpful part of student support system.

From the experts' point of view, the program "Nursing Care" provides a high level of academic support and fair treatment of its students. In addition, students have confirmed that they are satisfied with the support measures, as well as the information provision system in the Faculty.

The Examination Procedures and Regulations define the assessment methods, grading system and criteria for obtaining ECTS credits. All teachers inform their students about the course curriculum and assessment methods at the beginning of each semester. The assessment of the diploma thesis is regulated by the *Di-*

ploma Thesis Regulations. An assessment can be written, oral, or combined written and oral test. Group assessments are also possible, in which case criteria for evaluating the contribution of each member towards the final group grade have to be clearly set out. Equal study opportunities for special-needs students and students with disabilities are guaranteed. In the implementation of the study program, their special requirements are met by adjusting the study process and the assessment methods based on an application submitted by the student. Each academic year, the Faculty holds three examination periods (winter, summer and autumn exam period). In the current academic year, students may attempt to take an exam up to 4 times, which complies with the national provisions.

From the experts' point of view, the examination system is considered to be appropriate for the study program. Written examinations outbalance, however, other methods of student performance evaluation. The program needs to apply a larger variety of examination forms, because they will reflect the outcomes of a broader range of competences. Therefore, the experts underline the necessity to review the study program in terms of examination, which should be more competence-oriented.

Furthermore, the experts recommend reducing the amount of re-examination possibilities. At the moment, students can repeat an exam up to four times and even when they fail the last try, the Faculty finds it difficult to take a decision about their exclusion. Meanwhile, lowering the number of re-examinations could help to improve the level of education in the program because students will be obliged to prepare for examinations more thoroughly. This will additionally entail a certain decrease of organizational expenditure. The experts are similarly aware of the fact that the examination provisions at the Faculty are determined by national legislation. Hence, it is almost impossible for the Faculty to introduce any changes autonomously.

As it was already mentioned, the study workload of the program is evaluated to be very high both by the experts and the students. The reason behind the large pensum of study is the combination of theoretical courses and clinical practice. Therefore, the experts enquire the Faculty to verify whether the program could be prolonged to a total number of 7 semesters. The subsequent content adjustments could be applied for the development of students' reflexive and analytical capabilities and used for addressing the aspect of professional identity through the whole period of studies.

As of June 2014, a total of 58 full-time students and 58 part-time students have graduated the program.

The experts conclude that the program fulfills the discussed criterion.

(6) Program management

Quality assurance measures are integrated into all processes and sub-processes conducted within different units of the Faculty. Furthermore, the Faculty has prepared the "FHCJ Quality Manual", which entails the annual strategic development plan of the institution as well as the regulations for the maintenance and further enhancement of education quality in the study programs.

Moreover, the Faculty founded the "Center for Quality and Evaluation" in 2014 as a separate organizational unit. The purpose of the Center is to ensure a quick response to development requirements, providing a systematic approach to quality assurance and continuous quality improvement.

The Faculty's focus on development and continuous quality improvement ensures the implementation of its strategic objectives as well as the realization of various educative, administrative, scientific and extra-curricular activities on a good level.

All stakeholders participating in FHCJ's activities are part of the quality assurance process. It has to be highlighted, that the Faculty obtained the international standard ISO 9001:2008 and the Slovenian national standard Quality for Future Education (QFE) in 2012, when the Faculty became the first educational institution in Slovenia offering health care programs. The certificate demonstrates that all stakeholders meet the standards set for the quality management system.

The Faculty has adopted quality assurance measures through the national accreditation by the Slovenian Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (SQAA). Accreditation is required both for the education institution and the study programs, and has to be obtained every seven years. In 2013, the first cycle Nursing Care program has underwent re-accreditation procedure and received a quality certificate valid until 2021.

Data regarding quality assurance aspects are collected with the help of anonymous questionnaires as well as by monitoring and evaluating the previously set variables covering different areas of Faculty's activities. Results of questionnaires and monitoring indicators are discussed at the sessions of the Quality and

Evaluation Committee and the Senate. The results are also presented annually to the Academic Assembly.

The experts come to the conclusion that the quality assurance processes conducted in the "Nursing Care" program correspond to the overarching quality assurance measures of the entire Faculty.

Discussions with students revealed, however, that results of quality assurance and the results of practically implemented quality assurance measures are not communicated to students in a regular and sufficiently transparent manner. In this regard, the Faculty should reflect upon the possibilities to disclose the relevant information in accordance with data protection rules. Direct knowledge about survey results can potentially encourage students to participate more actively in various quality assessment procedures.

The experts also recommend the Faculty to employ quality evaluation methods, such as interviews, discussions with students, in a more intense manner. Hereby, the Faculty should make sure that the obtained results are stored and analyzed in appropriate units and by eligible authorities of the institution in order to draw the most appropriate conclusions for them for further development possibilities.

The Faculty of Health Care Jesenice is a relatively new organization. The first cohort of students graduated in 2011. In July 2014, the amount of graduate students constituted 123 people. Alumni Association of the Faculty was founded in 2012, which is in the process of continuous development. The collection of initial information about the employment record of alumni students has been planned for October 2014 because by that time the first batch of graduate students would have gathered at most three years of working experience. The criteria chosen for the evaluation of students' career development include professional achievements and recognition, published articles and other written works as well as contribution to the development of nursing.

The expert group concluded that the criterion of quality assurance is fulfilled.

3.4 Summary

Based on the information from the written documents and the results of the on-site visit, the experts came to the conclusion that the Bachelor study program

“Nursing Care” offered at the Faculty of Health Care Jesenice fulfills the above described criteria.

The experts emphasize that the program reveals a great potential to educate future nurses and provide them a solid academic background and practical experience. Apart from the nursing profession, also practice of can also continuous their academic career.

In the course of the on-site visit, the experts held very informative and positive discussion sessions with the representatives of the Faculty. All stakeholders, including the teaching staff and students, have clearly expressed a high level of commitment to the development of nursing in Slovenia. From the experts’ point of view, such a commitment serve as an evidence of a great need and interest in further development of nursing science in Slovenia on an academic level.

It has also become evident during the on-site visit that the Faculty possesses a larger record of accomplishments that it has been conveyed through the documents submitted for the accreditation procedure. Thus, notwithstanding the national restrictions, the Faculty has launched new developments in nursing in terms of teaching and research methods. Based on these observations, the experts recommend the Faculty to display its activities to the local as well as international audience in a significantly stronger manner.

Taking these facts into consideration, the experts come to the conclusion that they will submit a recommendation to the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS for a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program. The experts encourage the representatives of the Faculty to go forward in their development.

Based on these observations, the experts recommend the accreditation of the study program on the following recommendations, which should be accomplished in the course of upcoming adaptations upon the expire date of the next national accreditation:

- The module description should be revised in terms of lacking module enumeration, absent titles and partially incomplete information with regard to study hours.
- The Faculty could consider the extension of study period with the total amount of 210 or even 240 ECTS. This could enable the Faculty to ac-

comply with an individual professional identity of a nurse and at the same time provide enough space to address students' role as "change agents" not only throughout the studies but also in a module specifically designed for that purpose.

- Concerning the part-time form studies, the duration of the program should be prolonged for 1.5 years, thus, making part-time education available for employed students and single parents as well.
- The Faculty should consider the establishment of a PhD program in nursing in order to create a new generation of teachers working in the program.
- Taking into account the support of Slovenian government, the experts encourage the development of specific quality criteria on the national level, which will reveal what financial resources are stipulated to higher education institutions. The obtained information can serve as a basis for the development of a reward system supporting these institutions. .
- With regard to the examination system, the experts underline that the teaching staff of the program should better coordinate the exam timeframe in order to maintain a balanced study load for students during the examination phase. Besides, examinations should be taken after theoretical and practical parts of the program and not in-between the two phases.
- The examination system should be reviewed regarding the competence-orientation of the examinations.
- The number of re-examinations should be reduced with the aim to increase the quality of assessment results as well as students' motivation.
- Results of quality assurance and the results of practically implemented measures should be regularly and orderly communicated to students.
- The opening hours of the library should be evaluated and if necessary prolonged.

4 Decision of the accreditation commission

Faculty of Health Care Jesenice (FHCJ), Slovenia; Bachelor Study Program "Nursing Care" (Registered Nurse, RN)

The resolution of the Accreditation Commission is based on the Faculty's application as well as the expert report and the on-site visit covered in the expert report. The on-site visit occurred on 5 and 6 February 2015 according to the previously agreed schedule.

Furthermore, on 13 April 2015, the Faculty has submitted its response opinion regarding the expert report. The Accreditation Commission took it into consideration.

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

In the response opinion, several factual corrections were outlined. These are considered in the current version of the expert report.

The Accreditation Commission adopts the following resolution:

The Bachelor study program "Nursing Care" will be accredited. The program is offered since the winter semester 2007/2008. The study program constitutes the 1st cycle of studies in the nursing sphere. The regular study time of the program is three years, during which students have to obtain 180 ECTS. One academic year is worth 60 and each semester is worth 30 ECTS. Out of a total of 180 ECTS, 158 are awarded for 26 compulsory subjects, 12 ECTS are given for elective courses (students have to choose 4 out of 12 offered), and 10 ECTS are assigned for the diploma thesis. Upon completion of the program, graduates are awarded with the title of a "Registered Nurse" (RN).

The initial accreditation is carried out for a period of five years and ends at the 30 September 2020.

For the degree program no conditions are imposed.

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as the Faculty as a whole, the AHPGS Accreditation Commission recommends the responsible units to take into consideration the program-specific and the overarching recommendations listed in the Expert Report.