



Assessment Report

of the application by the
King Saud University, Riyadh,
College of Nursing,
on accreditation of
Bachelor and Master Study Programs “Nursing”
(Bachelor of Science, Master of Science)

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This report is confidential. Disclosure to third parties without the consent of the applicant institution or the office of the AHPGS is not allowed.

In order to render the document more legible, the AHPGS utilizes the masculine form for both masculine and feminine references.

1. Introduction

The Accreditation Agency for Study Programs in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary, multiprofessional organisation. Its mission is to accredit Bachelor and Master study programs in the fields of health and social science, as well as in related domains. As an international organisation, it aims at bringing a valuable contribution to the academisation of the health and social fields by accrediting Bachelor and Master study programs. By implementing accreditation 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.

In the context of the current internationalisation of higher education study programs, the AHPGS accredits international study programs and their compliance with general, internationally-acknowledged university standards. In such cases, the AHPGS also considers specific requirements formulated by the applicant higher-education institution.

In this context, the College of Nursing of the King Saud University, Riad, Saudi Arabia, has contracted the AHPGS for the accreditation of the Bachelor and Master study programs in "Nursing".

At a formal level, the accreditation process follows internationally-established steps: the Application is submitted by the university, the Review of the program by experts, the On-Site Visit and the Decision of the Accreditation Commission. The Accreditation Criteria (cf. Assessment Spheres document of the basic documentation) considered 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", established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the national regulation in matters of higher education accreditation is established by the National Commission for Academic Accreditation & Assessment (NCAAA, www.ncaaa.org.sa). The specifications formulated by the Commission are legally binding. Thus, every study program must undergo the NCAAA accreditation and comply with the Bachelor predetermined criteria set by the NCAAA Commission. The Accreditation process conducted by the AHPGS runs independently from the NCAAA.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS resolves the decision towards accreditation of a study program on the basis of the Application documents, the On-Site Visit at the College of Nursing in Riad, and the Expert Report.

The accreditation process is carried out in three steps:

I. The university application

The AHPGS verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the university, namely the Application and its corresponding Annexes. These are to fulfill the Accreditation Criteria. The agency ensures that the international legal requirements in matters of higher education are met. As a result, the AHPGS comprises a summary (see 2.-5.), which is to be approved by the university and subsequently made available for the expert group, together with all other documentation.

II. On-Site Visit (Peer-Review)

The experts assigned by the AHPGS carry out the external, On-Site Visit at the higher education institution. During the On-Site Visit, discussions with various members of the institution take place, from university and department administration, to degree program management, lecturers and students. This offers the expert group details about the degree program beyond the written documents. The task of the experts during the On-Site Visit is the verification and evaluation of 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).

After the On-Site Visit, the expert group issues the Expert Report based on the results of the visit, the written review of the study programs, and the documents submitted by the university. This Expert Report is made available to the university, in order for it to issue a Response Opinion.

III. The AHPGS decision regarding accreditation

For the accreditation decision, the AHPGS Accreditation Commission evaluates the university Application as well as its annexes, the Summary comprised by the AHPGS agency, the Expert Report, as well as the university Response Opinion. These documents form the grounds for the accreditation decision of the AHPGS Accreditation Commission.

2. General

The Application for Accreditation (without the awarding of the official seal of the Accreditation Council of the Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany) of the Bachelor and Master study programs "Nursing" (here Application) of the King Saud University, Riad, College of Nursing was submitted to the Accreditation Agency for Study Programs in Health and Social Science (AHPGS e.V.) on the 18.05.2011. The contract between the King Saud University and the AHPGS was signed on the 26.05.2011. This stipulates the review for accreditation of the following Bachelor and Master study programs in "Nursing":

- Nursing (Bachelor of Science, BSN);
- Nursing (Master of Science, MSN).

On the 28.07.2011 the AHPGS has forwarded to the College of Applied Medical Sciences the Open Questions pertaining to the Application for accreditation submitted by the College. On the 15.08.2011 the College submitted to the AHPGS the Response to the Open Questions in electronic format.

The summary of the Study programs “Nursing” (Bachelor and Master), prepared by the AHPGS, was approved by the University on the 06.09.2011.

The application for accreditation submitted by College of Nursing, King Saud University for the study programs follows the outlined criteria for international accreditation recommended by the AHPGS. Alongside the application request for accreditation of the study programs “Nursing”, the following additional documents are to be found in the application package (the documents submitted by the applicant are numbered in the following order for easier referencing):

Common Annexes valid for both Bachelor and Master programs in “Nursing”:

Annex	Description
Annex 1	Distribution of credit and contact hours for both programs
Annex 2	Student guide of the King Saud University, Riad
Annex 3a	Teaching matrix
Annex 3b	Short resumes of selected teaching members
Annex 3c	Regulations for academic promotion
Annex 4	Statistics over the course and final exam results of students at the College of Nursing
Annex 5	Strategic plan of the College of Nursing
Annex 6a	Quality Management Handbook of the King Saud University
Annex 6b	Self evaluation document of the College of Nursing

Specific Annexes for the Bachelor study program “Nursing”:

Annex	Description
Annex 7	Curriculum structure and course descriptions for courses specific for the Bachelor program “Nursing”
Annex 8	Course description of the general courses in the Bachelor program
Annex 9	Bachelor program specifications

Annex 10	Internship specifications
Annex 11	Annual program report

Specific Annexes for the Master study program "Nursing":

Annex	Description
Annex 7	Curriculum structure and course description for the courses in the Master program "Nursing"
Annex 8	Master program specifications

The evaluation and verification procedure is carried out on the basis of the accreditation standards of the AHPGS for international reviews.

The On-Site Visit took place on 30.09-01.10.2011. The present assessment report is based on the University's application, the additional documents, the written expert reviews and the results of the On-Site Visit.

Following the recommendation of the experts and of the Accreditation Commission, the AHPGS has reached a positive decision regarding the application towards accreditation of the Bachelor study program "Nursing" of the King Saud University, Riyadh, College of Nursing. Thus, the agency accredits the present study program without further conditions. This is valid five years, until the 15.12.2016.

For the Master study program "Nursing" of the King Saud University, Riyadh, College of Nursing the accreditation without further conditions has been decided, valid five years, until the 15.12.2016.

3. Content issues

3.1 Structure of the program and professional requirements

The final goal of both programs is to prepare students in a competent and professional manner in nursing, and in order to supply for the shortage of

personnel in this field. In addition to this, both programs intend to keep students constantly up to date with current and anticipated developments in primary health and nurse care (cf. Application, A2.1).

Both programs are available only in the full-time form. The levels are structured according to levels. One level corresponds to one semester, and equals 15 study weeks. For the **Bachelor** study program, a total study period of 8 semesters is foreseen, plus an additional internship year (reaching a total of 10 semesters/ 5 years). From the total of 8 semesters to be spent for the theoretical course, 2 of these are part of the Preparatory year mandatory for all KSU students and common for all students enrolled in health colleges (see Bachelor Table in Section 3.2 of the present Summary).

For the **Master** study program a total period of 6 semesters is intended, 4 of them consisting of full-time study, whereas the last 2 planned for preparing the final thesis or research project (cf. Application A1.7).

The aim of the **Bachelor** study program is to prepare competent adequate personnel for working in healthcare institutions, health organizations and within communities. After graduating from the program students can be employed as nurses in public or private healthcare institutions, as well as private nurses or nurse educators (cf. Annex 9 of the Bachelor-specific Annexes). In order for the students to gain practical experience in the field, a one-year, full-time internship (52 weeks, 5 days/week, 8 hours/day) is planned after the successful completion of the modules of the Bachelor program. This is a mandatory requirement for graduating from the degree. According to the university, it also represents an opportunity for Bachelor students to successfully transit to professional nurses (cf. Annex 9, Attachment 2: *Interns Guide*, p. 7). The

students are thus engaged in the labor environment, working in hospitals to which they have been assigned according to their Grade Average Point¹.

The aim of the **Master** study program is to continue the education provided within the Bachelor program and allow students to specialize in four specific work areas in the field of nursing: Maternity and Child Health Nursing, Medical Surgical Nursing, Nursing Administration and Education and Community and Mental Health Nursing (see Responses to the Open Questions). The program should prepare alumni to work as “clinical nurse specialist and administrators capable of assuming leadership in developing and implementing innovative roles that encompass education and managerial functions”, with the final goal of producing effective change in the healthcare system (cf. Application, A2.2).

The courses of study in “Nursing” (both Bachelor and Master) are taught in English and finalize with awarding the final degree of “Bachelor of Science in Nursing” (BSN) and “Master of Science in Nursing” (MSN), respectively.

The study time for both programs is divided in credit hours. There are three types of credit hours: lecture, clinical and practical. One lecture credit hour is equivalent to one contact hour spent during lectures. One practical credit hour equals either two hours spent during laboratory practice. One clinical credit hour equals three hours spent during clinical practice (cf. Application, A1.6). Generally the study time does not cover individual study time, the extra class hours, the internship or final exams.

For the **Bachelor** program, the study time amounts to a total of 166 credit hours, including the preparatory year (the internship is not accounted for in this workload). This results in a total of 2235 study hours (without the individual

¹ The Grade Average Point (GPA) represents the division of the cumulative value (average grade) of all courses attended. For an equivalency table of the GPA see also Section 3.5., *Access and admission requirements* of the present Summary, p. 22

study time of the students) (cf. Application, A1.6, *Undergraduate* Table). Another total of 2080 hours are added after the students have completed the internship in the last year of the program.

For the **Master** study program, the workload amounts to a total of 42 credit hours, which equals 990 study hours (without the individual study time of the students) (cf. Application, A1.6, *Graduate* Table). The workload per semester varies between 9 and 12 credit hours; however, it is possible to obtain a maximum of 15 credit hours with approval from the Department council (cf. Application A2.6, p. 16).

The workload of the programs can be summarized as following (following the indications listed under Application A1.6 and the attached Table A1.6.1.):

Program	Total number of credit hours	Total number of contact hours	Internship hours	Total of hours
Bachelor	133	2235	2080	4315
Master	42	990	---	990

A detailed structure of the study program for the **Bachelor** program can be found under Annex 7, Bachelor, *Study Plan* section. For the **Master** program, a structure of the program can be found under Annex 8, *Study plan* and *Curriculum plan* sections, and Annex 7, which lists all the courses included in the program.

For the **Bachelor** program there is no final thesis or research project intended. However, students are familiarized with scientific research, learn to think analytically, and to develop academic research studies (cf. Responses to the Open Questions).

For the **Master** program, students may decide whether to take a final paper or pursue a final research project, for which there are 6 credit hours assigned. For the latter option, students have to design, implement and orally defend a research project under the guidance of a overseeing committee. For the final

paper option, students have to pursue electives which amount to six credit hours and submit a final scholarly dissertation under the guidance of a thesis advisor. In addition to this, a comprehensive examination is also foreseen for this first option (cf. Application, A2.5, p. 16).

The earliest beginning of the Bachelor study program "Nursing" took place in the year 1977. The Master program was initiated in 1985.

The College of Nursing enrolls annually approximately 200 students for the **Bachelor** study program in both female and male sections, and in both Fall and Spring semester. Currently, there are approximately 900 students enrolled, regardless of study semester (cf. Application A1. 7 and A1. 9).

For the **Master** study program, student enrollment is possible only in the Fall semester. The College of Nursing enrolls annually approximately 24 students (*ibid.*), and a total of 66 students enrolled (cf. Application, C2.1 p. 31). The **Master's** degree was introduced for the first time in 1988, and is currently available only for female students (cf. Application, C1.1 p. 29). The motivation behind this decision is the fact that employment opportunities occur already at undergraduate level for male students.

Application, A5.9, Table 2 lists the total, male and female, completion rate for the College of Nursing, at both graduate and undergraduate levels. Table 1 of the same section offers an overview between the planned and actual enrollment in the two programs.

For both programs there are no tuition fees; this is the general regulation for all state-run study programs in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In addition to this, the Ministry of Higher Education grants a monthly scholarship of 1000 SAR (approx. 184,- Euro) to all students.

The international aspects of the curriculum are described in the Application under Section A1.14. The College of Nursing has developed the curriculum following the indications and criteria stated in the American Association of College of Nursing (AACN). As English is the teaching language, students have to demonstrate language proficiency when applying for the programmers. In addition to that, English courses are part of the curriculum. A particular condition for admission in the **Master** program with regards to English proficiency is the fact that successful applicants must obtain a score over 500 at the TOEFL test.

The university holds international collaborations with similar departments at universities in the United States of America (Yale, Pittsburgh) and Canada (McGill) (cf. Application, A.1.14).

The intercultural aspects of the university are presented in Sections A.1.14 and A.1.15 of the application. Students have the possibility to study abroad, as the KSU has collaboration contracts with similar institutions in Canada, Finland, and USA. Exchange students from the collaborating universities are allowed to follow courses at the KSU (Application A1.15). In addition to that, the College of Nursing attracted international teaching personnel, native-English speakers, as well as other non-Arabic speakers.

3.2 Curriculum

Bachelor program structure

For the Bachelor program, "Nursing" specialization the following courses are designed (cf. Annex 7, BA, Section *Study Plan*):

	Course	Course Title	Credit hours
Preparatory Year			
Level 1 (16 Credit Hours)	ENG 112	English Language I	3
	CLS 101	Chemistry for Nursing	2
	RAD 101	Physics for Nursing	4

Level 2 (18 Credit Hours)	NUR 115	Nursing and Health Care	4
	NUR 115	Medical Terminology	3
	ENG 113	English Language II	3
	CLS 202	Basic Anatomy and Physiology	4
	ARAB 101	Arabic Language I	2
	IC 101	Islamic Culture I	2
	NUR 122	Foundation of Nursing	3
	NUR 123	Concepts of Nursing	4
Bachelor of Nursing Specific Courses			
Level 3 (18 Credit Hours)	ENG 114	English Language III	3
	ARAB 103	Arabic Culture II	2
	IC 102	Islamic Culture II	2
	CHS 262	Nutritional Biochemistry	3
	CLS 212	Microbiology	4
	NUR 230	Health Assessment	4
Level 4 (16 Credit Hours)	IC 103	Islamic Culture III	2
	CLS 323	Pathophysiology	3
	RHS 366	Pharmacology	2
	NUR 244	Medical Surgical Nursing	4
	NUR 245	Clinical Aspects of Medical-Surgical Nursing	5
Level 5 (15 Credit Hours)	IC 104	Islamic Culture	2
	CHS 231	Infectious Diseases	2
	NUR 352	Gynecological Nursing	3
	NUR 353	Human Growth and Development	3
	NUR 356	Critical Care Nursing	5
Level 6 (17 Credit Hours)	CHS 221	Advanced Biostatics	3
	NUR 261	Principles of Learning and Teaching	2
	NUR 362	Maternal Child Nursing	4
	NUR 363	Clinical Aspects of Maternal and Child Nursing	5
	CHS 226	Nutrition	3
Level 7 (17 Credit Hours)	CHS 336	Epidemiology I	3
	NUR 471	Socio-culture Variation in Health	3
	NUR 472	Community and Mental Health Nursing	4
	NUR 473	Primary Health Care Nursing	5
	NUR 474	Concepts of Psychological Nursing	2
Level 8 (16 Credit Hours)	BMT 226	Introduction to Personal Computing	2
	NUR 485	Communication in Health Care	2
	NUR 487	Trends and Researches in Nursing	1
	NUR 488	Emergency Care Nursing	5
	NUR 489	Nursing Management	5

After completing all the theoretical courses, and successfully graduating the eight levels, student must also successfully complete the one-year internship in order to be awarded the Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing.

The Course Descriptions of the Bachelor study program “Nursing” (Annex 7) of the College of Nursing of the King Saud University contains an Overview, as well as specifications regarding the Objectives of each course, its Requirements, Outline, Evaluation and Bibliography necessary. However, this is comprised particularly for the Nursing major levels, the General Education modules not being described. Moreover, Annex 7, BA, Section *Study Plan*, p. 3-6 also contains a more specific division of the courses pertaining to levels and credit-hours.

Beyond specific, nursing-related courses, students have to follow general knowledge courses during the first levels of study (e.g. English Language, Arabic Language, Islamic Culture). These are “General Education” courses and are contained in the following categories: Natural and Relate Science; Social Behavior Science; Language; Humanities. Their aim is to familiarize students with a working and academic environment beyond the spectrum of their specialization (cf. Application, A1.12). For each category, the following courses are assigned:

- Natural and Related Science: Physics and Chemistry, Anatomy and Physiology, Microbiology, Nutritional Biochemistry, Pathophysiology, Pharmacology, Infectious diseases, Nutrition, Epidemiology, Biostatics, Computer Science;
- Social Behavior Science: Sociology, Psychology, Education;
- Language: English, Arabic;
- Humanities: Communication, Islamic Culture;
- Nursing Major: the courses indicated with NUR in the table comprised on pages 13-14 in the present Report.

In addition to this, a one-year, full-time internship is planned after completing the 8 theoretical levels. This involves a working time of 5 days/week, 8 hours/day, for a total of 52 weeks (48 working weeks and 4 weeks vacation) amounting to a total of 2080 hours for the entire year. Students have to successfully complete this practical stage in order to graduate from the program. Annex 9, *Attachment1: Study Plan* section states that this intends to facilitate the familiarization of the students with the work field, and that it aims at obtaining a variety of clinical experiences with the help of rotations into several clinical areas. Its main goal is to consolidate the theoretical knowledge in the nursing field gained during the previous study years and develop technical and management competencies (cf. Annex 10). It is an “earn-while-you-learn” program (Annex 9, *Attachment1: Study Plan* section), meant to provide students with the technical and practical skills necessary for their specialization.

During the internship, students rotate in different units in the hospital they have been assigned to. Regularly, they remain in such a department for 4 or 8 weeks. A larger time frame (16 weeks) is reserved for the elective training, in which the student decides on the unit in which he wishes to remain for further specialization (cf. Annex 10). The students' progress is monitored by a preceptor. Moreover, they remain under the supervision of clinical instructors at the hospitals and in the unit they work in. Annex 10 of the Bachelor-specific documents offers more details on the internship, student guidance during this time, as well as its intended outcomes.

For the internship there are no credit hours assigned.

Master program structure

For the Master program in Nursing, a different structure is intended than the one applied for the Bachelor program. Namely, the first level is common for all Master students. After successfully completing this level, the student may opt for a specialization offered by the four departments engaged in the Master program.

An overview of the courses present in the first level is listed in the table below (after the data offered in the Annex 7 and Annex 8 of the Master-specific Annexes). These represent the Core Courses mentioned in the Application.

Level 1 (9 Credit Hours)	NUR 500	Nursing Research	3
	CSH 550	Statistics	2
	NUR 501	Theoretical foundation of Nursing	2
	NUR 502	Health Care Delivery System	2

After successfully completing the Core Courses, students can decide upon one of 8 specializations designed for the **Master** program (see Table below).

There are four departments offering the eight possible specialization in the levels 2 to 4. These are listed in the following table, comprised after the information offered in the Response to the Open Questions, section referring to the Master program Nursing. For each department and specialization, specific courses are intended. For a comprehensive overview of the courses offered in the level 2-4, as well as the specialization they belong to, please refer to Annex 7 of the Master-specific Annexes.

Department	Specialisation(s)	
Maternity and Child Health	1	Maternity Health Nursing
	2	Nurse – Midwifery
	3	Pediatric Health Nursing
Community and Mental Health	4	Primary Health Care Nursing
	5	Community Health Nursing
	6	Psychiatric Mental Health Nursing
Nursing Administration and Education	7	Nursing Administration
Medical Surgical Nursing	8	Adult Medical Surgical Nursing

The courses offered in each specialization are divided among 4 different categories: Specialty Courses, Functional Role Courses, Relevant Science Courses and Thesis/Elective Courses (cf. Annex 7 and 8 of the Master-specific Annexes).

Thus, each specialization has courses pertaining to Specialty, Function, Science and final Thesis. Moreover, each subspecialization can be attended from three different standpoints, depending on the courses students opt for within these categories ("functional areas", cf. Annex 8): functional, educational or clinical (cf. Application, A1.12). A comprehensive description of the courses comprised in the specializations can be found in Annex 7, Master program.

The Course Descriptions of the Master study program "Nursing" (Annex 7) of the College of Applied Medical Sciences of the King Saud University offer detailed information with regards to the specializations available within the program. For each of the four options, the Curriculum Plan, Program Requirements, as well as Description of Graduate Courses are comprised.

Annex 8 also states the following with regards to specializations:

"The general curriculum plan requires that each student selects one program of specialization and a related area of subspecialty. In addition, each student chooses one functional role area in terms of her interest and career goals."

The course syllabus is presented to the students at the beginning of each semester. In addition to it, the university has recently introduced the "course portfolio" (*ibid.*), which contains more detailed information upon the specific evaluation procedures of the faculty itself. (cf. Application, A1.13).

Section A1.13 of the Application provides details regarding the examination procedure and student evaluation methods. The Application states that students are assessed through various methods, such as "continuous assessment (assignments, quizzes, presentations, etc.), self-learning activities, projects, midterms and final exams" (Application, A.1.13). According to the type of course, there are various assessment methods employed. For example, in theoretical courses, students are evaluated with the help of mid-term and final exams, both of them complexly constructed (as described in Application,

A1.13). Internships are evaluated with the help of clinical reports and oral exams. The final grade for a course is devised after the following proportion: 60% from semester activities and 40% from final exam (ibid.).

For successfully graduating a course, students must achieve a minimum Grade Average Point (GPA) of 2.0 (out of 5.0). This is calculated by taking into account all the methods by which the student has been evaluated during the course – methods enumerated in the preceding paragraph. If the student fails to do so, he must retake the course. A course examination can be taken once, or a course, can be retaken several times, . The precise evaluation scale can be found in the Application, Section A1.13, p. 10.

Recently, the university has introduced the E-register and the Edugate system, which allows university members access to student evaluation results and permits an accurate track of the student's academic progress.

3.3 Educational Objectives

Both programs in "Nursing" (Bachelor and Master) aim at instructing highly-qualified labor force in the respective field. The students are prepared in a competent manner in order for later to take on adequate positions in healthcare, health institutions, or other institutions that necessitate health-related personnel. The need for an appropriate course of study can also be explained by the difficulties encountered by Arabian students when deciding to specialize abroad (cf. Application, A2.1, p. 13). In this sense, both programs aim at offering students the best alternative in their home country, especially when considering female citizens – who are not otherwise allowed to pursue a study abroad unless accompanied by a husband or close relative (ibid.).

According to the university's Application, "Congruent with changing needs of society, the College of nursing proposes to offer graduate, and undergraduate

study leading to the degree of Master, and BSN of Nursing through a distinguished quality education and scientific research to be competent in their professions, health care organizations and serving communities" (Application, A2.2, p. 14).

The overall aim of the **Bachelor** program "Nursing" is to prepare competent, up-to-date workforce in General Nursing. In this sense, the course of study aims at instructing socially-committed and professionally-trained nurses, in order to eventually compensate for the present shortage of personnel in the field. According to the university, the curriculum has also been developed in order to respond to the needs of the employment market (cf. Annex 9, Bachelor program, Section *C. Mission and Goals*).

Aside from this, the program intends to change society's perception of the nursing profession. A long-term goal of the Bachelor study program is the continuous development and improvement of the healthcare system in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In this sense, the Bachelor program aims at preparing students for the changes that already take place in the field, or that have been anticipated.

In order to achieve these goals, the university prepares the students for identifying and efficiently solving problems pertaining to their field of activity. This implies efficiently applying theoretical insights and methods of nursing, as well as pursuing innovative approaches. Moreover, students should become able to take on leadership positions and exert an active role in society. Their commitment should display an ethical and responsible behavior, consistent with Islamic values and beliefs (*ibid.*).

The overall scope of the **Master** program in "Nursing" is – among other things – to improve society's perception of the nursing profession. With the academization of the field it is intended an "upgrade of the professional concept" (Application, A1.2 p 13), as well as an increase in the quality of the services provided by the graduates. The Master program is designed as a continuous

phase for undergraduates finishing the Bachelor program, and who wish to improve their qualification.

Depending on their previous study experience, students may develop competencies in a specialized clinical domain within the Master program. They are also provided with the opportunity to self-develop in matters of assuming responsibilities and solving problems. At a more pragmatic level, students gain the necessary knowledge in order to take leader positions as clinical specialists, teachers or administrators.

Application, section A2.3 lists the objectives of the Master program for students. These include, among other things, developing the students' capacity to synthesize and utilize a theoretical framework in the field of nursing; develop practical skills in the field and their chosen subspecialization; work proficiently as clinical nurse specialist, nurse educator or nurse administrator; plan and initiate change in the healthcare system (cf. Application, A2.3, p. 14).

The teaching methodology employed within the Bachelor and Master programs in Nursing varies widely, and includes both traditional (such as the lecture format, for example) and innovative teaching methods (such as E-learning). In addition to that, students gain first-hand experience through the time spent in laboratories and hospitals (cf. Application A.1.17).

3.4 Labour market situation and employment opportunities

Graduates of the Bachelor and Master programs in "Nursing" can most often be employed in the healthcare field, either in patient care, management, administration, research, insurance or other similar, private and public, areas. Nurses that successfully graduated can be employed in hospitals, healthcare centers, clinics or within adequate ministries or institutions.

For the students finishing the **Bachelor's** degree some of the following job opportunities can be considered: "Registered Nurse in acute hospital units [...];

Head nurse of the unit after some experience; Private Duty Nurse; Office Nurse in Doctor's Clinics; Occupational Health Nurse; School Health Nurse; Community Health Nurse; Intensive Care Nurse; Operating Room; Nurse Educator" (cf. Annex 9, Section A. *Program Identification and General Information*).

Especially for the graduates of the **Master's** program there is a leadership position foreseen. Graduates with the Master's degree can be employed as nurse practitioners or clinical nurse specialist (the latter specializing in one specific area of patient care). In this sense, they can work in the management or administration sectors of healthcare-related institutions, nursing homes, mental health organizations, or rehabilitation centers. They will be able to take on tasks pertaining to business development, or patient safety, or be involved in healthcare policies at a larger scale (cf. Application, A3.1, p. 17). Application Section A3.2. lists more specific healthcare-related fields in which the Master graduates can be employed.

3.5 Access and admission requirements

For both program there are two types of common criteria applying for prospective students: the General Admission Requirements and the College of Nursing Admission Requirements. In addition to this, there are specific requirements for each program.

The General Admission requirements demand that a prospective students fulfils the following conditions:

- the student is of Saudi citizenship or on a formal scholarship in the country;
- the student hold an advanced knowledge of English (which can be attested either by taking the English entrance test, or by presenting a relevant certificate);
- he makes proof of proper conduct and is medically fit;

- the student has to submit two academic recommendations from previous professors for being granted admission at Master level;
- if the case, s/he has to obtain the written approval of the employer for taking the Bachelor/Master courses (cf. Application, A4.1, p. 17).

Section A5. 9 of the Application lists the Internet links under which more details about the specific requirements for the BA and the MA can be found.

For the Bachelor's program, prospective students must have obtained a general high school diploma with a major in general science and a GPA of minimum 4.0² (cf. Application, A2.6, p. 16). If a student fails to register for a semester within the program, he is considered under the "discontinuity status" (Annex 9, Section *E. Regulations for Student Assessment and Verification Standards*). A student may be enrolled under the discontinuity status for no more than two consecutive semesters or three non-consecutive ones. If these time limits are exceeded, student enrollment will be cancelled (*ibid.*, p. 13).

If student enrollment is cancelled due to any of the reasons stated above, he is entitled to appeal for readmission. However, this is possible under the following conditions:

- the student has to fulfill the re-admission requirements;

² A student's Grade Point Average (GPA) is determined by dividing the cumulative point value of all the attended courses over the number of units in the student's semester schedule. In all categories of courses, the students are assessed by a grade according to the following scale:

Grade	Numerical	Average Point
A +	95-100	5.0
A	90-94	4.75
B +	85-89	4.5
B	80-84	4.0
C +	75-79	3.5
C	70-74	3.0
D +	65-69	2.5
D	60-64	2.0
F	≤ 59	1.0

The cumulative GPA can be translated as following:

4.50 ≤	Excellent
3.75 – 4.50	Very Good
2.75 – 3.75	Good
2.00 – 2.75	Pass
≤2.00	Fail

- he shall maintain the identification number previously assigned, as well as his student record;
- the appeal must be approved by the College Council.

Aside from this, a student may apply for re-admission by submitting his application anew, and starting the course of study again. In this case, his former student data shall not be taken into consideration. (cf. Annex 9, Section *E. Regulations for Student Assessment and Verification Standards*).

For the **Master's** program, prospective students must hold a university degree either from a Saudi university, or recognized by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In addition to the diploma, students must have graduated from their Bachelor's degree with a minimal GPA over 3.75. In addition to this, and besides passing the admission interview, students must have completed the internship integrated in the Nursing BA program and one year of professional practice in a healthcare institution. (cf. Application, A4.2, p. 18)

Applications must reach the Dean of Admission and Registration at least one month before each semester start. Students may be enrolled only on a full-time basis, and thus have to be exclusively available for attending the classes of the **Master** program. If this fails to happen, their enrollment is cancelled and they must subsequently renew their application. After registering, students may withdraw from the course of study within four weeks before semester start. If a student does not withdraw his registration in this time limit, and fails to attend the classes, s/he is considered to have failed. Unaccounted absence for a period longer than one month is not permitted; if a student presents sufficient, attested, motivation, a student may be excused from the course of study for a period of maximum three consecutive months. (cf. Application, A4.3, p.18)

According to the Application, Section A4.4, student enrollment for the **Master's** program can be cancelled from the part of the university and department board in some of the following cases: failure to maintain a GPA of "Very Good" for

more than two consecutive semesters; failing examinations twice, or not obtaining the grade “Good”; absence in other than the cases stated above (see previous paragraph); if the student’s course of study extends over the period planned for the program (see Chapter 3.1 of the Summary). If a student’s enrollment is cancelled due to any of the above-mentioned cases, or other reasons, his re-registration in any other programs at the King Saud University is not permitted.

3.6 Quality assurance

Quality assurance is among the main goals of the King Saud University when developing its programs. In this sense, a Quality Management System has been established and institutionalized (see Annex 5, Section *Strategic Objective 2*, p. 27-30). The Quality Management System (QMS) at the KSU is based on two main components: Internal Quality Assurance (IQA) and External Quality Assurance (EQA). In this sense, the criteria which apply for EQA represent the standpoint for IQA; simultaneously, they provided the basis for the “What and How” framework developed within the IQA (cf. Application A.5.1, p. 19). In shaping the IQA standards and criteria, the university has based itself on the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA) requirements for quality assurance.

The Quality Assurance criteria to be taken into consideration when designing Bachelor and Master programs are detailed in the KSU Quality Management Handbook. The Handbook proposes the methodology by which the IQA can comply with the EQA standards, and the means by which the former can “go beyond the expectations of accreditation” (cf. Application, A5.1, p. 19). The document is constructed by following the indications presented in the following documents of the NCAAA: *Standards for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education Institutions* (Version: November 2009 for institutions) and

Standards for Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education Programs
(Version: November 2009 for programs).

However, as the KSU Quality Management System (QMS) is overarching, referring thus to all the institutions at the university, the Handbook, too, is generic and offers only guidelines in the design and planning of Bachelor and Master programs. Furthermore, the Handbook also regards Quality Management at a broader level, namely at department, faculty or college level.

The quality of studies is assessed with the help of two types of forms, both of them developed in accordance with the requirements specified by the NCAAA. These templates are the “course specification” and “course report”. The course specification template refers specifically to the intended outcomes of the class, and the means by which these outcomes are to be achieved. The course report template refers to the pragmatic results that have been attained at the end of the semester class, with details upon student results, topics not covered, as well as plans for improvement.

In addition to these two templates, the university also employs the Edugate system (previously referred to in Chapter 3.2 of the Summary). This allows both students and teaching personnel to track student progress and academic evaluation.

For the **Bachelor** study program, more detailed information is offered in Annex 9, Section F *Student Administration and Support* with regards to student counseling. Students are advised by faculty members in matters pertaining to program requirements and admission (every faculty member has 5 weekly office hours assigned). Moreover, they can obtain relevant information from the Internet page of the College or Department. Career advice and workshop are organized on a regular basis in formal environments in order to support students choosing a career path (cf. Annex 9, Section F).

Moreover, in order to keep track of program and professional practice in both the Bachelor and Master programs, the College of Nursing employs three types of questionnaires available from the NCAAA: the Employer Survey, the Students' Survey and the Faculty Questionnaire. For all three of them, the Application lists in Section A5.5, p. 22-23, the link under which they can be found.

Pertaining to the training of the teaching personnel, the KSU encourages the continual instruction of its lecturers and professors (Application, A5.8). This is also considered an opportunity for career promotion, and is often in close connection with pursuing postgraduate studies. In order to encourage this concept, the university has also developed a Support Unit for Demonstrator and Lecturer (SUDL). Its task is to serve as a link between international similar institutions and the Saudi cultural offices. Moreover, all teaching personnel is required to attend orientation programs and professional development programs.

With regards to gender equality, Application A5.6 mentions the equality of chances for both female and male students, as well as professors. With regards to teaching personnel, members of both genders are involved in the decision-making system of the College and University. Student and applications benefit of equal chances in the evaluation, or admission process, respectively.

Section A5.10 of the Application offers information about the special support for students with disabilities. The University supports disabled students and meets the spatial demands for the participation of such students. Disabled students benefit from an allowance from the Deanship of Student Affairs at KSU. However, as the Application states, due to the specific nature of the "Nursing" study programs, physically or mentally disabled students cannot be accepted as students at the College of Nursing (Application, A.5.10, p. 25).

4. Personnel and spatial equipment

4.1 Teaching Personnel

Annex 3a of the general annexes for the Bachelor and Master programs provides an overview of the teaching personnel. The teaching staff amounts to a total of 47, all of whom employed on a full-time basis. Out of these, 5 are Professors, 5 Associate Professors, 13 Assistant Professors and 24 Lecturers. For holding a professorship chair, a potential candidate must successfully fulfilled the three areas of research, teaching effectiveness, and community services. The minimum research work required for promotion to full professor is six publications or accepted to be published. A minimum three single works, or two single works in addition to four works published in refer journal. This work should not be taken from a master or doctoral dissertation. The publications research as based on calculated points where the faculty should receive at least 6 points, one point for each single published work during 3.6-4 years after the Associate professor level. Moreover, evidence of community services should be documented and provided to the university council for promotion. Teaching Load should be at least 12 hours/semester, and the faculty who is applying for promotion should provide evidence of effective teaching through students evaluation.

The teaching staff is recruited by a committee established by the King Saud University and the Deanship of the faculty. The recruitment committee of the University establishes the general regulations in such matters; specific regulations are laid down by the respective Deanship. In order to attract distinguished academicians and teaching personnel, the KSU also established an Attracting Unit for Distinguished University Staff (AUDUS) (cf. Application, A5.7, p. 23).

For the **Master's** program, a recruitment demand from the part of the applicants for the teaching position is awarding of the doctor's degree (PhD), as well as appropriate field experience in the taught subject.

The teaching personnel at the College of Nursing are divided among the four main departments: medical and surgical nursing; nursing administration and education; community and psychiatric nursing; maternity and pediatric nursing.

Table B1.2 in the same Section of the Application (p.26) offers an overview of the relation between teacher and student, for both female and male students. The results show a teacher ration of 1:3.875 for the female students, and of 1:6.16 for the male students.

4.2 Equipment for Teaching and Research

According to the University application, the spatial facilities are both advanced and up to date. This refers to both the lecture rooms and the laboratories. Moreover, a survey has shown that students' consider that their learning conditions have improved majorly between 2007 and 2009. (cf. Application, B.1.3.) Section C.1.1 of the Application lists in the corresponding table the facilities available at the College of Nursing, for both the Bachelor and Master program.

The KSU university library has access to the latest publications and international journals in numerous fields, including nursing. The table presented in Section B.3.2. of the Application, p. 27, lists the libraries available on campuses, as well as the opening hours. Moreover, all the libraries have available computer workspaces equipped with Internet connection. For their maintenance there is an IT staff employed. The students also have access at the intranet network of the university, including the Edugate system.

5. Institutional Environment and Structural Conditions

King Saud University has been established in November 1957 – a fact which deems it the first university in both the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Gulf Region. Currently, it is among the top 400 world universities, as listed by the 2010 Shanghai Jiao Tong Academic Ranking of World Universities (cf. Application C.1.1, p. 28). Currently, the university has 53 colleges and 250 undergraduate, graduate, and postgraduate programs. In these are enrolled a total of 61.115 students, 35.893 male and 25.222 female. A table with the major developments that took place within the KSU can be found under Section C1.1 of the Application, p. 28. The University is continuously developing by establishing new Deanships and, research programs, or science parks (See application, C.1.1, p. 28-29).

The university also sets great emphasis on the research possibilities and attempts at making these available for all its members. In this sense, numerous Research Chairs, Centers for Excellence, and Research Institutes have been established. A noticeable result is the increase in high-quality publications and the participation in team research work. The PhD and Master's programs available at the University also strongly encourage research. For supporting this type of activity, the university has started developing a corresponding infrastructure, ensuring the physical, technological and spatial needs for laboratories, libraries and classrooms.

The College of Nursing has been established in 1977, thus becoming the first college of its kind in Saudi Arabia. Behind its establishment stands the need for qualified, graduate and undergraduate nursing education. The College has four departments: medical surgical nursing; nursing administration and education; maternity and pediatric nursing; and community and psychiatric nursing. Alongside the University, the College is also continuously developing, setting new goals in matters of accreditation and quality standards, curriculum design

and electronic learning (cf. Application, C1.1, p. 29). The final aim is to offer graduate and undergraduate programs assimilable at international level.

Currently, the College of Nursing offers a Bachelor and Master program, each with multiple specializations. Currently there are 950 students enrolled in the undergraduate program and 66 students in the graduate one.

6. Expert report

I. Preliminary remarks

The accreditation of the Bachelor and Master study programme "Nursing" of the King Saud University, Riyadh, College of Nursing, was carried out according to a structured procedure:

1. During the first step, the King Saud University submitted the Application documents to the AHPGS. The AHPGS subsequently prepared the documents in order for the expert group to examine them and verify their compliance to international accreditation standards.

2. During the second step, the members of the expert group formulated their appraisals and observations in the form of written reports. The written reports submitted by the expert group consisted the basis for the Open Questions forwarded to the College.

After the College had submitted the Responses to the Open Questions, the AHPGS processed these and the Application documents, as well as a Summary of the Application for each study program. These documents were forwarded to the members of the On-Site expert group as basis for the upcoming On-Site Visit.

3. During the third step an On-Site Visit of the King Saud University, Riyadh, College of Nursing was carried out.

4. The fourth step involves the final accreditation decision of the AHPGS Accreditation Commission. In making its decision, the Commission evaluates the University's Application and its annexes, the Summary comprised by the AHPGS, the Expert Report, as well as the University Response Opinion.

The following experts were appointed by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission for the accreditation of the study programmes³:

As representatives of the higher education institutions:

- *Prof. Dr. Johannes Keogh, Professor of Nursing, Fulda University of Applied Sciences, Germany*
- Prof. Dr. Johannes Korporal, Professor of Social Medicine, Alice Salomon University of Applied Sciences Berlin, Germany
- Prof. Dr. Michaela Röber, Professor, Head of the Master study program in Nursing and Health Management, University of Applied Sciences Frankfurt (Main), Germany
- *Prof. Dr. Birgit Vosseler, Professor of Nursing, Dean for students, University of Applied Sciences Ravensburg-Weingarten, Department of Social Work, Health and Nursing, Germany*

As student representative:

- Sarah Rubsamen, Student of Nursing Management and Public Health at the Catholic University of Applied Sciences, Freiburg, Germany. Nurse for health and medical care

According to the applicable guidelines for international accreditations – in particular the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Areas (ESG) published by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) and the "Rules of the Accreditation

³ The On-Site Visit was carried out by the hereinafter mentioned Experts, written in italics.

Council for the Accreditation of Study Programmes and for System Accreditation" (Decision of the Accreditation Council of 8 December 12, 2009 in the version of 10 December 2010; Drs. AR 85/2010) – the responsibility of the experts during the accreditation process consists in the evaluation of the study programme concept and the plausibility of its intended realisation at the higher education institution. This pertains, in particular, "programme aims and learning outcomes", "curriculum design", "staff", "facilities and learning resources", "study process and student assessment", and "programme management".

II. The study programmes to be accredited:

a) Bachelor in Nursing

The study programme "Nursing" is a Bachelor programme, designed as a full-time programme with an intended duration of ten semesters. The total study time amounts to 4315 hours. This is divided into 2235 contact hours for the theoretical part of the study program, and 2080 hours assigned for the internship. Accordingly, the theoretical part comprises a total of 42 courses distributed over the 8 levels. The study program finalises with awarding the degree of "Bachelor of Science in Nursing". The admission requirements demand from prospective students that they have obtained a secondary-school leaving certificate and that they hold an advanced knowledge of the English Language. In addition to this, they must successfully pass the admission interview conducted by the University Senate and must fulfil the program-specific admission requirements. Students were first admitted to the programme in 1977. The program is available for male and female students. The main goal of the study programme is to prepare competent adequate personnel for working in healthcare institutions, health organizations and within communities. After graduation, students can be employed as nurses in public or private healthcare institutions, as well as private nurses or nurse educators. The program was a

pioneer program in the region, in the sense that it was the first initiated in the Nursing field.

b) Master in Nursing

The study programme "Nursing" is a Master programme, designed as a full-time programme with an intended duration of six semesters. The total study time amounts to 990 hours plus one year to work out the Master thesis or a research project. Accordingly, the lecturing part comprises a total of 15 courses over the 4 levels. The study program finalises with awarding the degree of "Master of Science in Nursing". The admission requirements demand a Bachelor degree in Nursing. Students were first admitted to the programme in 1985. The program is currently available for female students, the programme for the male students will commence in 2012. The main goal of the study programme is to get a specification in one of the four fields: Maternity and Child Health, Community and Mental Health, Nursing Administration and Education, and Medical Surgical Nursing. The program is a pioneer program in the region, in the sense that it was the first Master programme in Nursing initiated in Saudi Arabia.

III. Accreditation Criteria

The Accreditation Criteria considered 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", established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

The Criteria are divided into the following six main areas:

- (1) Programme aims and learning outcomes
- (2) Curriculum design
- (3) Staff

- (4) Facilities and learning resources
- (5) Study process and student assessment
- (6) Program management

The Criteria were made available to the expert group at the beginning of the accreditation process. Accordingly, the written evaluations submitted by the experts are grounded on these criteria.

IV. Report of the expert group

On 30.05.2011 the relevant documents were made available to the group of experts for written evaluation with regard to the specified criteria. The results of the written evaluation were sent back to the AHPGS until the 20.09.2011. The results of the written evaluation served as a basis for the On-Site Visit.

The expert group met for preliminary talks in advance to the On-Site Visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as the resulting questions and problems. Furthermore, they planned the On-Site Visit at the higher education institution.

The On-Site Visit was carried out on 30.09.2011 and 01.10.2011 according to the specified schedule. The expert group was accompanied by representatives from the AHPGS agency.

The experts conducted talks with university management, the quality team of the college, representatives of the college and departments, program directors and teaching staff as well as with a group of students. The facilities and learning resources conditions of the female and male campus including the library of College of Nursing were evaluated during the On-Site Visit as well.

The following documents were made available to the expert group during the On-Site-Visit:

- King Saud University Strategic Plan 2030
- Flyer College of Nursing
- Nursing Sciences Undergraduate Program Internship Program: Internal Policies, Rules and Regulations
- Flyer Quality and Development Unit
- Flyer Nursing Club
- Flyer Basic Life Support Training Centre

The expert report is structured according to the above mentioned Accreditation Criteria. The criteria will be discussed in a comprehensive manner in the following.

(1) Programme aims and learning outcomes

In the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia there is a significant need for nurses. On the one hand, the ratio between the number of educated nurses and the number of patients per thousand inhabitants is still not sufficient and needs to be increased. On the other hand, more than half of the nurses working in the Kingdom are of foreign origin. The expert group therefore explicitly sees a high demand for both study programmes to increase the number of nursing professionals as well as certified experts within the Kingdom. The objectives of both study courses were revised and updated before the accreditation process. The expert group regards this revision as constructive, in particular in view of the fact that the study programmes of the King Saud University often have a signalling effect on the study programmes offered at other universities in the Kingdom.

The **Bachelor study programme** “Nursing” which is subject to accreditation is divided into a general university “preparatory year” (1st – 2nd semester), the study programme-specific courses at the College of Nursing (3rd – 8th semester)

and the subsequent practice-oriented one-year internship. The expert group believes that the qualification objectives of the Bachelor study programme are well explained and comprehensible. The Bachelor study programme conveys professional skills, which enable nurses to acquire their nursing licence and work in hospitals and other fields. The expert group positively views the qualification objectives of the study programme, as it conveys professionals with profound knowledge and grants them a first academic degree, which in turn will enable Saudi Arabia to overcome the lack of nursing staff.

The **Master study programme** “Nursing” lasts four semesters and offers four specialised areas to choose from after the first semester. The study programme intends to prepare graduates to work as “clinical nurse specialists and administrators capable of assuming leadership in developing and implementing innovative roles that encompass education and managerial functions”, with the aim of bringing about an effective transformation of the healthcare system of the Kingdom. The expert group welcomes the more in-depth concept of the programme and the strong orientation of its objectives towards nursing science. The expert group recommends that the specialisations, the areas of activity covered by them, as well as the boundaries of the specialisations be much more clearly developed. The Master study programme is currently only offered for female students. The human resource requirements at the male campus were fulfilled this year so that the study programme for the male students is expected to commence in 2012. The expert group also welcomes the fact that complete professional nurse training will become possible for men as well.

During talks with the programme directors it became apparent that the contacts with numerous well-developed clinics and thus also the possibilities for students to gain practical experience in an established environment are among the special features and strengths of the college and both study programmes being accredited.

(2) Curriculum design

Both the Bachelor as well as the Master study programmes in nursing are designed as full-time study programmes. The students take part in different courses which vary regarding the numbers of contact hours and the diverse teaching methods (lecture, clinical and practical). Both study programme concepts are deemed by the expert group as well reflected, well structured and logically arranged with feasible curricula for students. The Bachelor study programme, which qualifies graduates for profession, is generally viewed positively and as an important step for further professionalization. As for the Master programme, the differentiated and explicit focus on nursing in the different specialisations is also evaluated positively. Both study programme concepts are regarded as appropriate, comprehensible, feasible and target-oriented with regard to their content, structures and objectification.

The expert group recommends integrating the following substantive aspects into the study programme concepts:

Regarding the Bachelor study programme the expert group recommends already offering individual elective courses at the Bachelor level. Issues related to the special needs of a society experiencing strong demographic change and an increasing average life expectancy should be taken into account, e.g. dementia. Furthermore, it should be clarified whether all content indicated in the curricula can be taught in its entirety. Regarding the Master study programme, the expert group recommends clarifying for the specialisation "midwifery" which activities the graduates are capable of carrying out and where the boundaries are – both in terms of the formal boundaries they are subject to, their independent functions without doctors' instructions as well as the skills they must acquire. For both study programmes the expert group recommends to clearly specify if and where different content and practices are taught to the female and male students. In

addition, the concept of "evidence based practice" should be visibly demonstrated at both the Bachelor and Master study programmes.

According to statements from the programme directors, there are currently no binding standards for the design of a nursing study programme. Therefore, the expert group regards the comprehensibility of both study programme concepts for third-parties as ever more important, in particular for other higher education institutions within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia as well. The experts recommend a revision of the description of the modules so that they are seen by outsiders as uniformly designed.

In this regard the expert group sees further possibilities for development, which should serve to further improve the study programmes. In the mid- and long-term the university should strive for a strong skills orientation in the description of the individual study programmes. The experts suggest merging the individual courses into larger units (modules). Modules are understood as study units, which are thematically distinct and offered within certain timeframes. The modules should be composed of different forms of teaching and learning (e.g. lectures, exercises, internships, e-learning, research training, etc.). The modules should be limited in terms of content and time and, as a rule, not last longer than two semesters. To reduce the examination burden, the modules should be completed with a skills-oriented examination, the result of which is incorporated into the final degree certificate. Moreover, the experts suggest also indicating the independent study times of the students in the descriptions of the modules, in order to grasp the entire student-investment-time involved. This could be oriented not only towards the national calculations of credit hours (contact times), but also towards the ECTS (European Credit Transfer System) if this is deemed applicable. This would facilitate study visits by European students at the King Saud University, as the workload could be more easily calculated. Accordingly, the expert group suggests defining the didactical concepts in the respective study programmes with regard to the skills orientation in a case- and

problem-specific manner (problem-based learning) during the revision of the description of the curricula.

As the last cross-programme possibility for improvement, the expert group suggests promoting interdisciplinary co-operation with thematically related study subjects and colleges. This was also explicitly wished for by the students.

(3) Staff

The number of qualified nurses from Saudi Arabia is very low in relation to the demand for them. The college is committed to actively supporting promising young professionals (frequently by financing a doctoral dissertation in North America or Europe) and at the same time maintaining ties with them for the long-term, in order to allow for the steady expansion of the programmes in the future. However, with regard to the College of Nursing the expert group has come to the conclusion that the teaching capacities are sufficiently guaranteed both in qualitative as well as quantitative terms. Certified professional staff is employed at all levels – i.e. the college administration, department management and teaching staff. Regarding teaching staff, foreign nursing scientists primarily from the Arab region with extensive international experience are employed due to the need for development within Saudi Arabia. During the talks with the directors it became particularly apparent how important the further development of nursing sciences in the Kingdom is to them. This strong commitment and the strong degree of identification with the college and the discipline at all levels left a particularly positive impression on the expert group. The expert group supports the directors in their plan to further promote this development and recommends them to also think about the introduction of PhD programmes at the college, in order to allow for the continuous socialisation and qualification of nurses in Saudi Arabia.

Furthermore, the material, spatial and financial resources provided by the university to employees for research and teaching are also viewed positively.

Finally, the expert group suggests further expanding the already existing possibilities for further training for the teaching staff and actively promoting the formation of networks as well as the strengths of employees.

(4) Facilities and learning resources

King Saud University is a university with impressive possibilities with regard to its spatial, financial and material resources. The College of Nursing is divided into four departments: medical and surgical nursing; nursing administration and education; community and psychiatric nursing; maternity and paediatric nursing. The laboratory facilities are adequate and appropriate for the study requirements. In addition, there are good contacts with various hospitals.

The facilities of the College of Nursing are designed so that the vision, mission and objectives as well as the structures are comprehensible for everyone and thus also facilitate a high degree of identification with the college.

After the evaluation of the facilities of both the male and female campus of the College of Nursing it is obvious that the infrastructure is of a high quality for both the teaching staff as well as students. Altogether, the expert group is convinced that the qualitative and quantitative material and spatial resources ensure that the study programmes subject to accreditation can be effectively carried out now and in the long-term. The expert group emphasises the excellent structure of the skills labs at the female campus. The laboratories' infrastructure consists of 5 rooms and a delivery room; A methodical conception is included, each laboratory has allocated two instructors and an instructions manual.

The expert group also wishes to positively highlight the Nursing Club, for which the college provides the students adequate resources for them to deal extensively with and exchange ideas on nursing issues both within and outside the university.

(5) Study process and student assessment

During their first year at the Kind Saud University students take part in a so-called Preparatory Year, during which they are closely accompanied and prepared for their role as students. The expert group much acknowledges the intensive support given to them in the first phase of study. The first semester introductory programme still also takes place with the support of the Nursing Club.

Altogether, a high degree of support is provided to the students. The programme directors can be easily reached and actively support the students.

With regard to the examinations in both study programmes the expert group recommends that (as mentioned under Item 2) the examination results be evaluated and that the type of examinations be modified. The expert group recommends a reduction of the number of examinations and suggest that several courses be designed in a comprehensive skills-oriented manner.

There are student exchange programmes with other domestic and foreign higher education institutions. However, the process – both for a potential semester abroad for students of the KSU as well as foreign students wishing to spend a semester abroad at the KSU – is difficult and not very transparent.

The expert group recommends further promoting the international openness of the college, so that teaching staff as well as students are transparently and actively encouraged to take part in an international exchange programme. Summer schools can also be used for this purpose.

(6) Programme management

The excellent quality assurance concept of the higher education institution is institutionalised at all levels. All relevant actors spanning from students, to teaching staff onto the management of the departments, colleges and the university as well as external professional stakeholders are incorporated to improve the study programme concept. The vision, mission and objectives are drawn up by the university management, college and department and then co-ordinated and aligned with one another. Detailed reviews of the study programmes subject to accreditation are conducted on an annual basis in order to further develop them; the college has drawn up a five-year plan in which the strengths, weaknesses and challenges are analysed in detail and tasks are defined in a targeted manner with a division of responsibilities and schedule. Moreover, there is sufficient staff with extensive skills (vice-rector, deanery, vice-dean of the college, etc.) operating in the area of quality assurance and further institutional development. The expert group rates this distinctive approach as above-standard in international context.

The expert group views the quality management system extremely positively and is impressed by the comprehensive understanding of quality assurance. The college offers a "quality room", assigned for the systematic documentation of quality assurance information and for appropriate implementation of the results for both study programmes. The expert group was particularly impressed that this extremely complex system functions in a target-oriented manner and serves the further development of the study programmes in an easily comprehensible manner.

The development of a quality culture is still in its early stages, as the current process only began less than a year ago. According to statements from teaching staff, there has been much activity since then and the progress has become more visible and, in particular, more systematic (e.g. course directors have been appointed). The expert group explicitly supports this process and backs the

efforts of the programme directors in promoting the definition of responsibilities, the coordination between different areas (e.g. men and women, between departments, and between course teachers, etc.), the expansion and joint implementation of e-learning, the orientation towards learning outcomes and all additional aspects contributing to quality and in establishing a sustainable long-term quality culture.

Altogether the programme management can be regarded as target-oriented and very well structured. The relevant processes are very comprehensible and clear both for teaching staff as well as students. The admission requirements and prerequisites for successful studies are transparent.

Summary

In the view of the expert group, it is evident that the study programmes subject to accreditation fulfil the necessary requirements in terms of the Accreditation criteria. In particular the well structured quality management system is really impressing. The high level of motivation of the people involved in the development of and carrying out the study programmes as well as the high degree of satisfaction of the students with "their" university are viewed positively. The College of Nursing makes a contribution to the professionalization of the field of nursing and also responds to an ever-emerging issue within the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. It is evident, that the College is prepared for national and regional leadership in the nursing field.

The experts recommend that both the Bachelor and Master study programmes be accredited by the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS.

In order to further enhance the quality of the college and its study programmes the following recommendations are set up:

Recommendations regarding both programmes:

- The curriculum and the objectives of the study programmes should be comprehensible and systematically presented in view of the model function of the King Saud University for other higher education institutions and due to lacking descriptions of standards for nursing training in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In doing so the internship should be integrated as a fundamental part of the curriculum into the presentation of the study programmes to outsiders.
- The courses should be consistently consolidated into modules. The descriptions should thereby be specified in a skills-oriented manner in the form of learning outcomes.
- The independent study times of students should be included and the results in this regard should be incorporated into the further development of the study programmes.
- The differences in the curricula of male and female students should be visible.
- The development of a PhD programme to advance the profession should be considered.
- The possibilities for teaching staff as well as for students to gain experience in nursing in an international environment should be facilitated. This pertains, in particular, to dismantling bureaucratic obstacles related to student exchange programmes as well as networking with other academics. This should also result in mutual visits.
- The examinations should be designed in a more skills-oriented manner. The high number of examinations should also be reconsidered.

The expert group has the following recommendations for the Bachelor of Nursing:

- The range of indicated taught content should be examined and limited to the essentials. In this regard, the expert group recommends strengthening the focus on core nursing skills and approaches during basic training.

- Issues regarding demographic change should be integrated into the curriculum.
- Elective courses would be desirable in the Bachelor programme.

The expert group has the following recommendations for the Master of Nursing:

- The expert group supports the plans to offer the Master study programme in one year to male students as well. It recommends making the differences in the different specialisations from the study programme which was previously only offered to female students clearer.

7. Decision of the Accreditation Commission

Bachelor of Science “Nursing”

The decision of the Accreditation Commission is based on the University's Application documents, the Expert Report, which covers the written expert reviews and the results of the On-Site Visit, as well as the University's Response Opinion to the Expert Report. The On-Site Visit took place from 30.09.2011 until 01.10.2011 at the King Saud University, College of Nursing, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS has discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS reached the following decision:

The full-time Bachelor program “Nursing” is to be completed with awarding of the academic degree “Bachelor of Science” (B.Sc.). The standard period of study is ten semester. The total study time amounts to 4.315 hours. This is divided

into 2.235 contact hours for the theoretical part of the study program, and 2.080 hours assigned for the internship.

The Accreditation decision is based on the Accreditation Criteria 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", established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

These Criteria cover the following six main domains:

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

The AHPGS Accreditation Commission considers that the above mentioned Accreditation Criteria are fulfilled without conditions. The AHPGS Accreditation Commission accredits the study program for the duration of five years, until the 15.12.2016.

The study program specific recommendations, as well as the overarching recommendations, formulated in the Expert Report are to be taken into consideration.

Master of Science "Nursing"

The decision of the Accreditation Commission is based on the University's Application documents, the Expert Report, which covers the written expert reviews and the results of the On-Site Visit, as well as the University's Response

Opinion to the Expert Report. The On-Site Visit took place from 30.09.2011 until 01.10.2011 at the King Saud University, College of Nursing, Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS has discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS reached the following decision:

The full-time Master program "Nursing" is to be completed with awarding of the academic degree "Master of Science" (M.Sc.). The standard period of study is six semesters. The total study time amounts to 990 hours.

The Accreditation decision is based on the Accreditation Criteria 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", established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

These Criteria cover the following six main domains:

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

The AHPGS Accreditation Commission considers that the above mentioned Accreditation Criteria are fulfilled without conditions. The AHPGS Accreditation Commission accredits the study program for the duration of five years, until the 15.12.2016.

The study program specific recommendations, as well as the overarching recommendations, formulated in the Expert Report are to be taken into consideration.

Freiburg, 15.12.2011