

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



## **Assessment Report**

**for the Application of  
Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU),  
College of Dentistry,  
for the Accreditation of the Study Program "General Dentistry"  
(Bachelor of Dental Surgery)**

AHPGS Akkreditierung gGmbH  
Sedanstr. 22  
79098 Freiburg  
Telefon: +49 (0) 761/208533-0  
E-Mail: [ahpgs@ahpgs.de](mailto:ahpgs@ahpgs.de)

On-site visit	February 4, 2021
Expert group	Prof. Dr. Sebastian Bürklein, Münster University Hospital, Germany Prof. Dr. Adrian Kasaj, Johannes-Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany PD Dr. Dr. Julia-Gabriela Wittneben, University Bern, Switzerland Dr. Christina Erbe, Johannes-Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany Mr. Mathias Dilger, Albert-Ludwigs University Freiburg, Germany
Decision	May 20, 2021

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## 1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency 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 accreditation procedures, the AHPGS follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). In the present case, the decision regarding the accreditation of the study program is carried out by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission based on the following accreditation criteria<sup>1</sup>:

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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 agreed upon accreditation. 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 recommendation for accreditation of the study program. Consequently, this decision – together with all other documentation – is forwarded to AHPGS Accreditation Commission for it to reach a decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

## 2 Overview

### 2.1 Procedure-related documents

The Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University (PSAU), also referred hereinafter as “the University”, delegated the task of accrediting the “General Dentistry” Bachelor study program to AHPGS.

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) of the above-mentioned study program (hereinafter the Self-evaluation report) of the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University (hereinafter the University) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) in electronic format on the 01.06.2020. The contract between the University and the AHPGS was signed on 07.05.2020.

On August 7<sup>th</sup> 2020 the AHPGS forwarded the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter OQ) pertaining to the Application for accreditation for the study programs to the University. On September 2<sup>nd</sup> 2020, the University submitted the answers to the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter AOQ) to the AHPGS in electronic format.

The present document presents the summary of the AHPGS for the Bachelor study program “General Dentistry” The first cohort for this program was admitted in 2009.

The application documentation submitted by the University follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Along with the application request towards accreditation of the Bachelor study program “General Dentistry”, the following additional documents can be found in the application package (the documents submitted by the University are numbered in the following order for easier referencing):

Documents for the study program “General Dentistry”

Annex	Description
Annex 01	Schedule
Annex 02	Teaching Matrix
Annex 03	Module Descriptions
Annex 04	Teachers' CV

Annex 05	Procedure Manual for Final Examinations
Annex 06	Internship Clinic Rules and Regulations
Annex 07	Transcript of Records
Annex 08	Quality Assurance Manual
Annex 09	Research Strategy 2020-2023
Annex 10	Equipment List
Annex 11	Intern Assessment Form
Annex 12	Procedure Manual for Final Examinations
Annex 13	Program Admission Requirements

The application, 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 agreed standard within the University.

## 2.2 Study program

### 2.2.1 Structural data

University	Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University
Faculty/Department	College of Dentistry Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Diagnostic Sciences Department of Prosthodontics Sciences Department of Conservative Dental Sciences Department of Preventive Dental Sciences
Cooperation partner	The Ministry of Education - The Ministry of Health
Title of the study program	General Dentistry
Degree awarded	Bachelor of Dental Surgery
Form of studies	Full-time, on campus
Organisational structure	Sunday to Thursday 08:00 am to 5:00 pm
Language of Studies	English
Period of education	Twelve semesters (preparatory year included) + one-year noncredit internship
Total number of modules	78 (including preparatory year)



Credit Points (CH) according to the Credit Hour System	205 credit hours (equals to 183,5 ECTS credit points)
Hours/CP	1 Theory Credit Hour = 1 Hour 1 Lab/Practical Hour = 2-3 hours 1 Clinical Hour = 2-3 hours
Workload	Total: 11.097 hours Contact hours: 5.505 hours Individual work: 3.504 hours Practice: 2.088 hours
Launch date of the study program	2009
First accreditation	Program has not yet been accredited
Time of admission	Fall Semester
Number of available places on the program	25 places each year
Number of currently enrolled students	176 male students
Number of graduates by now	136 male students
Particular enrollment conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Saudi Secondary School Certificate – Science Section (SSSCSS) or its equivalent (not more than five years old)</li> <li>- Aptitude Test Certificate (ATC)</li> <li>- minimum qualifying score in SSSCSSS and &amp; ATC: 75 %</li> <li>- Passing the Preparatory Year with a GPA of at least 3.75 on a 5.0 scale</li> <li>- Students must have Saudi nationality or a mother born in Saudi Arabia</li> <li>- only male students are accepted to the program</li> </ul>
Tuition fees	Tertiary education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia is free for all Saudi nationals. Students also receive monthly governmental stipends until they graduate

Chart 1: Structural data of the study program

The College of Dentistry was established in 2009 in Al Kharj (main Campus of the University). The College of Dentistry encompasses four academic departments, which namely are the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Diagnostic Sciences, the Department of Prosthodontics Sciences, the Department of Conservative Dental Sciences and Department of Preventive Dental Sciences. The language of instruction is English “except for Islamic and Arabic language courses which are in Arabic” (SER 1.2.8).

### **2.2.2 Qualification objectives and employment opportunities**

As the University states, the “General Dentistry” program prepares graduates to be knowledgeable, service-oriented and highly-trained dental practitioners. They focus on problem-based learning and patient needs by critical thinking, commitment to lifelong learning and ethical values. They hold the core values to meet the current and future needs of the dental profession and the healthcare system. The acquired qualification empowers graduates of the study program to professionally practice as dentists in public and private hospitals or to start their own clinics after completing the licensing procedures with the professional bodies in KSA. The graduates are also able to continue in postgraduate studies at other Universities in KSA or other foreign Universities.

According to the University, the curriculum implemented at the College of Dentistry per the needs of the local and global standards of the professional education system. The program has been developed to provide educational experiences to students to enable them to develop expertise in the profession of Dentistry. The curriculum is designed to cultivate knowledge, understanding, and appreciation of the socio-economic aspects of health. It emphasizes the students to become responsible Dentists who practice in an ethical and legal manner.

The University provided a list of output-oriented descriptions of all skill fields in the program, including overarching skills, following the categories of the National Qualification Framework (NQF) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. These are categorized into Knowledge Skills; Cognitive Skills; Interpersonal Skills and Responsibility; Communication, Information Technology and Numerical Skills and Psychomotor Skills and described by the University as follows:

Knowledge Skills are chiefly concerned with the ability to understand and acquire knowledge, concepts and information from different disciplines and sciences, such as:

- know the basic knowledge of patient examination, assessment and clinical intervention techniques,
- define basic sciences of anatomy, physiology and biomaterials,
- recognize basic dental surgery,
- provide fundamental knowledge related to oral diseases

Cognitive Skill stem from the students' ability to evaluate data from the patient examination (history, test and measures) to make clinical judgements and to adapt delivery of Dentistry services with consideration for patients' differences, values, preferences and needs. Furthermore, the students need to be able to apply their knowledge about basic oral anatomical structures and functions in order to safely perform Dentistry.

Interpersonal Skills and Responsibility concern the skill of solve problems in accordance with the analyzed date in the field of Dentistry and demonstrate professional behavior and present themselves in a professional manner. Concerning Information Technology Skills, the students are expected to demonstrate competences in the use of computer-based information and data processing tools.

Finally, the Psychomotor section concerns itself with the ability to practice in a safe manner that minimizes the risk for the patients, themselves and other persons involved and apply the dental procedures on the patients correctly.

According to the Kingdom Vision 2030, the need of Saudi dentists will be highly increased. Hence, the government decided to gradually localize the dental profession in KSA. Consequently, a number of qualified dentists is required to meet these expectations in the future (SER 1.4.2).

### **2.2.3 Modularization and exam system**

The program comprises 78 obligatory modules. On average, there are between 6 and 12 modules provided for each semester. All modules have to be completed within 12 semesters. Currently, there are no semesters offered as a period for exchange programs. Exclusive of the internship year (non-credit

bearing), students usually complete between a minimum of 12 and a maximum of 21 credit hours (CH) per semester.

The following study plan lists the required sequence of courses at the University.

<b>Nr.</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Sem.</b>	<b>CH</b>
ENGL131	Listening/Speaking	1	2
ENGL132	Reading	1	2
ENGL133	Writing	1	2
IC101	Introduction of Islamic Course	1	2
ARAB10 1	Arabic Language Skills	1	2
STAT106	Biostatics	1	2
		Total:	12
ENGL134	English for Health Sciences	2	3
CHEM10 5	General Chemistry for Health Sciences	2	2
PHYS106	General Physics for Health Sciences	2	4
CHEM10 6	Organic Chemistry for Health Sciences	2	2
BIOL106	General Biologoy	2	4
CT140	Information Technology Skills	2	3
		Total:	18
DSX111	Oral Biology and Histology // First Part	3	1
DSC122	Dental Anatomy and Morphology	3	2
DSA102	Introduction to Dentistry	3	1
DSX112	Gross Anatomy and Histology // First Part	3	4
DSA104	Biochemistry //First Part	3	2
DSA105	General Physiology // First Part	3	3
IC102	Islam and Construction of Society	3	2

DSX106	Basic Genetics and Molecular Biology	3	1
		Total:	16
DSX111	Oral Biology and Histology // Second Part	4	2
DSC121	Introduction to Restorative Dentistry	4	2
DSC123	Dental Materials I	4	1
DSA101	Behavioral Science	4	1
DSA103	Dental Informatics	4	2
DSX112	Gross Anatomy and Histology // Second Part	4	4
DSA104	Biochemistry // Second Part	4	2
DSA105	General Physiology // Second Part	4	2
IC103	The Foundation of the Economic System in Islam	4	2
		Total:	18
DSX211	Preclinical Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery & Pain Management // First Part	5	1
DSX213	Maxillofacial Radiology I // First Part	5	2
DSX214	Oral Diagnosis // First Part	5	2
DSC221	Preclinical Restorative Dentistry // First Part	5	3
DSC222	Dental Materials // First Part	5	1
DSP231	Dental Occlusion	5	2
DSA201	Professional Ethics in Dentistry	5	1
DSX215	Pharmacology I // First Part	5	1
DS216	General Microbiology and Immunology // First Part	5	2
DSX217	General Pathology // First Part	5	1
		Total:	16
DSX211	Preclinical Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery & Pain Management // Second Part	6	2
DSX212	Maxillofacial Pathology I	6	2
DSX213	Maxillofacial Radiology I // Second Part	6	2
DSX214	Oral Diagnosis // Second Part	6	2
DSC221	Preclinical Restorative Dentistry // Second Part	6	3
DSC222	Dental Materials II // Second Part	6	2

DSV214	Preventive Dentistry	6	1
DSX215	Pharmacology I // Second Part	6	1
DSX26	General Microbiology and Immunology // Second Part	6	1
DSX217	General Pathology // Second Part	6	2
DSV242	Preclinical Periodontology	6	2
		Total:	20
DSX311	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery I // First Part	7	2
DSX312	Maxillofacial Radiology II // First Part	7	1
DSC321	Clinical Restorative Dentistry // First Part	7	2
DSC322	Preclinical Endodontics // First Part	7	2
DSV341	Clinical Periodontology I // First Part	7	2
DSX313	Maxillofacial Pathology II	7	2
DSP331	Preclinical Removable Prosthodontics //First Part	7	3
DSP332	Preclinical Fixed Prosthodontics // First Part	7	3
DSA302	Infection Control	7	1
DSA303	Treatment Planning	7	1
		Total:	19
DSX311	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery I // Second Part	8	2
DSX312	Maxillofacial Radiology II // Second Part	8	1
DSC321	Clinical Restorative Dentistry // Second Part	8	1
DSC322	Preclinical Endodontics // Second Part	8	2
DSV341	Clinical Periodontology I // Second Part	8	2
DSV342	Preclinical Pediatric Dentistry	8	2
DSP331	Preclinical Removable Prosthodontics //Second Part	8	3
DSP332	Preclinical Fixed Prosthodontics // Second Part	8	3
DSA301	Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation	8	1
		Total:	17
DSX411	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery II // First Part	9	2
DSX412	Oral Medicine I //First Part	9	2
DSC421	Clinical Restorative Dentistry II //First Part	9	2
DSC422	Clinical Endodontics // First Part	9	2

DSC423	Clinical Periodontology // First Part	9	2
DSV441	Clinical Pediatric Dentistry I // First Part	9	2
DSV442	Preclinical Orthodontics // First Part	9	2
DSP431	Clinical Removable Prosthodontics // First Part	9	2
DSP432	Clinical Fixed Prosthodontics // First Part	9	3
DSA401	General Internal Medicine	9	1
DSA403	Research Methodology // First Part	9	1
		Total:	21
DSX411	Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery II // Second Part	10	1
DSX412	Oral Medicine I //Second Part	10	2
DSC421	Clinical Restorative Dentistry II //Second Part	10	1
DSC422	Clinical Endodontics // Second Part	10	1
DSC423	Clinical Periodontology // Second Part	10	2
DSV441	Clinical Pediatric Dentistry I // Second Part	10	2
DSV442	Preclinical Orthodontics // Second Part	10	2
DSP431	Clinical Removable Prosthodontics // Second Part	10	1
DSP432	Clinical Fixed Prosthodontics // Second Part	10	1
DSA402	General Surgery	10	1
DSA403	Research Methodology // Second Part	10	1
DSA404	Evidence Based Dentistry	10	1
		Total:	16
DSX452	Oral Medicine II	11	2
DSV451	Clinical Pediatric Dentistry II // First Part	11	1
DSV458	Biostatics	11	1
DSV459	Public Health and Community Dentistry // First Part	11	2
DSV452	Clinical Orthodontics // First Part	11	1
DSP450	Implant Dentistry	11	1
DSA456	Comprehensive Clinical Dentistry // First Part	11	4
DSX455	Pharmacology II	11	1
DSA457	Special Needs Dentistry // First Part	11	1
DSA458	Literature Review // First Part	11	1

IC104	Foundations of the Political System in Islam	11	2
		Total:	17
DSC450	Esthetic Dentistry	12	1
DSV451	Clinical Pediatric Dentistry II // Second Part	12	1
DSV459	Public Health and Community Dentistry // Second Part	12	2
DSV454	Practice Management	12	1
DSV452	Clinical Orthodontics // Second Part	12	1
DSA453	Geriatrics and Gerodontology	12	1
DSA456	Comprehensive Clinical Dentistry // Second Part	12	4
DSA457	Special Needs Dentistry // Second Part	12	1
DSA458	Literature Review // Second Part	12	1
ARAB10 3	Writing Arabic Language	12	2
		Total:	15
		Overall	<b>205</b>

table 2: module overview

The module descriptions (Annex 03) contains information about each course's name and code, in which semester it is offered, its number of credit hours, its language of instruction, intended learning outcomes, course contents and assessment methods.

According to the University, all newly admitted students are required to complete the preparatory year program (first and second semester) with a GPA of at least 3.75 out of 5.0 before starting their undergraduate study (AOQ 1).

The study program is structured as follows:

Semester 1 + 2: preparatory year under the deanship's supervision. Students study at the College of Education together with all other enrolled students. This preparatory year is a 'unified health science program' and common for all medical and allied health science programs at the University. It aims to enhance the students' abilities to communicate effectively in English, to deal with information technology and to prepare them for advanced science and allied health courses. During this preparatory year, students study basic science courses



such as chemistry, biology, physics and biostatistics (SER 1.3.4). The successful completion of the preparatory year is a prerequisite for being admitted to the “General Dentistry” program.

In Year two (third and fourth semester), courses like preclinical oral surgery, preclinical restorative dentistry, preclinical periodontology and oral diseases prepare the students for the clinical treatment activities. These courses cover several medical aspects in patient evaluation assessment for suitability for dental treatments. The methods of teaching will include lectures and seminars as well as hand-on workshops, using computer-assisted software and mannequins.

In Year three, four and five the courses are designed to introduce students to various specialties of dentistry and help them to develop knowledge and skills required to become competent in performing various clinical procedures (SER 1.3.4). The courses in the last semesters mainly deal with professionalism like work ethics, community participation, management, research and other administrative issues which are covered by Research Methodology, Patient Care and other modules.

During the “General Dentistry” program, students gain their practical experience through an internship year, right after they successfully completed all modules of the program. The governmental clinical internship can be provided as per the agreement with the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health. Therefore, it can be held in any hospital in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The internship program focuses on providing each student with supervised sessions in a variety of clinical environments (SER 1.2.6). The students are not considered as graduates until they complete the full clinical training period of 12 months in accredited training centers under the supervision of the College.

Certain criteria should be followed when assessing the performance of the intern students. The candidate should reach a minimum of 60 overall rating score plus complete an internship research project in order to successfully pass the internship year (see Annex 11).

Currently, it is not possible for “General Dentistry” students to participate in mobility exchanges. Rather, the University ensures the international relevance of its program “as the curriculum, development process has meticulously consulted and reviewed according to related programs at other top universities around the world” (SER 1.2.9).

Thus, “the curriculum [...] represents a solid comprehension of ideas from many relevant sources and maintain consistency and reliability with employment requirements at national and international front. To provide the core knowledge in the respective field of disciplines, the education runs parallel and consistent as according to the international standards and its guidelines and retains its harmony with the practices of the Saudi Council for Health Specialties (SER 1.2.8).

Students are introduced to the essential concepts of research in Year 4 through the modules DSA403 and DSA404, which deal research methodologies and independent studies. Moreover, these courses help the students to get familiar with various research methods and incorporate evidence-based practice during the internship. Moreover, the Deanship of Scientific and Student Affairs gives the opportunity to perform research under the supervision of the concerned and interested supervisors. The Deanship of Student Affairs also holds a competition amongst the students. The students are encouraged to submit their research studies as scientific posters and oral presentations. An expert committee will judge the studies on an annually held scientific forum for the students. The best papers are awarded prizes and certificates (SER 1.2.7).

The University stresses on participative and outgoing lectures in which topics and concepts are explained and explored interactively, constantly referring to relevant and associated literature. The students also undertake quizzes, in which they exchange information and fully discuss the subject matter and the assignment(s) of the course. The required psychomotor skills and attitudes are taught mastered during the laboratory and clinical training hands-on sessions. First, these skills are explained and demonstrated to the students through pictures, videos and after that, on real patients. The students are also provided coaching sessions during the faculty office hours, to explore the topics directly related to their assignment or course work (SER 1.2.4).

According to the University’s regulations the absence percentage is 25 %. Students who exceed this percentage will not be allowed to take the final exam. The attendance is taken before every lecture and practical/clinical session is taken and every course director ensures that names of the absent students are correctly marked in the already prepared attendance lists via the Academic E-Services Portal.

For the final exam, only attested hospital reports will be accepted in case of sickness. For full details for the final exam including the attendance rules please refer to Annex 12.

The process of assessment is implemented through a mix of formal, predetermined examinations and semester-long assessment methods such as quizzes, presentations, projects, etc. There are at least two major examinations in each module, namely, the midterm and the final examination. Regarding the examination regulation for the final exam please see Annex 05.

The success in a course is based on the combination of a grade awarded for course work plus the grade for the final exam. The grade for the course work is within 50-60% of the total mark, the remainder builds the final exam. The pass mark of each course is 60, the total mark is 100.

Regarding regulation compensation measures for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses the University explains that as a prerequisite for the "General Dentistry" program, students' health should be in a good state of physical, and psychological fitness.

Students who have gaps in their studies can apply for re-registration according to following rules:

1. Application should be submitted within two academic years after the first term of absence
2. The college council should approve the application for re-registration
3. If the gap was more than two academic years then the student can seek a new start to the program by submitting a fresh application to the University. This new enrollment application would follow the admission rules at the time of the new application
4. Only one re-registration can be permitted
5. Re-registration cannot be processed if the student was initially suspended

Regarding the rules of recognition for credits, the University explains that the "maximum allowable percentage of credit hours that could be transferred by students from other universities is 40% of the total credit hours in the curriculum. Students must have a minimum GPA of 3 out of 5 in order to be able to transfer from other departments within the university or from another recognized institute to our program. Also, transfer to the applied medical sciences programs is limited to those who are attending school of science, engineering,

or other medical-related programs. All of the previous courses he has studied, including his grades and his term and cumulative averages, will be entered into the academic record of a student who has changed from one major to another according to the provisions of the regulations governing examination. [...]. These courses are evaluated by the Department Academic Committee and faculties who teach these courses and approved by the Department head. Transferred credits are not included in the GPA and a pass grade is assigned to those courses" (SER 1.5.3). The regulations for transferring students and the rules of recognition for credits are developed by the University's Rectorate for Academic and Educational Affairs and posted on its website.

#### **2.2.4 Admission requirements**

For the official admission requirements, please refer to Annex 13.

In order to be accepted to the study program, students must complete the admission process for PSAU and the program's requirements, the foremost which is, having Saudi nationality. For regular students, applicants must hold a Saudi Secondary School Certificate Science Section (SSSCSS) or its equivalent that is not more than five years old with a percentage of no less than 90 %. In addition, applicants must have an Aptitude Test Certificate (ATC) administered by the National Center for Assessment in Higher Education. Accepted students start studying at the Preparatory Year Deanship in Medical part, in which they must achieve a cumulative cGPA (cumulative Grade Point Average) of at least 3.75 out of 5.00 to start the "General Dentistry" program.

### **2.3 Study conditions and quality assurance**

#### **2.3.1 Human resources**

According to the University, the workload in the "General Dentistry" program is managed by 2 professors, 3 associate professors, 27 assistant professors, 9 lecturers and 15 demonstrators (SER 2.1.1). They are all employed on a full-time basis.

The full teaching load of all regular academic staff members is 10 hours for professors, 12 hours for associate professors, 14 hours for assistant professors, 16 hours for lecturers and 18 hours for demonstrators.

The requirements for the post of demonstrator/teaching assistant are besides fulfilling other conditions determined by the faculty council announced at the time of application a BDS degree from a Saudi University or an academically recognized University. The requirements for the post of a lecturer is a Master degree from a Saudi University or an academically recognized University. Assistant professors should at least hold PhD degree. The University Council may appoint a candidate for the post of the assistant professor without holding a PhD in a specialty that do not offer Doctorate qualification according to the following conditions:

- The candidate should possess a Master degree from a Saudi University or an academically recognized University
- Having held a lecturer post for at least three years
- Having completed a scientific research activity of at least three published units

Taking the previous conditions for the appointment of assistant professor, an associate professor should:

- Hold a PhD degree
- Have the experience as university teaching post for at least four years after the appointment as assistant professor
- Having completed a scientific research activity according to the standard requirements set by the University council
- Be promoted to the rank of associate professor in a Saudi University

Taking the previous conditions for the appointment of associate professors, a professor should:

- Hold a PhD degree
- Have the experience as university teaching post for at least eight years (four years as associate professor)
- Having completed a scientific research activity according to the standard requirements set by the University council
- Be promoted to the rank of professor in a Saudi University

The faculty's qualifications are documented in the CVs submitted by the University (Annex 04). The faculty requirements are adopted by the Ministry of Education for all the universities.

Considering the total of 187 currently enrolled male students in the “General Dentistry” program, this corresponds to a 1:3.4 student-to-faculty ratio (SER 2.1.1).

According to its own information, the University provides a wide range of professional and organisational development services for its staff. All faculty members are encouraged to attend workshops and international and national conferences for which they are given financial support, such as transportation allowance, registration allowance and daily-pocket money allowance. The University also provides training options to help their faculties improving their teaching effectiveness and the quality of education at the colleges in general.

“The Quality Assurance and Program Accreditation Unit” is branched from the office of the college vice dean for post-graduate studies, research and quality. This unit is comprised of the faculty members/who are appointed as departmental quality coordinators.

The “Interns Training Unit” is branched from the office of the college vice dean for clinical affairs. This Unit includes the program coordinator und manager.

### **2.3.2 Facilities**

The University states that wireless internet access is installed at the college reaching all areas of it, including staff and faculty offices and the classrooms.

For the „General Dentistry“ program, 6 lecture rooms, 1 conference room and 4 skills labs are available. For the equipment list, please refer to Annex 10.

The University states to also hold subscription to several electronic library full-text databases. Students and faculty staff have also access to the Saudi Digital Library (SDL) containing thousands of e-books, journals and periodicals (SER 2.3.2). The library is open from 8:00 to 14:15 on Saudi weekdays.

Based on the annual strategic plan the college specifies its financial needs in terms of infrastructure, academic and administrative requirements to the assigned deanship. After due deliberation, the university allocates annual budget to the departments. The PSAU University receives its budget from the ministry of finance of KSA (SER 2.3.4).

### 2.3.3 Quality assurance

To ensure quality teaching and learning management, the University claims to follow the standards and procedures issued by the NCAAA (National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment), which has been established “with responsibility for determining standards and criteria for academic accreditation and assessment and for accreditation postsecondary institutions and the programs they offer” (SER 1.6.1). The college has established three vice deanships for “postgraduate study, scientific research and quality”, “academic affairs” and “clinical affairs”. The Vice Deanship for post graduate study, scientific research and quality is concerned with disseminating the concept and practice of quality, evaluating the level of performance and working on academic accreditation, as well as the collection of data and information of quality activities in the college and documenting the efforts and actions in all quality activities and academic accreditations. The Vice Deanship of academic affairs is concerned with the development and implementation of the strategic plan for the college, organizing exams and seminars and liaising with the faculty members, course directors and student affairs committee in order to ensure the optimum delivery of academic courses. The Vice Deanship of clinical affairs is concerned with all the clinical requirements guaranteeing that the clinics are running effectively to deliver the best quality service for patients as well as ensuring that infection control measures are carried out (SER 1.6.1).

As described by the University, the “General Dentistry” program employs the following measures to assure quality within the program:

- Each group of modules (per level) are assigned to a quality coordinator who has the responsibility of ensuring that the NCAAA’s quality-related documents are fully prepared and submitted to the Department’s Quality Coordinator, who is a member of the Development and Quality Unit
- Students Course Evaluation survey is applied for each module to measure its quality
- In collaboration with the Vice Deanship of Development and Quality, the Department’s Quality Coordinator is responsible on ensuring the completion of various documents

The University declares that the “General Dentistry” program is regularly evaluated. Beside the students’ evaluations which are completed by using electronic surveys, each module coordinator submits a report regarding recommendations

for improving the assessment mode or any other difficulties faced during the semester. The evaluation of the practical experiences is ensured by periodical evaluations and feedback. The interns of the “General Dentistry” program are also asked to complete a survey about the practical relevance of the program. Added to that, the Alumni Unit of the college keeps in touch with the graduates to follow their careers. Furthermore, the students can submit complaints and appeals to the Vice-Head of Department, who works on resolving these complaints and appeals by following internal communications.

For new students, the program organizes an orientation week, which is held on their first day of study. Furthermore, students are assigned to the faculty staff members for academic advice. The academic advisors are responsible for assisting them in getting familiar with the available services, understanding the University and program policies, the curriculum, and any issue affecting the teaching and learning experience. Furthermore, the academic advisors monitor and guide the students’ progress and also give feedback on their examination results.

The University emphasizes that it follows equal opportunity policy for recruitment students’ admittance. Currently, the program is only available for male students. The initial plan was to consider enrolling female students. However, the Ministry of Education has decisively instructed to reduce the number of enrolled students. To implement the enrollment of female students, the following steps were taken (see AoQ 12):

- The number of male students enrolled has been decreased for the academic year 2019-2020 and 2020-2021.
- Female faculty staff were employed by the College of Dentistry and is currently lecturing or benefiting from scholarships to continue their postgraduate studies in order to join the faculty teaching staff.
- Preparation measures to open postgraduate studies in diverse specializations of Dentistry will be offered equally to male and female students after formal approval from the Ministry of Education.

The University plans to provide a barrier-free environment for physically challenged students. However, as there are no general laws regarding the admission of students with disabilities, decisions are taken on an individual basis by the concerned department. The College of Dentistry decided to not accept any students with disabilities or chronic illnesses (SER 1.5.2). The college aims to



select applicants who have the ability to become highly competent general dentists who are well prepared to enter private practice, or enter postgraduate training programs.

According to the University, a candidate for the BDS degree must have abilities and skills which include those that are observational, communicational, sensory/motor, intellectual/conceptual and behavioural/social. It is mandatory that students own the motor skills necessary to directly perform palpation, percussion, auscultation and other diagnostic manoeuvres, basic laboratory tests and diagnostic procedures. The students must be able to execute motor movements reasonably required to deliver emergency medical and dental care such as CPR, application of pressure to control bleeding, suturing of simple wounds and uncomplicated oral and maxillofacial surgical procedures. Such actions require coordination of both gross and fine muscular movements, equilibrium and functional use of the senses of touch, vision and audition.

## **2.4 Information about the University**

The University was founded in 2009 under the Royal Decree No. M/7305 as "University of Al Kharj" and includes colleges in five governorates of Riyadh Region. In 2015, the University changed its name to "Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz" University (PSAU). Currently, more than 28.000 students are enrolled.

The University includes 22 colleges, 103 academic departments and 112 study programs in various majors such as medicine and health sciences, engineering, human sciences etc.

The College of Dentistry was founded in 2009. The College of Dentistry encompasses four academic departments, namely the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery and Diagnostic Sciences, Department of Prosthodontics Sciences, Department of Conservative Dental Science, Department of Preventive Dental Science. There are currently 181 students enrolled at the College of Dentistry. As described, the College of Dentistry is looking forward to start accepting female dentistry students in the near future.

Furthermore, the College of Dentistry established an outpatient clinic to provide dental treatment services for the community in Al-Kharj. Also, it helps the students to develop their professional skills.

### 3 Expert report

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (hereinafter AHPGS) was commissioned by the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University (hereinafter the University) to accredit the study program “General Dentistry” (Bachelor of Dental Surgery).

The on-site visit evaluation of the study program “General Dentistry” offered at the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, was carried out on February 04<sup>th</sup>, 2021. In regard of the current situation, the AHPGS Commission decided to conduct the on-site visit virtual.

The documents of the University, the feedback from the experts to the documents and the results of the discussions with the representatives of the University during the on-site visit serve as bases for the statements made in the expert report.

The following experts were appointed by the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS for the evaluation of the study program.

**Prof. Dr. Sebastian Bürklein**  
**Münster University Hospital, Germany**

Senior physician at the Center for dental, oral and maxillofacial medicine;  
Specialist in Endodontology (DGET);  
Specialist dentist for oral surgery

**Prof. Dr. Adrian Kasaj**  
**Johannes-Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany**

Professor at the Department of Periodontology and Operative Dentistry;  
Specialist in Periodontology (DG PARO, EDA)

**PD Dr. Dr. Julia-Gabriela Wittneben, MMedSc**  
**University Bern, Switzerland**

Associate Professor Department for Reconstructive Dentistry and Gerodontol-  
ogy, University of Bern  
Specialist in Prosthodontics;  
Lecturer (part-time faculty member); Harvard School of Dental Medicine, De-  
partment of Restorative Dentistry and Material Sciences; Boston, USA;  
Visiting Assistant Professor; TUFTS School of Dental Medicine, Department of  
Prosthodontics and Operative Dentistry; Boston, USA

**Dr. Christina Erbe**

**Johannes-Gutenberg-University Mainz, Germany**

Specialist dentist for orthodontics;

Specialist in Pain therapy in the oral and maxillofacial region

**Mr. Mathias Maximilian Dilger**

**Student at the Albert-Ludwigs University Freiburg, Germany**

Licensed physician and currently Student of Dentistry

According to the Rules for the Accreditation of Study Programs and for System Accreditation (determined by the decision of the Accreditation Commission, of December 8, 2009 in the version of February 20, 2013, Drs. AR 20/2013), the task of the experts in the accreditation procedures is to evaluate the education concept of a specific study program as well as to estimate the possibility of its successful implementation. This concerns, in particular, qualification objectives of the study program, its conceptual integration into the system of education, the concept of the study program, feasibility of the content and scope of studies, the examination system, study-relevant collaborations, personnel, material and space resources, transparency and documentation, application of the results of quality assurance for further development of the study program (it is especially important to present the analyses and evaluation results of student workload, academic accomplishments and employment of graduates, which are to be documented and taken into account within the framework of continuous development of the study program), as well as the provision of gender equality and equal opportunities.

The on-site visit of the experts is carried out in accordance with 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). After the announcement of the accreditation decision, the expert report will be published as a part of the Final Report.

### **3.1 Basic information about the study program**

The main objective of the Bachelor study program “General Dentistry” offered at the College of Dentistry of the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University is to prepare graduates to be knowledgeable, service-oriented and highly-trained dental practitioners. The study program requires the obtainment of 205 credit hours

(CH) according to the international credit hour system. One CH is equal to one contact hours of lectures, or two hours of practical or clinical training per week.

The total workload of the program constitutes 11.097 hours, out of which 5.505 hours are contact hours, 3.504 hours are individual work and 2.088 hours have to be completed in a 58-weeks rotary internship at the end of the studies. The Bachelor study program "General Dentistry" is a full-time study program with a regular duration of six years/twelve semester plus one year of rotary internships. The program curriculum consists of 78 obligatory courses, of which 12 are to be taken in a preparatory year.

Admission requirements of the program include the possession of a Saudi Secondary School Certificate (Science Section) or its equivalent and passing the Aptitude Test Certificate with a summarized minimum score of 75 %. In addition, the students must pass the preparatory year with a GPA of at least 3.75 on a 5.0 scale. Until now, only male students are allowed to enroll the program.

Upon completion of the study program, students are awarded with the academic degree "Bachelor of Dental Surgery". The average students' intake in the "General Dentistry" program is 25 students each year. Admission takes place in September (Fall Semester).

The first batch of students has been admitted to the program in the year 2007. Up to now, 136 male students have graduated the program. The main language of instruction is English. No tuition fees are charged to Saudi nationals. Students also receive monthly governmental scholarships until they graduate.

### **3.2 Expert Report**

The on-site visit was carried out on February the 4<sup>th</sup>, 2021, according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on February the 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 for preliminary talks prior to the on-site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the on-site visit at the University.

In the course of the on-site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management (Rector; Vice Rector for Academic & Educational Affairs; Vice Rector for Development and Quality; Dean of Development and Quality), representatives of the College of Dentistry (Dean of the College; Vice Dean for Postgraduate, Scientific Research and Quality; Vice Dean for Academic and Educational Affairs; Vice Dean for Clinical Affairs) the Chairmen of the Main Departments of the College of Dentistry and the teaching staff of the program “General Dentistry” as well as with students currently studying in the program, graduates and interns.

Because of the virtual on-site visit, the University submitted a virtual tour of the University, that the experts could inspect the learning premises, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, library and computer classes. Moreover, experts had the opportunity to see the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories.

The expert report is structured in compliance with the 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). The study program will be described and analyzed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the University, the experts’ feedback to the documents, the observations made during the on-site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University, the College and the Departments serve as the basis for the statements made in the expert report.

### **3.2.1 Program aims and their implementation**

The University itself has set the mission to train highly qualified graduates by providing education in accordance with international standards in an academic and research environment of effective community partnership and supportive administrative structure. In accordance with the mission of the University, the “General Dentistry” program has been implemented in 2009 in order to meet the need for qualified dentists. The program’s aim is to qualify graduates to be knowledgeable, service-oriented and highly-trained dental practitioners. The graduates are able to focus on problem-based learning and ethical values. Furthermore, graduates are prepared to conduct distinguished scientific research in the fields of dentistry. In the experts’ opinion, the University provides optimal capacities of human and technical resources.

The Bachelor program “General Dentistry” pursues specific qualification objectives. The program’s goal is to empower graduates to professionally practice as dentists in public and private hospitals or to start their own clinics after completing the licensing procedures with the professional bodies in KSA. The University explains that to start their own clinics, the students have to complete a licensing exam from the Saudi Commission of Health Sciences as a first step. The University prepares the students for this exam and is also in close communication with the Saudi Commission of Health Sciences.

Furthermore, they can continue their studies in foreign Universities. The University states that the aim is to also implement a post-graduate study program for the “General Dentistry” students at the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University, which the experts strongly support.

The learning objectives of the “General Dentistry” program are based on the National Qualification Framework (NWF) of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and are categorized in Knowledge Skills; Cognitive Skills; Interpersonal Skills and Responsibility; Communication, Information Technology and Numerical Skills as well as Psychomotor Skills.

Overall, from the experts’ point of view, the program fulfills the professional requirements for the training of a dentist. The experts confirm that the study program focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

Out of the 136 graduates of the “General Dentistry” program, 118 are employed in the government sector, 6 are employed in the private sector, 7 are attending post-graduate programs and 5 are still waiting for a job vacancy.

From the experts’ point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.2.2 Structure of the study program**

The Bachelor study program “General Dentistry” is a full-time study program with a regular duration of six years (twelve semesters) plus internship (two semesters). The program curriculum consists of 78 courses, out of which ten are to be taken in the preparatory year. This study period is followed by a non-

credit bearing but obligatory one-year internship. Hence, students require seven calendar years to fully complete the program cycle.

The first year, called the preparatory year, is common to all medical and allied health sciences programs at the University. Passing the first year is a prerequisite for being admitted to the study programs. After that, the students study at the College of Dentistry. The Health Sciences' Preparatory Year contains English language skills, Arabic language skills and communication skills, as well as basic sciences courses in biology, chemistry, medical physics and medical foundation in order to reinforce skills and knowledge to provide a strong basis upon which to build the study of "General Dentistry". Courses in computer skills and Islamic culture are also part of the Preparatory Year.

Being admitted to the College of Dentistry (see Criterion 3), students start accumulating more program-specific knowledge for the remaining five years. In the opinion of the experts, the curriculum contains too little general medical content. The university explains that this is taught by the other colleges of the university (College of Medicine and College of Pharmacy) and is also taught during the clinical training, as the goal is to prepare the graduates to be able to treat patients safely and also know their limits. The experts take positive note of the University's implementation.

Thus, the experts conclude that students acquire specialized and program-specific knowledge as well as interdisciplinary knowledge and professional, methodological and general competences. Furthermore, the experts acknowledge the very detailed course files with its contents and aims, which allows a high level of transparency. In the experts' opinion, the structure of the curriculum seems to make the workload manageable.

The professional skills are gained through of practical hours in the College's clinic. In addition, students gain experience in clinical practice in the internship year, which they complete in cooperating hospitals. The specific content of the clinical internship varies with the clinical site to which the student is assigned, as the internship is consisting of a comprehensive clinical practice in various departments. As the student is not yet a licensed professional, the student performs under the supervision of a clinical instructor.

Although comprising a one-year full-time workload, the final internship is not credit bearing as it is not formally part of the study program but rather of the

legal recognition/licensing process according to the Health System of Saudi Arabia.

Expectations for students' qualifications and the structure of the internships are clearly defined in the "Interns' Clinics Rules and Regulations". The experts appreciate that supervisors from both the University and the clinic are assigned to supervise students during their internship. Patients make an appointment at the university clinic and are first examined by a licensed dentist. Depending on the difficulty of the case, the patient is then assigned to students from the first semesters or students from the higher semesters. If the case exceeds the competences at the university clinic, the patient is referred to a governmental clinic.

The University explains that the clinic gets about 12.000 patients per years and has about 30.000 active patient files. Because of the high number of patients, the students are able to perform in many different cases and therefore get an excellent practical training. Regarding the emergency treatment, the University states that there are specific clinical supervisors to deal with emergency cases. The experts highly appreciate the fact that the students are able to treat many different cases due to the high patient flow. The students in the round of talk confirm that the high number of cases are helpful for their further development.

The study program has a course-related examination system. Its implementation, including the grading system, course load regulations, repetition of courses and exams is regulated and transparent for the students.

From the expert's point of view, the requirements of the criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.2.3 Admission and Feasibility**

The admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are properly documented and made publicly available. Admission requirements include, a Saudi Secondary School Certificate – Science Section (SSSCSS) or its equivalent with a minimum score of 90 % and which is not older than five years. Furthermore, applicants require an Aptitude Test Certificate (ATC) administered by the National Center for Assessment in Higher Education.

All newly admitted students are required to complete the Preparatory Year program before starting their undergraduate studies. Passing this year, students get an orientation and are approved to the study programs depending on their desire, available seats and their GPA. To be placed to the "General Dentistry"



study program, students must pass the Preparatory Year with a Grade Point Average (GPA) of at least 3.75 out of 5.0.

Currently, only male Saudi citizens are allowed to study in the “General Dentistry” program (see also Criterion 6). The university reports that it is planning to set up a master study program in dentistry for which female students will also be admitted. The experts strongly welcome this plan. The experts also recommend that the university consider admitting international students. In this way, the existing study place capacity could be fully utilized and, at the same time, the program could be financially supported by fees that international students would have to pay.

The experts criticize the fact that students with disabilities or chronic illnesses are not admitted to the „General Dentistry“ program. During the rounds of talk, it became clear that the pre-selection already takes place as a medical check-up before the preparatory year and that the College of Dentistry is not involved in this decision. Nevertheless, the evaluators represent the opinion that especially students with certain chronic illnesses such as diabetes etc. should be admitted to the study program, as such chronic illnesses are not an obstacle to practise dentistry. The experts therefore strongly recommend that a precise definition of the disabilities and chronic diseases that are unsuitable for the „General Dentistry“ program should be established.

As the Preparatory Year comprises medical foundations as well as basic knowledge in medical biology, chemistry and physics in order to compensate deficiencies from secondary school, the experts determine the admission procedure and requirements to be appropriate. They correspond to the standards of the study program.

During the round of talks, it became obvious that the teaching staff follows an “open-door-policy”. The students confirm the supportive and easy communication between staff and students and emphasize that the teaching staff adequately reacts to students’ questions. Furthermore, in the first week of each year, students and instructors alike undergo an orientation that familiarizes them with available support services. An academic advisor is responsible for a small number of students from the beginning of each semester and students are supported through the academic counseling student unit with their registration process, selecting a study program, financial and personal issues and their performance during the semester.

The experts find the support services at the University to be exemplary and conducive to the health and success of the student body. The experts confirm that the University takes measures to guarantee the feasibility of the study program despite the high workload. As a whole, the organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study program.

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of the criterion are fulfilled.

#### **3.2.4 Examination system and transparency**

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. This is achieved by evaluating the performance of the student through a series of exams and tests that are scheduled during the academic semester. Students in the "General Dentistry" program are not required to write a Bachelor thesis but have to conduct a research project instead. Furthermore, the students are encouraged to write research papers and give presentations. The experts were told that some students already published their research papers.

In the experts' point of view, the transparent information of examination methods and the examination schedule at the beginning of each term makes the great number of assessments during and at the end of each semester manageable. An examination can be repeated twice, if the students have special reasons, e.g. illness, they get a third chance to pass the exam.

The experts conclude that the examinations, although numerous, serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved or not. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge. The requirements to students' performance in examinations are regulated and published. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organization, is appropriate.

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion fulfilled.

#### **3.2.5 Teaching staff and material equipment**

In general, the "General Dentistry" program is carried out by 2 professors, 3 associate professors, 27 assistant professors, 9 lecturers and 15 demonstrators. They are all employed on a full-time basis. Considering the total of 187 currently enrolled students, in the "General Dentistry" program, the student-to-faculty-ratio is 1:3,4. The experts take positive note of the very good student-to-faculty-ratio.

Regarding the employment process, the qualification and experience of the teaching staff is closely evaluated prior to the appointment decision. The experts are convinced that the instructors involved in the study program reveal a high level of competency in the relevant field.

New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the program and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. Students evaluate the performance of all teaching and other staff periodically.

Overall, the teaching and academic staff of the College of Dentistry at the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University shows a very high level of commitment and potential for the execution as well as further development of the study program they are responsible for. The expert group comes to the conclusion that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics among the University and the faculty administration.

The experts find the amount of human resources allocated to the program to be sufficient to carry out its functions. The teaching staff within the Bachelor program "General Dentistry" is in possession of academic and technical credentials and experience adequate to their tasks. The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development transparently, and actively encourages their participation in workshops, training courses and conferences intended to further their ability, which is confirmed during the talks with the staff on site.

The experts learned that about 10 per cent of the employees of the University are female and about 15 per cent of the people currently taking up scholarships abroad are women. The experts already see a lot of potential among the female staff and encourage the university to use the existing female staff also for higher positions as well as to further increase the percentage of female staff.

During the round of talks, the experts gained the impression that research is an important issue at Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University. According to the University, there has been a high increase of publications and research during the last years. The College of Dentistry encourages its staff and students to do research. The University has an internal research fund for staff members and students in order to award the students and the staff for publications. Furthermore, the research qualification is an important issue for the hiring process. If staff members want to be promoted, they must be able to show various

publications, depending on the level they intend to achieve. The staff is also encouraged to attend workshops to improve their scientific research skills. The experts were told that ISI indexed publications are already disclosed in different journals. The University states that every department has its own research unit to encourage their students to do research. The experts take a positive view of the efforts to conduct research and also to involve students in the process.

Since the assessment had to take place virtually due to the Corona pandemic, the university provided the experts with a video of the university's premises and the set-up of the treatment rooms in advance. The experts were impressed with the quality of the laboratories and clinical facilities used to train students in the "General Dentistry" program. During the interview, the students confirm the experts' impression. Students are encouraged to learn new techniques, to operate the new equipment and the clinical supervisors take a lot of time to demonstrate the operation of the equipment. The experts take positive note of this.

As a whole, it was ascertained by the experts that the "General Dentistry" program has plenty teaching facilities at its disposal. The infrastructure and the equipment are suitable to guarantee teaching and research.

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of the criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.2.6 Quality assurance**

The University developed a strategic plan for 2012-2021, in which one objective is to develop a quality control system and criteria that enhance the university's outputs.

From the experts' point of view, the University has a well-structured system of quality assurance spread across all of its units. The University has established a quality assurance hierarchy which ranges from the vice rector of quality and development to the vice dean of quality and development to the head of department to the coordinator of the program and then to the committees.

The Deanship of Quality and Development carries out internal and external quality assurance procedures on a cyclical basis, among them are course evaluations and student and teaching staff surveys. At the end of each semester, a course report is written and course specifications may be amended according to evaluation results.

The experts conclude that the University has a well-established, documented and published concept of quality assurance regarding the education process, teaching and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of its study program and, therefore, also further development of the “General Dentistry” program.

The results of the internal quality assurance management are applied to the continuous development of the study program. In doing so, the University takes into close consideration the quality evaluation results as well as the analysis of students’ workload, their academic accomplishment and feedback from graduates. The experts acknowledge that the University implemented arrangements for student participation, such as student councils in every college and the student club.

The experts are impressed of the very good student-to-faculty-ratio, which guarantees excellent support for the students. The students confirm that the communication with the staff is very well and problems are dealt with, even outside the intended round of talks.

From the experts’ point of view, the requirements of the criterion are fulfilled.

### **3.2.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities**

Currently, the “General Dentistry” program is only offered for male students. The implementation of a postgraduate study program which is also offered for female students is planned. Furthermore, female faculty staff were employed by the College of Dentistry, either currently lecturing or benefiting from scholarships to continue their postgraduate studies in order to join the faculty teaching staff. As already described before, the experts consider it an important step for the study program to involve female students as well as to increase the proportion of female employees and to support them in their further qualification for higher positions in order to be able to compete on the international market.

Considering the societal norms and cultural context of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the expert group concludes that the requirements of the criterion are met.

### **3.3 Summary**

The experts sum up that the overall impression of the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University is very positive. The University itself presents itself

convincingly as an open-minded and dynamic institution, within the cultural boundaries of the local society, with willingness to import new ideas and recommendations for further enhancement.

A number of favorable characteristics and achievements of the study program "General Dentistry" were demonstrated by the management of the University, the representatives of the college, those of the departments as well as the students, such as strong commitment. Moreover, the experts highlight the thorough and comprehensive curriculum of the study program. The experts think that the Bachelor study program "General Dentistry" is a well-structured program with modern topics and all relevant clinical aspects in it, so that the students get all relevant clinical competences. The experts encourage the University to especially stay on the line with modern modules like biostatistics and informatics as well as behavioral sciences. From the experts' point of view, the University also found a profound and solid solution of working interdisciplinary together with the University clinic and other colleges to cover general medical aspects. Furthermore, the research output of the graduates seems very impressive. The students were motivated to do their postgraduate studies which the experts encourage.

The experts also state that the gender discussion was intense and important. They are happy that there is already some female faculty staff and motivate the University to support these and also increase the number of female faculty staff. They also emphasize the motivation of the University to start accepting female students.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the on-site visit, the experts came to the conclusion that the study program "General Dentistry" offered at the Prince Sattam Bin Abdulaziz University fulfills the above-described criteria. Hence, the experts recommended that the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS make a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

For the continuous development of the study program, the experts have outlined the following recommendations:

- The experts recommend that the university consider admitting international students. In this way, the existing study place capacity could be

fully utilized and, at the same time, the program could be financially supported by fees that international students would have to pay.

- The experts therefore strongly recommend that a precise definition of the disabilities and chronic diseases that are unsuitable for the „General Dentistry“ program should be established.
- The experts encourage the university to use the existing female staff also for higher positions as well as to further increase the percentage of female staff.
- The experts recommend to the University to start accepting female students.

#### **4 Decision of the accreditation commission**

This resolution of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS is based on the University's application, as well as the expert review and the on-site visit covered in the expert report.

The virtual on-site visit of the University took place on February, 06, 2021 according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

The accreditation decision is based on the Expert Report which is structured according to the Accreditation Criteria developed by the AHPGS. The Accreditation Criteria are developed 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).

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group and the response opinion of the University regarding the expert report.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS considers that all Accreditation Criteria are fulfilled and adopts the following decision:

The study program requires the obtainment of 205 credit hours (CH) according to the University's credit hour system. The regulated study period in the program "General Dentistry" are six years (twelve semesters), including a Preparatory Year, followed by a non-credit bearing one-year clinical internship after completing the studies. The study program comprises of 78 mandatory courses, of which 10 belongs to the Preparatory Year, and 68 are compulsory. The main language of instruction is English. The Bachelor study program "General Dentistry" is completed with the conferral of the academic degree "Bachelor of Dental Surgery".

The study program "General Dentistry" is accredited for the duration of five years, until September, 30, 2026.

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as of the University as a whole, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS supports the recommendation articulated in the expert report.