

ASSESSMENT REPORT

**Health Sciences for Therapeutic Profiles
– Speech and Language Therapy,
Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy (B. Sc.)
at Kolegji Heimerer – Heimerer College,
Prishtina, Kosovo**

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1. Kolegji-Heimerer – Heimerer College Prishtina

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

The college was founded in 2010 with the aim to improve quality of healthcare education, and it offers study programmes at Bachelor's and Master's level. Currently 1,438 students are studying at the college, of which 1,307 are undergraduates. Language of instruction is Albanian, some lectures are held in English, too.

The following Bachelor study programmes are offered:

- Nursing (B. Sc.)
- Professional Education in Health (B. Sc.)
- Therapeutic Health Sciences (B. Sc.) with two different profiles:
 - Speech Therapy and
 - Occupational Therapy
- Health Sciences for Diagnostic Profiles: Laboratory Technician Profile (B. Sc.)

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

The college also offers two Master programmes:

- Management of Health Institutions and Services (M. Sc.) and
- Psychology of Assessment and Intervention (M. A.)

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

Heimerer College intends to further expand its range of studies: The existing Bachelor's programme "Therapeutic Health Sciences (B. Sc.)" is offered since 2012. The programme is to be supplemented by a further profile "Physiotherapy" in winter semester 2021/22.

The college also intends to offer new Master's programmes, both "Medical Laboratory Sciences (MLS) (M. Sc.)" and "Nursing – Advanced Nursing Practice (ANP) (M. Sc.)" first in winter semester 2021/22.

2. The accreditation procedure

The accreditation process was conducted as a cluster accreditation with all three programmes being assessed together by one expert panel. The assessment took into account that neither the new Bachelor's profile "Physiotherapy" nor the new Master's programmes have been offered so far and therefore a concept assessment had to be performed. The assessment procedure took place as an informed peer review on the basis of the self-evaluation report provided by Heimerer College, a site visit conducted online¹ by an international expert panel, an assessment report by the expert panel for

¹ Due to the consequences of the corona pandemic, an on-site visit was not possible. An agreement was reached with Heimerer College to hold a full-day video conference which was also considered sufficient by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency (KAA). ZOOM was used as technical platform for this purpose, since there is a contract between **evalag** and ZOOM for commissioned data processing in order

each programme, and the accreditation decision made by the **evalag** Accreditation Commission.

The procedure applies the eligibility for purpose approach which assesses to what extent a programme complies with the **evalag** criteria for programme accreditation.² These are formulated in coherence with the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG).³

These criteria mainly focus on the profile of the programme and its curriculum. Furthermore, the criteria cover all aspects of the implementation of a study programme, its quality assurance and its resources. With regard to the criteria of programme profile and curriculum, **evalag** also assesses if the programme meets academic standards that are accepted in the European Higher Education Area (EHEA).⁴

The following six criteria are applied:

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

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

The proceedings can be suspended until a new application if the programme does not fulfil relevant criteria, but it is likely that the institution will be able to remedy the shortcomings within 18 months after the assessment.

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

Academic experts:

- Prof. Dr. med. Dr. h. c. Wolfgang Patsch (Austria), Professor emeritus at Paracelsus Private Medical University of Salzburg
- Prof. Dr. Andrea Pflingsten (Germany), Professor for Physiotherapy, Head of Study programme “Physiotherapy” and member of the examination boards of Bachelor’s programmes “Physiotherapy”, “Speech Therapy”, “Nursing” and

to ensure that the conferences are carried out in conformity with European data protection law. The discussions during the video conferences were not recorded. The length of the web conferences did not differ from the conversations that would have taken place in an on-site inspection. Instead of a personal inspection of the premises, the group of experts was provided with various video and image material to enable them to inspect the campus, the premises and the equipment.

² https://www.evalag.de/fileadmin/dateien/pdf/akk_international/standards_kriterien/prog_acc_process_criteria_171201.pdf (accessed February 10, 2021)

³ https://enqa.eu/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/ESG_2015.pdf (accessed February 10, 2021)

⁴ The European Higher Education Area (EHEA) is a group of 48 countries that cooperate to achieve comparable and compatible higher education systems throughout Europe. Member countries of the EHEA follow the directives of the so-called Bologna Process to achieve these goals.

Master's programme "Advanced Nursing Practice", OTH – Regensburg Technical University

- Prof. Dr. Marieke Schuurmans (Netherlands), Appointed Professor in Nursing Science and Educational director of Professionals in Health care at the UMC Utrecht/ University Utrecht

Expert from professional practice:

- Christoph Biele, M.Sc. (Germany), Biele Krankengymnastik & Massage, Herne

Student expert:

- Beatriz Atienza Carbonell (Spain), Quality Assurance Officer at Valencian International University, PHD student (medicine/ psychiatry) at University of Valencia, Member of the QA pool of European Students' Union (ESU)

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

The online meetings (annex) took place on February 3, 2021. The expert panel met the leadership of Heimerer College, academic and administrative staff, several international cooperation partners of the college, employers, students and alumni from current study programmes. A five-minute recording provided by Heimerer College gave an impression of the local conditions.

After the online meetings the expert panel produced the assessment report which was submitted to the university for correction of potential factual errors on March 2, 2021.

From **evalag**'s side, Georg Seppmann coordinated and carried out the project. Ana Gvritshvili, Head of Quality Assurance Office at European University Tbilisi (Georgia), took part in the proceedings as a guest.⁵

The experts thank the organisers of the online meetings for the opportunity for additional questions and the open discussion during the online meetings.

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

3. Programme assessment

3.1 Programme profile

The profile and objectives of a study programme is an essential criterion for the assessment. The experts have to evaluate whether the objectives of the programme are in line with the profile and the strategic goals of the institution. Further, they assess if the intended learning outcomes of the programme are well defined, publicly accessible and whether they correspond to the type and level of qualification provided by the programme. They also consider whether the intended learning outcomes are based on academic or professional requirements (standards), public needs and the demands of the labour market, and if they contribute to the employability of the graduates. The experts

⁵ As part of the cooperation policy of CEENQA network and with the consent of Heimerer College, **evalag** invited Ms. Gvritshvili as a guest observer.

have to evaluate the programme's relation to research (procurement of scientific methods in theory and practice, research-based teaching). The experts assess whether the profile and objectives of the programme comply with internationally accepted standards. The experts consider the international dimension of the programme and verify whether the qualification of the academic staff is adequate in terms of the profile and the objectives of the programme.

Current status

Programme profile and objectives

The study programme "Therapeutic Health Sciences" is a three-year full-time programme with three different profiles. Successful graduates receive a Bachelor's degree. Table 1 shows some statistical information on the programme:

Name of study programme	Therapeutic Health Sciences: Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy (B. Sc.)
Founding year	2012: Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy 2021 (new): Physiotherapy
Final degree	Bachelor (B. Sc.)
Duration of study	3 years or 6 semesters
Credits (ECTS or other system)	180 ECTS credits
Number of students (actual semester)	333
Number of graduates (from the beginning)	202
Drop-out rate (average in last 5 semesters)	4.5 %
1 st year students (actual semester)	60 (only Speech and Language Therapy)
Target capacity per semester	Speech and Language Therapy: 80 Occupational Therapy: 40 Physiotherapy (new): 60
Full-time academic staff in the programme	19
Part-time academic staff in the programme	15

Tab. 1: Data on "Therapeutic Health Sciences: Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy (B. Sc.)"⁶

According to the self-report, the programme "Therapeutic Health Sciences (B. Sc.)" aims to create health professionals for Kosovo as well as for other European countries. The programme has already been offered with two profiles successfully for 8 years now; from the coming winter semester, the physiotherapeutic profile is to be offered

⁶ Source: Self-report by Heimerer College

additionally. The college justifies the new profile with an immediate need for physiotherapeutic qualifications in Kosovo.

In general, with the three profiles that would then be available from the winter semester 2021/22 the university answers to a high demand for qualifications in the health sector.

The “Speech and Language Therapy” study profile was designed considering the philosophy, basic values, skills and knowledge of speech and language therapy articulated by the Standing Liaison Committee of Speech and Language Therapists/ Logopaedics in the European Union (CPLOL). Students have to demonstrate that they meet the minimum standards for the education of speech therapists as defined by the Standing Liaison Committee of Speech and Language Therapists/ Logopaedics in the European Union.⁷

The “Occupational Therapy” study profile reflects the philosophy, core values, skills, and base of knowledge of occupational therapy, articulated by the World Federation of Occupational Therapy (WFOT). Students are required to demonstrate at least entry-level professional skills and knowledge that they fulfil the minimum standards for occupational therapy education set by the European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education (ENOTHE) (Tuning Project, 2020).⁸

The “Physiotherapy” study profile was modelled based on a programme offered by the University of Applied Sciences of Utrecht (Netherlands) and according to the World Confederation Physiotherapy (WCPT) standards.⁹

The Bachelor's programme also pursues higher-level, socially relevant goals. Graduates of all profiles are expected to be competent and reliable professionals who are reflective and critical in their thinking and approach to practice. They should value diversity, respect individuals and individual choices, and have open and empathic communication. Graduates also should value collaboration with colleagues, individuals, and other relevant people and work independently.

Learning outcomes

The learning outcomes are described in the self-report as follows:¹⁰

a. Cross-profile learning outcomes:

- General: knowledge of health care practice, problem-solving and decision-making skills, client centeredness, ability to incorporate current trends, technology, and innovation. Use of theories, models, approaches, and concepts.
- Assessment: knowledge of health conditions and diseases, handling skills and perform assessment safely, the ability to recognize red flags, providing patient comfort and dignity, provide a professional diagnosis.
- Intervention: professional process, clinical reasoning, evidence-based practice, holistic approach with ICF communicate with other professionals, patients, and caregivers.

⁷ Cf. https://cplol.eu/images/Revised_Min_Standards_2007_la.pdf (accessed February 10, 2021)

⁸ Cf. https://www.unideusto.org/tuningeu/images/stories/Publications/OCCUPATIONAL_THERAPY_FOR_WEBSITE.pdf (accessed February 10, 2021)

⁹ Cf. <https://world.physio/resources/policies-guidelines> (accessed February 10, 2021)

¹⁰ Cf. self-report pp. 39-41

- professional and interprofessional: Professional codes of ethics and legal issue, advocate the profession, documentation, working in a multi professional/interdisciplinary team.
- Health promotion and prevention: facilitate health behaviour change, health promotion and prevention strategies.
- Research and evidence based: analyse the available evidence into clinical practice, search relevant scientific literature and ability to conduct a research.
- Education and learning: self-evaluate practice, professional development and lifelong learning, clinical supervision of undergraduate students, shared learning with other professionals.

b. Learning outcomes of “Speech and Language Therapy” profile:

- Graduate students should be able to operate in a variety of specific contexts including healthcare, prevention and education, customer needs processing for speech care, performing tasks in diagnostic and therapeutic processes, coordination, reporting, documentation, and performing tasks related to the development of practices.
- Speech and Language Therapy professionals will be able to work in a team and take responsibility for the speech and language therapy process.
- Ability and knowledge to carry out work according to modern health principles, with an emphasis on individuality, active participation, partnership, and holistic approach to patients as individuals, their family or group.
- Ability to recognize the needs of individuals with problems at the level of patients and the population, to set objectives and to plan, implement and evaluate them.
- Ability to be part of a health team and to lead them. Ability to create a positive professional identity and to understand and accept the way of perceiving the profession of a speech therapist which will increase your motivation for the role of the speech therapist into the developed world.
- Ability to plan and implement tasks in diagnostic and therapeutic treatment programs for patient treatment, based on qualifications.

c. Learning outcomes of “Occupational Therapy” profile:

- Knowledge of professional occupational therapy codes of ethics
- Knowledge of the occupational therapy process of practice
- Knowledge of health conditions and their impact on occupational performance
- Knowledge of healthy occupations throughout the lifespan
- Knowledge of research methods to access learning and practice digital, human and environmental resources
- Knowledge of basic occupational therapy theories, models, approaches and concepts
- Knowledge of collaborative methods in learning and practice environments
- Knowledge of current trends in occupational therapy practice

- Application of professional occupational therapy codes of ethics in the learning and practice environment
- Application of the occupational therapy process in practice
- Application of clinical reasoning knowledge in occupational performance evaluation
- Application of critical thinking skills in assessment, goal setting and treatment plans
- Application of research methods during learning and practice assignments
- Application of occupational therapy theory, approaches and concepts based on occupational therapy models of practice
- Application of collaborative efforts in learning and practice environments
- Consistent demonstration of professional integrity in professional occupational therapy practice.
- Consistent demonstration of effective use of digital, human and environmental resources.
- Consistent demonstration of the use of occupational therapy theories, models, approaches, and concepts.
- Consistent demonstration of effective practice of the full occupational therapy process.
- Consistent demonstration of critical thinking and reasoning in occupational assessment, goal setting and treatment intervention
- Demonstration of effective multidisciplinary collaboration in learning and practice environments
- Demonstrate client-centred practice and effective therapeutic use of self in encouraging client engagement in occupations

d. Learning outcomes of “Physiotherapy” profile:

- Recognize different roles, responsibilities, and functions of physiotherapists, and adapt their activities to effectively meet the needs of the individual/populace.
- Identify their needs and opportunities for professional development, to convey knowledge in similar areas daily to assess their knowledge to develop their activity and improve the quality of services provided.
- Work on the principles of physiotherapeutic care, respect individuality, apply a holistic approach, and ensure the protection of the rights of their patients and beliefs.
- To evaluate the patient / client's situation fully, with appropriate instruments, considering all factors (physical, social, cultural, psychological, spiritual, and environmental).
- Recognize and interpret situations that deviate from normal and based on assessment, establish physiotherapeutic diagnosis.
- Plan, implement, and evaluate physiotherapeutic care in cooperation with patients/clients, caregivers, families and other health professionals and team members.

- Offer physiotherapeutic care focused on the basic human needs of patients / clients of all ages with different health problems.
- Present accurate documentation and efficiently develop health care and evaluate the results of physiotherapeutic care.

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

According to the self-evaluation report and the interview sessions with the college management, the study programme “Therapeutic Health Sciences (B. Sc.)” responds to Kosovo’s labour market needs and the increasing demand for therapeutic services of high quality. Speech therapists, occupational therapists and physiotherapists are increasingly needed in Kosovo as well as in the whole Balkan region, although good training places are still few and far between. This is where Heimerer College’s claim is to start. The college involves regional stakeholders, ministries concerned and also partner universities, conducts regular needs analyses and attempts to make timely adjustments to the programme design. The development of the new profile “Physiotherapy” has emerged in such a preparatory process.

Institutional arrangements with international partners (e.g. Helios Kliniken GmbH, Germany) have been made. Thus, the employment of 240 graduates from Heimerer College is guaranteed every year. In the self-report as well as in the interview session the college emphasized the high percentage (98%) of employability of its young graduates in view of a country with extremely high unemployment.¹¹

Relation between study and research

According to the self-report, graduates will be professionally and qualified professionals who have high professional competencies in order to meet the needs in education, prevention, diagnosis and treatment taking into account patient-centred approach, the integration of theoretical and practical knowledge and everyday skills in practice, awareness of social and cultural differences in individuals, understanding the role of their role in the health system. In its own words, the college offers clinical/ professional education and training in their profession that is supported by theory, research, and clinical practice. The programme integrates the development of theoretical knowledge with clinical skills in a wide range of services, it is application-oriented. As is generally the case at Bachelor level, no own research is conducted, but new scientific findings are reflected and incorporated into the curriculum.

International dimension

As mentioned above, international guidelines and standards were taken into account in the establishment of the study programmes and also in their further development, e.g. recommendations of CPLOL, World Federation of Occupational Therapy, and European Network of Occupational Therapy in Higher Education. Besides, the design of existing study programmes, namely at Osnabrück University of Applied Sciences (Germany) and Ontario Universities’ Application Centre (Canada) was taken into account. Implementation and further development are accompanied by several international partners. Foreign guests are on site at regular intervals to offer lectures or exchange information on the latest subject developments. There is a strong connection with the German Heimerer institutions.

¹¹ It must be said, however, that most graduates work outside Kosovo.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5, further below)

The staff employed in the programme are mostly from Kosovo, most of them with PhD degrees. Most of them studied in Kosovo or other Balkan countries. Teachers from the USA and the Netherlands are also listed.

Staff recruitment is done according to defined regulations and takes place via a selection process with clear objectives and criteria. A description of staff-related procedures and responsibilities is part of the “Guide for Academic Staff”, provided to each member of staff (last updated in 2018).

Assessment

Programme profile and objectives

During the interview sessions the experts experienced Heimerer College presenting itself as a higher educational institution with high ambition to offer health sciences studies of professional relevance and international quality standards. In the view of the experts, it seems only logical to expand the existing Bachelor’s programme “Therapeutic Health Sciences” to include the new profile of physiotherapy.

According to the experts, the college as a whole will gain from the new programme.

“Student-centred teaching and learning” was a statement often quoted. All representatives, the experts could talk to, have internalised this as their educational mission.

Learning outcomes

As far as it can be seen from the translated documents, the learning outcomes of the programmes are clearly defined, and they correspond to the level of awarded qualification. One exception may be the explicit mention of “conducting research” which is not only very general but does also not really fit Bachelor’s level: research methods, clinical reasoning, evidence-based, therapy process, prevention, etc. ... should have been mentioned instead (to name just a few keywords).

Students’ learning success is regularly assessed by using a variety of assessment methods. The intended learning outcomes described in each module description are by and large concise, clear and aligned with content.

Nevertheless, further elaboration is needed. Above all, the contents should be carefully checked again for possible gaps. The partner universities as well as institutions where the graduates are likely to work later, should be consulted again. At first glance, several important contents such as the area of physiotherapy in palliative care seem to be missing. As far as assessments are concerned, the allocations between assessment method and learning objective need to be made more precisely: It must be comprehensible why which method is chosen in a specific case.

Relation to academic and professional requirements and public needs

There is an obviously strong connection between the programme’s intentions and Kosovo public needs. Heimerer College’s portfolio addresses public needs and necessities.

The experts appreciate the innovative character of the whole institution in a rather difficult social and public environment in Kosovo. Obviously, the college has a good

partner environment and is appreciated by the regional health care institutions. Students from Heimerer College are gladly accepted for internships.

International dimension

The experts appreciate the international partner network of Heimerer College. Representatives of the partners took part in some of the online sessions, and they painted a very positive picture of the cooperation with the college. The implementation of all programmes is going along with continuous exchange with international partners as well as with the German parent institution.

Staff qualification (see also criterion 5)

In the view of the expert panel, the qualification of the teaching staff at Heimerer College is adequate for the existing profiles of “Therapeutic Health Sciences”.

The experts recognise that there are explicit criteria for staff recruitment and that the recruitment process itself seems to be well developed.

The relation between full-time and half-time staff seems by and large appropriate. The experts note from the interview sessions that teaching is performed by committed and motivated lecturers. Some of them have international working and teaching experience which is appreciated by the expert panel. Obviously, a variety of teaching methods is used. The experts highlight how enthusiastic and dedicated academic and administrative staff presented themselves in the interview sessions. The experts appreciate that the university offers different opportunities to teaching staff for improving their teaching methods.

The experts are not at all convinced – neither from the available documents nor from the discussions – that the intended practice modules in the different profiles will always be supervised by corresponding subject teachers.

Areas for improvement

The interview partners at Heimerer College themselves stated during the online visit that studies are never finished and therefore need to be regularly reviewed for their appropriateness (content, methods, teaching staff). This process seems to be working quite well at Heimerer College, but needs to be further developed in the sense of a permanently learning institution.

Conditions and recommendations

Before starting with the new profile Heimerer College has to review the new profile and its content structure again. This should be done together with experts from higher education institutions as well as from relevant health professional institutions.

Heimerer College must develop and implement a training programme for mentors in clinical practice to ensure academic quality of practical learning.

3.2 Curriculum

The second criterion concerns the curriculum as well as the teaching and learning methods. The expert panel evaluates, whether the curriculum of the programme is adequately structured to achieve the intended learning outcomes and whether the

curriculum provides the necessary knowledge and methodological expertise of the relevant discipline(s). The experts also evaluate the organisation of the learning process, especially if there are appropriate student-centred teaching and learning methods, if students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process and whether the diversity of students and their needs is taken into account.

Current status

Programme structure

The study programme “Therapeutic Health Sciences” is a three-year full-time programme with 180 ECTS credits. Credit points are a quantitative measure for the overall workload of a student. The overall student workload consists of the time for attending lectures as well as the time for preparing and taking exams, thesis writing, seminars and semester assignments. An effort of 30 hours is taken as a basis to earn one credit point. One study year’s effort equals 1,800 hours of work.

The total credits per semester and the respective workload can be summarised as follows:

- 1 academic year has 60 ECTS
- 1 academic year has 30 teaching weeks in auditorium and 4 to 6 weeks of final exams
- 1 semester has 15 teaching weeks of lecture and 2 to 3 weeks of final exams
- 1 ECTS = 30 hours of student work
- 1 lesson hour = 90 minutes

At least 30 % of total hours are contact hours. Weekly teaching load including lectures, seminars, exercises, and labs are within the range of 20 hours.

The curriculum comprises six semesters with only obligatory courses. Some courses are held cross-profile but there are also courses along the three specialisations.

All lectures and modules are offered either in Albanian language or in English Language. For professors who are engaged but do not have primary Albanian language, there are assistant translators who translate the lectures and the material. The same applies to international professors who come to the college for short-term stay.

The curriculum is structured as shown in table 4 (type= obligatory vs. elective, profile: “Speech and Language Therapy”, “Occupational Therapy”, “Physiotherapy”):

YEAR 1: 60 ECTS (per profile)							
SEMESTER 1: 30 ECTS (per profile)				Hours			
Nr.	Type	Profile	Module	Lecture	Practice	Self-study	Credits
1	O	S/O/P	Introduction to the structures of the health care system	30	30	90	5
2	O	S/O/P	Beginning English language	30	30	90	5
3	O	S/O/P	Academic writing	30	30	90	5

4	O	S/O/P	General psychology	30	30	90	5
5	O	O/P	Human health: anatomy and physiology	30	30	90	5
6	O	S	Introduction to speech therapy	30	30	90	5
7	O	S	Language sciences	30	30	90	5
8	O	O	Occupational performance across the lifespan	30	30	90	5
9	O	P	Physiotherapy professional practice: clinical reasoning, evidence-based practice and massage	30	30	90	5
SEMESTER 2: 30 ECTS (per profile)				Hours			
Nr.	Type	Profile	Module	Lecture	Practice	Self-study	Credits
1	O	S/O/P	Paediatrics child development	30	30	90	5
2	O	S/O/P	Neurology	30	30	90	5
3	O	S/O/P	Genetics and clinical conditions	30	30	30	3
4	O	S/O/P	Clinical practice 1	30	120	0	5
5	O	S/O/P	Professional English language	30	15	15	2
6	O	S	Acquired language disorders and treatment methods	30	30	90	5
7	O	S	Pedagogy	30	30	90	5
8	O	O	Theory and history of occupational therapy	30	30	90	5
9	O	O	Occupational therapy process and diagnosis: client-centred approach	30	30	90	5
11	O	P	Physiotherapy in disorders of the lower extremity and lumbar spine	30	30	90	5
12	O	P	Exercise therapy	30	30	90	5

YEAR 2: 60 ECTS (per profile)							
SEMESTER 3: 30 ECTS (per profile)				Hours			
Nr.	Type	Profile	Module	Lecture	Practice	Self-study	Credits

1	O	S/O/P	Evidence-based practice	30	30	90	5
2	O	S/O/P	Clinical practice 2	30	120	0	5
3	O	S	Clinical reasoning	30	30	90	5
4	O	S	Language disorders and treatment methods	30	30	90	5
5	O	S	Augmentative and alternative communication	30	30	90	5
6	O	S	Aphasiology	30	30	90	5
7	O	O	Areas of occupation	30	30	90	5
8	O	O	OT Treatment 1: neurodevelopmental treatment and sensory integration frames of reference	30	30	90	5
9	O	O	Creative crafts and techniques I – treatment modalities	30	30	90	5
10	O	O	OT Treatment II: psychosocial frames of reference: mental health	30	30	90	5
11	O	P	Physiotherapy in disorders of the upper extremity, cervical and thoracic spine	30	30	90	5
12	O	P	Physiotherapy in neurological disorders	30	30	90	5
13	O	P	Physiotherapy in cardiovascular and pulmonary disorders	30	30	90	5
14	O	P	Physiotherapy in metabolic syndrome (diabetes and obesity)	30	30	90	5
SEMESTER 4: 30 ECTS (per profile)				Hours			
Nr.	Type	Profile	Module	Lecture	Practice	Self-study	Credits
1	O	S/O/P	Statistics and epidemiology	30	30	90	5
2	O	S/O/P	Family and rehabilitation	30	30	90	5
3	O	S/O/P	Clinical practice 3	30	120	0	5
4	O	O/P	Hand rehabilitation	30	30	90	5
5	O	S	Voice disorders and treatment methods	30	30	90	5
6	O	S	Speech disorders and treatment methods	30	30	90	5

7	O	S	Audiology and phoniatrics	30	30	90	5
8	O	O	OT Treatment 3: occupational/ vocational rehabilitation frames of references	30	30	90	5
9	O	O	Creative crafts and techniques II – crafts in intervention	30	30	90	5
10	O	P	Physiotherapy in complex musculoskeletal disorders	30	30	90	5
11	O	P	Physiotherapy in stroke, Parkinson and spinal cord injuries.	30	30	90	5

YEAR 3: 60 ECTS (per profile)							
SEMESTER 5: 30 ECTS (per profile)				Hours			
Nr.	Type	Profile	Module	Lecture	Practice	Self-study	Credits
1	O	S/O/P	Introduction to qualitative and quantitative research methods	30	30	90	5
2	O	S/O/P	Ethical issues and diversity	30	30	90	5
3	O	S/O/P	Interprofessional cooperation	30	30	90	5
4	O	S/O/P	Clinical practice 4	30	120	0	5
5	O	S	Swallowing disorders and treatment methods	30	30	90	5
6	O	S	Dyslexia and dysgraphia	30	30	90	5
7	O	O	Assistive technology and environmental adaptation	30	30	90	5
8	O	O	OT treatment 4: elderly	30	30	90	5
9	O	P	Physiotherapy in oncology and complex health problems	30	30	90	5
10	O	P	Physiotherapy in pediatrics	30	30	90	5
SEMESTER 6: 30 ECTS (per profile)				Hours			
Nr.	Type	Profile	Module	Lecture	Practice	Self-study	Credits
1	O	S/O/P	Dissertation	15	0	435	15
2	O	S/O/P	Clinical practice 5	30	420	0	15

Tab. 2: Curriculum structure

Each course is described in detail in the programme handbook structured as follows:

- semester
- profile assignment
- type (obligatory vs. elective)
- module name
- ECTS
- lecturer name
- short summary of content
- goals and expected results
- forms of teaching and learning
- assessments methods and passing criteria
- student workload: hours per week with ratio of lecture/ practice/ self-study
- recommended literature/ learning material

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

In the conceptualisation phase (mainly in class learning) the students acquire a theoretical knowledge through teacher structured lessons, in class exercises, and real-life examples provided by students, guest speakers or field trips. Practice is then the basic pillar and consists of clinical exercises and clinical practice. Theoretical instruction should include at least 1/3 of the total number of hours, while the practical part should include approximately 1/2 of the total number of hours of professional modules. Clinical exercises are conducted with 5 or 10 students, in simulated cabinet conditions equipped with modern equipment for practical training in speech, occupational and physiotherapy. Through clinical practice, students are introduced to different areas of speech, occupational and physiotherapy and through these practices they get the first idea of where they would like to work after their graduation. At the same time, clinical staff can identify students who have good skills and competencies that will in the future count as their potential for work. Clinical practice is supervised by the clinical mentor. Clinical mentors are distributed throughout the Kosovar health system as primary, secondary, and tertiary.

Students are evaluated by mentors and lecturers upon completion of the clinical practice period with direct on-site assessment based on an assessment form and with a test to prove that they have achieved the required standard of knowledge, skills and competencies, practice, personal development, and professional practice. During the students' internship, they must write a report on the internship that corresponds to the "SOAP" form (subjective, objective, activities and plan), where they daily reflect on their work in workbooks for the internship.

All reports and reflections are reviewed by those in charge of the internship, analyzing all the activities that students have described during their internship, and then making suggestions and recommendations from the occupational therapy intern. The exam at the end of each module of practice is also assessed with a case study from the place of practice.

The student is obliged to attend a practice of 1,050 hours, where these practices are divided into 5 practical laboratories which are:

1. Clinical practice 1 – 150 hrs./ 5 ECTS
2. Clinical practice 2 – 150 hrs./ 5 ECTS
3. Clinical practice 3 – 150 hrs./ 5 ECTS
4. Clinical practice 4 – 150 hrs./ 5 ECTS
5. Clinical practice 5 – 450 hrs./ 15 ECTS

Total = 1,050 hrs. of practice.

The theoretical and practical classes in general may vary on the content of the study programme but they must include at least 1/3 of the total number of hours, while the practical part of at least 1/2 of the total number of hours.

Organisation of students' learning experience

The programme syllabus consists of all descriptions of the modules. The following is an example of a module description¹²:

Module: (S/O/P) Genetics and Clinical Conditions			
ECTS: 3			
Professor: [REDACTED]			
Short content Cytogenetics with cytology basics. Chromosome and chromosomal disorder. The basics of biochemical genetics. The basics of molecular genetics. Basics of hematopathology. The inheritance of genetics. Polygenic diseases and polygenic characteristics. The genetic basis of neuromuscular diseases. Genetic disorders of mental retardation, deafness, visual loss, congenital malformations. Genetics of Conduct. Genetic advice.			
Goals and expected results The purpose of this course is to gain genetic knowledge and theoretical and practical skills. After passing the course, students will be trained to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appropriate use of Literature: in the field of genetics, • Defining the topic, tasks and goals of genetics, • Using modern terminology, definitions and classifications, • Understand the genetic process 			
Forms of teaching and learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working in groups, • Practice Based Learning • PowerPoint presentation • MOODLE 			
Assessment methods and passing criteria <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success in the Colloquium will give you extra points towards the final exam. • Eligibility criterion 51%. • Completion of colloquium tasks successfully is assessed with a minimum grade E. • Written exam / Practical experience report (related to laboratory work). 			
Lecture / Seminar	Clinical Exercises / Clinical Practice	Self-Study	Total workload
30	30	90	150
Literature: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ricki Lewis (2017) <i>Human Genetics</i> • Sopjani, M. (2006). <i>Biologija molekularne</i>, Prishtinë. • Rexha, T. (2004). <i>Biologija qelizore dhe molekulare</i>, Prishtinë. • Zergollem Lj. i sur. (1994). <i>Humana genetika</i>. Zagreb: Medicinska naklada. • Đuričić, E., Terzić, R., Kapović, M., & Peterlin, B. (2005). <i>Biologija sa humanom genetikom</i>. Sarajevo. Medicinski fakultet Univerziteta u Sarajevu. 			

Tab. 3: Module description (example)

Once new students are registered, Heimerer College organizes days of open doors as well as an orientation week where a team from different offices welcome the new students. On that occasion, students are provided with an usb-stick which contains the related study regulations, syllabuses, and detailed information about all processes in the institution. The methodology of the assessment and the criteria are also explained.

In order to ensure practical learning and internships for students, Heimerer College has arranged cooperation agreements with a number of hospitals and organizations relevant to the scope of the study programme.

¹² Source: Syllabus of "Therapeutic Health Sciences: Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy (B. Sc.)", p. 15

Assessment

Programme structure

The curriculum gives a structured and logical impression. The modules are described in detail. The level of detail differs slightly between the modules, a clear distinction between knowledge and competences is not always made. Teaching and learning methods are by and large specified.

The experts consider the handbook to be appropriate at this moment. Nevertheless, the programme content should be reviewed again before the first semester. Especially, the mentioned assessment method and the learning outcomes do not always match.

Mechanisms for providing knowledge and application of scientific methods

Heimerer College has broad experience with both appropriate and innovative teaching methods. Students the experts have been talking to reported a good learning atmosphere together with a general policy of openness which makes it easy to solve difficulties and problems fast and sustainable. The experts got the impression that teachers see themselves to be more of learning supporters than instructors. Appropriate student-centred teaching and learning methods are generally used at Heimerer College, students are also encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.

Organisation of students' learning experience

The teaching methods described seem appropriate in general. Due to the variety of forms of teaching, the diversity of students and their needs seems to be taken into account. For the clinical phases, it is not transparent to the panel how many hours of supervised learning (in relation to self-directed learning) take place.

Areas for improvement

In the opinion of the experts, the curriculum appears to be feasible. Nevertheless, as mentioned above, the responsible academics should reflect on the physiotherapeutic profile again since several important aspects are not part of the programme, namely just to mention: palliative therapy aspects, pain management, manual therapy, passive interventions besides massage, electrostimulation, physiotherapy in lymphoedema, preventionial aspects, gynaecology, geriatric aspects. Also, the clinical internship mentors should be formally evaluated. It must be ensured that mentors are always deployed in a precisely subject-specific manner. If needed, further education and improvement should be offered to own staff as well as to (external) mentors.

Recommendations and conditions

The college must review the curriculum to check the suitability and the scope of the planned contents once again. This should be done with experts from higher education institutes (esp. partner institutions) and from professional practice.

The number of hours of supervised learning during the clinical phases must be shown.

3.3 Student assessment

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

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

Current status

Organization of assessment of intended learning outcomes

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

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

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

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

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

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

The college takes all efforts to make the assessment in line with the expected results of each course to ensure the provision of quality teaching that leads to the predefined competences. There are filter mechanisms established, such as an ongoing monitoring of its implementation and ongoing evaluations of knowledge, skills and competencies.

Besides ongoing evaluations of academic staff, Heimerer College undertakes an extra evaluation from other two bodies within the college, the Vice–Rector for Teaching and Quality Assurance Office. At the end of the academic year, those offices together with Dean’s office organize the “quality week”, where students from all study programmes and all years of study are subject to an overall evaluation. The evaluation data clearly shows the achieved progress as well as problems that would require solution, by exposing students to different tasks: individual interviews, questionnaires testing students’ professional skills and other tasks, like writing a substantial essay, are the methods used to test students’ professional knowledge, skills and competences acquired from the institution. To evaluate students’ technical and social skills, two methods are used: solving of different professional problems and role play. Findings from these activities are used for further advancement of didactic methodology and teaching/learning processes in general.

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

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

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

Transparency and consistency of assessment criteria

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

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

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

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

- Term of January
- Term of June
- Term of April

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

Adequacy of the qualifications of the staff undertaking assessments

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

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

Availability of examination regulations

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

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

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

According to the self-report Heimerer College ensures that the rights and obligations of students are regulated by the Study Regulation, which is public to students on the college intranet, the SIMS and MOODLE platform and is physically delivered to each student at the beginning of studies (see above). In Particular, the Article 9 "preliminary procedures before the exams" and Article 13 "Exceptions" also defines the time limit for taking the exam and eventual absences. Students' absence, illness and other mitigating conditions are mainly addressed after the request of the student is delivered

and the request is recorded by the dean's office. According to the Study Regulation - besides the standard forms of assessment according to the foreseen timeframe, at the student's request, a student's entrance to examination may be allowed only if the dean of the academic unit approves her/ his request to enter the exam before the foreseen timeframe. This is permissible when the student is part of international exchange-study programs when she/he is pursuing practical teaching abroad.

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

- a) Students have the right to complain about violations of the exam development rules. The appeal is submitted to the dean within 48 hours, from the moment of the completion of the exam.
- b) The responsible programme officer makes a final decision after verifying the violations in cooperation with the Quality Committee and the Vice-Rector for Teaching.
- c) If the complaint is fair, the examination shall be cancelled within three days from the day of the appeal and another exam takes place within that examination period.

Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

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

Recommendations

It should be better elaborated in each module, why and for what purpose dedicated assessment methods are used.

3.4 Organisation of the study programme

Furthermore, the implementation of the programme has to be evaluated. The expert panel assesses the appropriateness of entry qualifications and the regulations for the recognition of qualifications (i.e. Lisbon Convention). It has to be reviewed whether the organisation of the study process allows the programme to be carried out in such a way that the intended learning outcomes will be achieved and whether the organisation of the study process also takes the diversity of students and their needs into account. It

is evaluated how the implementation of the programme is managed (roles and responsibilities) and even whether the workload of the programme is adequate with respect to the necessity to reach the intended learning outcomes in the scheduled time frame. The organisation of the student life cycle (i.e. all (organisational) relationships between the student and the institution from enrolment to graduation) is also part of this criterion. The experts check whether the care services and student advisory services are suitable and – in case of a cooperation with internal and external partners – how the cooperation is organised.

Current status

Entry qualifications

The entry and application processes are regulated by the Regulation of Studies, which also define the target group for each study programme. All information on study opportunities is published on the website of the college¹³ and other means of information such as social networks, to notify everyone about the possibility of registration.

For the application to a Bachelor's programme at Heimerer College, applicants must have at least 12 years school education, which is completed with a secondary school degree or Matura examination.¹⁴ Candidates must issue also the transcript as a record of grades showing their high school success, issued by the school and recognized by Ministry of Education and Science (MES) of the Republic of Kosovo. Besides, applicants have to pass the entry exam. Further completed basic studies, verified by a certificate or diploma might be acknowledged.

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

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

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

Regulations for the recognition of qualifications

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

Organisation of the study process

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

¹³ <https://kolegji-heimerer.eu/> (accessed February 10, 2021)

¹⁴ Before 2008 Matura exam was not organized.

students are at risk of falling behind in their study progress. Furthermore, the lecturers are also easily approachable for the students.

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

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

Management of the study programme

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

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

Student workload

The allocation of credits at Heimerer College for a study programme or educational component is carried out according to the estimated student workload needed to achieve the defined learning outcomes. The overall student workload consists of a time for attending lectures as well as the time for preparing and taking exams, thesis writing, seminars and semester assignments. An effort of 30 hours is taken as a basis to earn one credit point. One study year's effort equals 1,800 hours of work. Consequently, a Bachelor's programme corresponds to 5,400 hours of work, Master's programmes correspond to 3,600 hours of work.

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

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

Student life-cycle and student support system

Clinical practice is supervised by clinical mentors who are appointed throughout the Kosovo health system, primary, secondary and tertiary. Students in the first-year start practicing in the primary sector (outpatient clinic); in the second year they continue in the secondary sector (regional hospitals) and in the third year in the tertiary sector at

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

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

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

Students are regularly informed via e-mail, MOODLE, social media, and internet sources, and they may participate in democratic processes with the Student Council and the Academic Council. In the final study period of writing the thesis, students get full support from the institution (with seminars on how to write a thesis and even for related topics) as well as a personal mentor.

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

Cooperation with internal and external partners

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

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

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

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

Assessment

Entry qualifications

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

Regulations for the recognition of qualifications

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

Organisation of the study process and management of the study programme

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

Student workload

Having heard the students, the expert panel assumes that the workload of the programmes is manageable. The college observes the students' workload regularly. However, the college itself reports quite high dropout rates (9 %). Besides, only 40 % of students complete their studies within the standard period of study. The university must conduct more detailed research into the causes of this.

Organisation of the student life cycle

The experts note that there is excellent communication between students and teachers: learning groups are small, there seem to be lots of formal as well as informal

contacts between teachers and students. The students the expert team could interview were very positive against the good organisation and atmosphere of the study process.

Student support system

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

Cooperation with external and internal partners

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

Recommendations

Heimerer College should do more intensive research on reasons of students' drop-out and study delays and should develop countermeasures.

3.5 Resources

Central to the criterion "resources" is whether there are appropriate resource endowment and deployment in the involved faculties. The experts evaluate the existence of sustainable funding and financial management. They also evaluate whether the staff is adequately qualified and sufficient to ensure the intended learning outcomes and which strategies and processes for staff recruiting and staff development are used. The experts examine if the amount and quality of facilities and equipment (library, laboratories, teaching rooms, IT equipment, etc.) allow the provision of the programme and if the resources are adequate to reach the programme's objectives.

Current status

Financial management and funding

Based on past years as well as strategic planning for the next three years, Heimerer College demonstrates sustainability based on proper planning, consistency of enrolled students over the years as well as international projects involving key benefits and activities are dedicated to study programmes, including the profile of occupational therapy. Within the strategic planning as well as the planning of the program itself, there is also a financial plan that ensures the sustainability of programme implementation for the next three years. Together with the self-report the college provided an income-expenditure overview.

Staff

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

in accordance with the criteria set by the KAA in terms of teaching positions. 28 out of 43 (65.12 %) of the academic staff cover only one full-time position.

15 out of 43 (34.88 %) academic staff cover part-time positions in college and full-time in another educational institution. Also, there are 5 Clinical Mentors who cover the mentoring in the clinical practices. Most of the staff have one-year contracts because the declaration of the academic staff, based on KAA requirements, needs to be done every year. Table 10 shows the staff workload.

Standard of hours at the level of week for positions according to the organogram		Position																	
		Vice rector for teaching	Coordinator for teaching processes	Coordinator for Internship	Vice rector for projects	Coordinator of projects	Ass. for projects	Vice rector for research	Ass. For research	Researcher/ statistician	Coordinator for quality	Ass. for quality	Dean	Vice dean	Ass. for teaching processes	Ass. for Research and projects	Responsible person for internship	Ass. for Internship	Academic Staff
Engagement in Teaching (teaching with students, literature development, exercises, mentoring Thesis, Exams, consultations)	10	15	15	4	4	4	4	6	6	6	6	6	14	14	23	15	25	30	25
Engagement in Projects (Writing and Implementation)	4	4	3	15	19.5	23.5	4	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	8	1	0.5	2
Engagement in Research	2	2	2	1	2	1	5	20	27	27	2	2	3	3	2	8	1	1	4
Daily administration	12	7	7	10	7	5	10	15	1	4	4	4	9	9	4	2	4	2	1
Trainings	1	1	1	0.5	0.5	0.5	1		0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1
Quality	2	4	4	0.5	0	0	5		19	21	2	2	2	2	2	0	2	0.5	1
Developmental hours	4	2	3	4	2	1	4		2	0	4	4	4	4	1	1	1	1	1
Lunch break	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Hours per week	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40	40

Tab. 4: Staff workload

Staff recruiting process

Academic staff recruitment and selection for the bachelor programme follows the “Regulation on the Grading and Engagement of Academic Staff” which is included in the “Guidelines for Academic Staff”. The regulation ensures that the selection, appointment, and promotion of academic staff is made according to the relevant qualifications and relevant workplace experience, thus effectively ensuring that all candidates are treated equally. The regulation on the degrees, titles, selection and promotion of academic staff is based on Law no. 04 / I-037 on Higher Education in the Republic of Kosovo and in the Status of Heimerer College. Heimerer College attaches great importance to the development of academic, scientific, research, creative and further competences.

The existing Erasmus+ programmes play an important role in staff development. The college provides administrative and faculty staff training with its international partners.

Facilities

Heimerer College has a modern well-equipped campus in Prishtina with laboratories, teaching rooms, a library, IT equipment with a total area of 5,030 square meters. Room for social activities is provided as well.

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

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

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

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

Due to the current pandemic it was not possible to visit the campus but the college provided the experts with pictures, lists of equipment and a five minute film on the campus.

Library

The library has 26 working places for students and is open during business days. In addition to the library, students have access to the classrooms which are free after the class schedule and at the period of the exams. These rooms can be used individually

as well as for group preparation. Another 30 places for group work are implemented in the computer cabinet which is part of the library.

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

Heimerer College has full membership in JSTOR,¹⁵ a shared digital library created in 1995 that includes more than 2,000 academic journals. JSTOR was founded to help libraries and academic publishers transition their activities from print to digital operations, to expand access to scholarly content around the world and to preserve it for future generations. Every member of Heimerer College staff can have access to JSTOR's collections by browsing for the needed content and can download several articles periodically.

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

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

Assessment

Financial management and funding

In the view of the experts, the financial management of the college is professional. The planning on which the new profile is based, also seems comprehensible. However, the expert panel points out that the target numbers of new students are set very high, possibly even too high for adequate supervision to be possible. Alternative calculation models that assume fewer new entrants should therefore also be calculated. For the time being, the experts refrain from recommending a concrete reduction in the number of students.

Staff

From the point of view of the expert panel, the qualification of the teaching staff at Heimerer College seems adequate for the existing programmes. The experts assess the recruiting procedures of the college as appropriate and in line with international academic practice. The current staff/ student ratio allows the college to maintain relatively small groups and a close contact between teachers and students.

The relation between full-time and half-time staff seems appropriate. The experts note from the interview sessions that teaching is carried out by dynamic and motivated lecturers. Some of them have international working and educational experience which is appreciated by the expert panel.

However, the expert team has doubts as to whether the planned number of teachers will still be sufficient after the third profile has been established. There appear to be too few specialist supervisors for the physiotherapeutic area if the desired number of students actually enrol.

¹⁵ <https://www.jstor.org/> (accessed February 10, 2021)

Facilities

From the pictures alone, the expert panel got a good impression from the existing facilities but real assessment is not possible without a visit.

Recommendations and conditions

The college must ensure that there is enough time for teachers for their own scientific development and that this is not at the expense of the quality of teaching and student support.

3.6 Quality assurance

The criterion “quality assurance” focuses on the internal and external mechanisms used by the institution to monitor and improve the quality of the study programme: how the study programme is designed and implemented and how its improvement is organised.

The experts evaluate the existing quality assurance concept of the programme and what kind of quality assurance processes and instruments are implemented, which indicators are used for monitoring the achievement of the programme’s objectives and how the institution and the persons responsible for the programme collect, analyse and use relevant information about their activities. Moreover, the experts examine whether quality assurance is used regularly, systematically and effectively for quality enhancement and if quality feedback loops are closed. It is also evaluated how stakeholders (students, teachers, administration, employers) are involved in quality assurance and whether relevant programme information for students and prospective students is provided.

Current status

Quality assurance concept of Heimerer College

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

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

The most important quality circle at Heimerer is the five-year “Strategic Plan of the College” which sets strategic and specific objectives, including those related to quality

assurance. Each academic unit develops its own strategic plan in alignment with the objectives of the college. The strategic plan contains measurable outcomes of strategic planning goals and objectives and these measurable outcomes comprise of internal targets, which the college management agreed with academic and administrative units. The results contribute in defining improvement actions. These actions result in further improvement of the study programmes as well as administrative and support services.

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

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

Quality assurance processes and instruments

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

The model for self-evaluation adapted by Heimerer College is focused on three most important aspects for a higher education institution, including: quality of teaching, quality of learning and student support. For these three aspects, the college's own group for quality drafted effective evaluation methods, based on the Total Quality Management model (TQM).¹⁶

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

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

¹⁶ The TQM model was developed in the 1950s by W. Edwards Deming and Joseph M. Juran. TQM follows 8 principles:

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

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

Feedback loops

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

Involvement of stakeholders

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

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

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

Quality assurance in research

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

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

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

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

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

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

Assessment

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

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

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

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

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

Recommendations and conditions

The college should further develop its quality system and also apply it to the clinical practical parts.

The involvement of external experts in the university's internal quality assurance should be considered.

4. Final Assessment

Assessment levels

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

Results of the assessment

Assessment grades

No	Assessment criteria	Assessment
1	<p>Programme profile</p> <p><i>C1 Before starting with the new profile Heimerer College has to review the new profile and its content structure again. This should be done together with experts from higher education institutions as</i></p>	B

	<p><i>well as from relevant health professional institutions.</i></p> <p><i>C2 Heimerer College must develop and implement a training programme for mentors in clinical practice to ensure academic quality of practical learning.</i></p>	
2	<p>Curriculum</p> <p><i>C3 The college must review the curriculum to check the suitability and the scope of the planned contents once again. This should be done with experts from higher education institutes (esp. partner institutions) and from professional practice.</i></p> <p><i>C4 The number of hours of supervised learning during the clinical phases must be shown.</i></p>	B
3	<p>Student assessment</p> <p><i>R1 It should be better elaborated in each module, why and for what purpose dedicated assessment methods are used.</i></p>	A
4	<p>Organisation of the study programme</p> <p><i>R2 Heimerer College should do more intensive research on reasons of students' drop-out and study delays and should develop countermeasures.</i></p>	A
5	<p>Resources</p> <p><i>C5 The college must ensure that there is enough time for teachers for their own scientific development and that this is not at the expense of the quality of teaching and student support.</i></p>	B
6	<p>Quality assurance</p> <p><i>R3 The college should further develop its quality system and also apply it to the clinical practical parts.</i></p> <p><i>R4 The involvement of external experts in the university's internal quality assurance should be considered.</i></p>	A

5. Statement of the university to the assessment report

COMMENTS OF PrBHE HEIMERER COLLEGE REGARDING THE FIRST DRAFT OF EVALUATION REPORT FROM THE EVALAG EXPERTS

We thank you for the online visit you conducted at our institution on 3/2/2021 and for your feedback and recommendation. We will make sure that all of your suggestions will be taken into account. With appreciation for some more of your time, please allow us to provide some clarifications, as additional information, which reflect your recommendations. We hope these clarifications will be addressed and included in the final report (*Please note that all comments from Heimerer College are in blue. We have left the original from the draft report for referencing purposes. Please note as well that sometimes we have addressed two comments with one response*).

Conditions (C) and recommendations (R):

Programme profile/Curriculum

- C1** Before starting with the new profile Heimerer College has to review the new profile and its content structure again. This should be done together with experts from higher education institutions as well as from relevant health professional institutions.
- C3** The college must review the curriculum to check the suitability and the scope of the planned contents once again. This should be done with experts from higher education institutes (esp. partner institutions) and from professional practice.

Heimerer College: Physiotherapy topics

Initially we appreciate your comments and as you recommended, we have reviewed the profile of physiotherapy and we have given the explanation below which shows that the majority of the suggested topics are already in the programme, namely in the modules. We have also mentioned the modules where respective topics are integrated. However, it is important to emphasize that when we designed the curriculum and the modules, although we have based on the curriculum of physiotherapy of [Utrecht University](#) and the WCPT guidelines, we also took in to consideration the context of Kosovo which has a high average of young people.

Just to explain further the process of designing the programme, as we have mentioned already in the Report, each programme and profile has established a Programme Commission (see page 29 in SER) and in addition to the regular members of this Commission from the academic staff of the programme, we have also our partners as members in this Commission: [Angelique Hagen](#) and [Jasmin Pekaric](#) ([confirmation letter](#)).

The members of the Programme Commission:

Internal Staff:

PhD. Muljaim Kacka, OTD. Dianna Ullrich, PhD. Sylejman Miftari, PhD. Bujar Shabani, PhD. Bunjaim Memedi, PhD. Ilir Hoxha, PhD (c) Margarita van Dijk

International Staff:

MSc. Angelique Hagen – University of Applied Sciences of Utrecht

MSc. Jasmin Pekaric - University of Applied Sciences of Utrecht

External Partners:

Kosovo Chamber of Physiotherapy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education and representatives of health institutions for clinical practice.

So, when we addressed the conditions and recommendations that were given by Evalag experts, we have worked together as a Commission to address them. We have made some specifications and below you can see the specific explanation where these specifications can be found to each of the topics. It is worth mentioning that the cooperation with Utrecht aims at the provision of teaching materials and support our teaching staff. Teach the teacher will be a way to connect teachers from our partner University on a specific topic, with our teachers in Kosovo. We will continue our cooperation and like we did before, we are planning to have exchange of staff, which allows our colleagues from

the partner Universities to provide education to our students, training for the continuous development for physiotherapists in Kosovo and teaching the teacher to help to grow in the areas of teaching.

Palliative care

Palliative care is a topic that was not addressed specifically in the program on which we are based (from the University of Utrecht). The main reason is that this is seen as a specialization after the physiotherapy bachelor program. However, since we do not have this specialization in Kosovo, we saw the need to specify this topic into our syllabus. We choose to add this topic to the module Physiotherapy in oncology and complex health problems.

The way palliative care is integrated in other modules is that student will be asked for the advanced care planning in for example patients with COPD. Students will have to demonstrate decision making skills and evidence based practice in the scenarios in which their patients are deteriorating.

Pain management

Pain management is a topic that is being discussed in many different modules. To clarify the role of pain management in the physiotherapy profile, we have specified this in the learning outcomes of different modules. In the module Physiotherapy professional practice: clinical reasoning, evidence based practice and massage we have added the introduction to pain management; Analyse pain management and the classification of pain. Additionally, we have added the learning outcome on understanding the role of acute and chronic pain in the modules; 1. Physiotherapy in disorders of the lower extremity and lumbar spine and pelvic and 2. Physiotherapy in disorders of the upper extremity, cervical and thoracic spine.

The different types of pain related to neurological disorders is an added learning outcome in the module: Physiotherapy in neurological disorders.

The more complicated part of pain management, in regards to patient with complex health problems will be addressed in the module ; Physiotherapy in oncology and complex health problems, in the learning outcome; Understand the role of pain management with patients with comorbidity.

Specification of terms like, Manual Therapy Techniques, Passive Interventions and Electrotherapeutic modalities

We agree that terms like Manual Therapy Techniques and Electrotherapeutic modalities have not been specified enough, even though they are important elements in the outcome of our learning. We have now specified clearer where these techniques will be addressed in our existing syllabuses. Important to notice is that within the Integrated Practice Exam, we do expect our students to demonstrate these techniques. While addressing evidence based practice, these techniques are important elements in many of our modules and case studies and therefore are repeatedly practiced.

Physiotherapy in lymphoedema

Physiotherapy in lymphoedema is part of the module Physiotherapy in oncology and complex health problems.

Prevention

The theme prevention is an important part of our physiotherapy profile. Especially, because this is an area where the physiotherapists in Kosovo are not as much focused at. Prevention can be found in the Exercise Therapy module, in which the healthy person, pregnant women and healthy aging are discussed. Fall prevention is added as a specific learning outcome in this module.

We have made the prevention elements more explicit in the 2 modules in which prevention plays an important role in the physiotherapy approach; 1. Cardiovascular and Pulmonary disorders and 2. Physiotherapy in Metabolic Syndrome.

Gynaecology

We have specified this topic in different modules. Firstly, we have added the pelvic into the module Physiotherapy in disorders of the lower extremity and lumbar spine and pelvic.

Secondly, we have added pregnant women into the Exercise Therapy module. The reason we put it there is because the pregnant women is a healthy process, but still needs specific addressing when talking about doing exercises. Since this module is already addressing individual exercise therapy and group therapy, we will implement group therapy with pregnant women.

Geriatric aspects

Even though geriatrics is not a separate module, these are themes which are discussed in different syllabuses. However, this was not clearly specified. We have looked for the places in which we could specify geriatric aspects and make clear how they will be addressed.

The first aspect of geriatrics is healthy aging. This will be specifically addressed in the module Exercise Therapy. Students will understand the role of exercise therapy in healthy aging and fall prevention will be an additional topic to show the role of the physiotherapist in healthy aging.

Another aspect is elderly with comorbidity, which are addressed in this syllabus as the frail elderly. This will specifically be addressed in the module Physiotherapy in Oncology and Complex Health Problems.

[Attached you have the syllabus of the whole programme with changes in the profile of Physiotherapy.](#)

Curriculum

C4 The number of hours of supervised learning during the clinical phases must be shown.

Heimerer College C4:

Supervision team consists of the responsible person for practical issues, assistant of the practices of the module and the clinical mentor who is responsible for the part of practices in the institutions out of the Heimerer College. This supervision team is in the program level, that means each profile has its own responsible staff. Also, this so-called supervision team is part of the student assessment for each clinical practice after completing their practice hours.

The staff from the Heimerer College visits students at their practice place at least 3 times during the semester of the practice whereas, the clinical mentor supervises the students during their practice in their institution all the time during that period of the practice and they are always available for the student throughout every practice hour. There is one mentor assigned for each group of maximum 16 students.

Supervision of the clinical practice consist of lectures as an introduction to the practice place, explanation of the procedures and expectations, revision of the ethical code of the profession and part of these lectures will be also reflection on the professional behavior during their practice hours, discussing case studies from their practice and discussion challenges that they face during their practices. Additionally, students can discuss their challenges and concerns with their supervisor on an individual basis. And, also during these lectures, students will be notified how to write a report for their daily practice and where to place each subject in their practice notebook. This supervision learning is given by the responsible person of the profile for the practices and a subject related teaching staff.

Table 1 - supervised learning during the clinical phases

Clinical practice 35 ECTS	Speech Therapy	Occupational Therapy	Physiotherapy
Practical Hours	1050 Hours	1050 Hours	1050 Hours
Mentoring Hours from clinical mentors engaged from Heimerer college	1050 Hours	1050 Hours	1050 Hours
Monitoring/supervision from responsible person from Heimerer college in clinical settings	3 times per semester to each group of the students	3 times per semester to each group of the students	3 times per semester to each group of the students
Assessment of students	First assessment is done by clinical mentor for every day activity and the final assessment is done in cooperation between Clinical Mentor, Responsible person of internship and module assistant	First assessment is done by clinical mentor for every day activity and the final assessment is done in cooperation between Clinical Mentor, Responsible person of internship and module assistant	First assessment is done by clinical mentor for every day activity and the final assessment is done in cooperation between Clinical Mentor, Responsible person of internship and module assistant

C2 Heimerer College must develop and implement a training programme for mentors in clinical practice to ensure academic quality of practical learning.

Heimerer College C2:

According to institutional strategy and annual plan, find in page 17 in the document of strategy, it is planned to have twice a year regular training for clinical mentors, this means that Heimerer College has in its strategy training program for clinical mentors. Clinical mentors' needs are identified through regular evaluation of the Quality Office (their needs of improvement you may find in page 33 of SER). According to identified needs for the training; the trainings are organized by the vice rectorate for teaching and

learning and internship coordinator. Those [trainings for clinical mentors](#) are organized regularly by Heimerer College.

From 2018, this process has progressed quite a lot: 20 of clinical mentors were in Germany for a week in internship to get a best practice, in Charite Clinic in Berlin, Vivantes Clinic in Berlin, University Clinic Halle, Heimerer Académie in Leipzig and Leipzig Clinic. After they returned, they shared their experiences with other clinical mentors in Heimerer College ([the Agenda](#)).

This training program advanced even more in 2020 when OTD. Mrs. Dianna Ullrich expert from USA, who works in Heimerer College as a full-time staff, started offering a training for clinical mentors based on the model created to advance mentoring in clinical practice in her PhD done in Boston USA in the topic of PRACTICE PLACEMENT TRAINING FOR PROFESSIONALS MENTORING STUDENTS: A PIONEERING PROGRAM IN KOSOVO. It was specifically a project to create a Clinical Practice Mentor training program for health professionals mentoring students. Considering the time available of most health professionals, it was designed to be only a one-day training workshop, but it can be adapted to be a multi-session training program. It is published under Quest database but can be found through google scholar as well.

Added value to the training program was another training held on behalf of Erasmus + projects that was oriented in the practical part, through the project of Student Run Multidisciplinary Allied Health Practical Centre. Under this project there was organized also a study visit in Turkey, in University of Manisa.

Clinical mentors continually are part of trainings in two main areas: in increasing professional competences and updating with the new techniques. Those two aspects guarantee that we are investing in the people who master the practical skills of the students in the practice. It is our advantage that clinical mentors are not only staff of Clinics, but they are also considered as Heimerer College staff as we pay them in addition to their regular salary in line with the signed contracts. In the contract are mentioned all responsibilities which you can find in the TOR's of the clinical mentors find attached.

Clinical mentors, before each start of the internship module receive training from the P.O and P.R for the application of theoretical knowledge in practice. During the training they are also acquainted with internship documents, such as: internship notebooks - that presents competencies and activities for a given competency, evaluation forms which are adapted to the practice notebook. CM, also receives education on teaching methods, focusing on implementation and the assessment part as didactic skills. In terms of their professional development, they benefit through participation in training roundtables, study visits abroad, conferences and symposiums.

Evaluation of competences

After the end of the clinical internship period, students are evaluated by Clinical Mentors and Assistant of exercises (page 53 of SER) with direct on-site assessment based on the assessment form, and with an exam to prove that they have achieved the required standard of knowledge, skills, and competencies in practice, for their personal development and professional practice. Students' activities in practice are set based on competences that should be achieved in each module. During the student internship, each day, they are required to make a report of their internship, reflecting on their work in the workbooks (internship notebooks) for that day of internship activities.

All these reports and reflections are reviewed by the mentors, analyzing all the activities that students have described during their internship. As a result, suggestions and recommendations are given. The exam at the end of each internship module is evaluated through case studies. This shows a clear interaction between theoretical and practical part. Consequently, the evaluation is made according to Bloom Taxonomy which means that we always organize the teaching, learning and evaluation as a whole pack, including lectures, exercises, and clinical hours. So, the evaluation is done from the same team including lecturer, assistant and clinical mentor following the same line of evaluation.

Practice content

1. The clinical internship of students is conducted according to the work plan of the respective unit of Institutions where the internship and the student curriculum of Heimerer College are performed.
2. Prior to the commencement of the internship, the parties draw up a joint internship curriculum for Heimerer College students, which is oriented to the College curriculum and the work plan of the Institution where the internship takes place.
3. The internship curriculum is drafted by the internship coordinators and the implementation is supervised by them.
4. The curriculum is finalized at least fifteen (15) days before the start of clinical practice and the exercises.

Recruitment of clinical mentor

1. For a clinical mentor to be appointed, the following conditions must be met:
 - 1.1. Have at least a bachelor's degree (B.Sc.) in medical sciences such as nursing, speech therapy, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, technical laboratory, etc., for students of Bachelor level. While, for the master level they must be at least at the same level (have a master's degree).
 - 1.2. Have work experience of at least five (5) years.
 - 1.3. Should be trained in clinical teaching (or education in Professional Pedagogy in Health).
 - 1.4. Have experience in student mentoring.
 - 1.5. Have a work license in the field where they mentor.
2. The selection of clinical mentors is done through joint Public Announcement, announced from the institution where the internship is performed and the Heimerer College. This is set out in paragraph 2 of article 11 of the agreement.
3. The institution where the internship takes place ensures that the Public Announcement, and the appointment of clinical mentors takes place at least thirty (30) days before the start of the clinical internship, or exercises of Heimerer College students.

Clinical mentor payment

1. For his engagement, the clinical mentor will be with 30% of their monthly salary as monthly stipend given by the Heimerer College, and their regular salary is given by the relevant Institution.
2. The monthly stipend is given in accordance to the Labor Law provisions and the hours of engagement, or fixed amount based on the agreement between parties.

Types of selected institutions for clinical mentor

The process of selecting clinical mentors is regulated in three types of agencies: at health institutions, education institutions and NGOs.

Mentors who are part of health institutions, are engaged in public and private health institutions at three levels of health system and ambulances, where they provide services in certain areas. In Educational level, mentors are engaged in other institutions such as schools and kindergartens. And mentors who are part of NGOs are engaged in NGOs and resource centers.

The focus and work are organized with institutions where primary, secondary, and tertiary level health services are provided, where the internship is organized for most programs in these institutions. For the public and private institutions, for more details related to the internship see the list.

The process of Clinical Mentoring

1. Student internships and exercises is supervised and mentored by clinical mentors.
2. Clinical mentors are appointed by the head of the partner institution and the Internship Coordinator at Heimerer College in accordance with the institution's internal rules and the mutual agreement.
3. The clinical mentors have working relationship with the Institution where the internship is performed, and they are paid from Heimerer College with 30% of their monthly salary in addition to their monthly salary.

4. A clinical mentor cannot mentor more than sixteen (16) students. Usually, the number of students is less compared to the type of internship and they perform the work under the responsibilities of the staff, while the mentor facilitates the work process and evaluates them. The number of students performing clinical practice and exercises in respective units of service providers, is determined by the parties in accordance with the decision of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency, for admission and the number of students who can be admitted during a year of study at Heimerer College.

Heimerer College, based on the decision of the Kosovo Accreditation Agency compiles the list of students, who will attend clinical practice during the academic year, and submits the same to the Coordinator of institutions where services are provided at least two (2) weeks before the internship or training.

1. Clinical practice and exercises are performed in the facilities of the constituent units of the institutions where the practice takes place.
2. Student internship is carried out within the regular working hours and after the regular hours.
3. Students perform clinical practice and exercises within the regular schedule of constituent units. During a day student can accomplish 8 hours in total.
4. Internship coordinators jointly determine the schedule of clinical internships and exercises for each student. The internship is conducted according to the curriculum defined by Heimerer College and derived from the program accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency.
5. A clinical mentor has 16 students under supervision, it also depends on the specifics of the internship module where is possible to have fewer students under the supervision of an CM. While the clinical exercise groups in the cabinets are conducted with 5 to 10 students.
6. Students during clinical practice are supervised by CM who is present in the internship but are also monitored by Responsible Person who is responsible for the internship module three times per each group during the semester.

Student assessment

R1 It should be better elaborated in each module, why and for what purpose dedicated assessment methods are used.

Heimerer College R1: In our modules we use written exams (knowledge exams), integrated practical skills exam, presentations and group projects, and oral exams. As an example, we can have the module of **Swallowing disorders and treatment methods** which consists of the written exam and the practical experience report for assessing the students.

During the lectures students will gain the theoretical knowledge by the blended learning methodology, lectures, seminar work, improved techniques, and others about the swallowing process, including oral and pharyngeal phenomena, physiological development in swallowing, etiology, symptoms, and classification of various swallowing disorders in children and adults and other topics that are mentioned in the syllabus, for which they will be assessed by written exam. Written exams questions are divided in all the levels of the Bloom's Taxonomy, where there will be open and closed questions, and students will have the opportunity to show their level of the gained competences during the lectures and their theoretical knowledge.

Seminar works will give the opportunity to the student to research about a specific topic or phenomena on which they will master the knowledge and will present it for other colleagues and to create an interactive lecture. The seminar will give a theoretical demonstration of the students' understanding of the subject matter and how to apply it with the practical process.

And as for the Practical experience report the students will be assessed for the clinical exercises. Example: When students will have master the theoretical part of the test procedures and evaluation instruments for orofacial muscular dysfunction or therapeutic techniques for specific problems, during the clinical exercises they will implement all the tests for assessing the orofacial musculature dysfunctions or will improve the therapeutic techniques for specific problems by playing roles and in the end, they will prepare a report which will be part of their final assess in the part of practical experience report. Of course, before writing a report a student will be notified how to write one during the lectures, so it will help them to realise it in the clinical exercises. Students will gain extra points toward their final grade by attending the lectures, clinical exercise also by preparing and presenting their presentations in order to increase motivation and to create a more attractive learning environment.

Table 2. Example from Speech and Language Therapy Profile

Module: (S) Swallowing disorders and treatment methods			
ECTS: 5			
Professor: Ph.D. Ana Poposka/Msc. Ajshe Bekirovska/MA. Blerta Krasniqi/Bsc. Miranda Rama			
Short content: Students will be introduced to the swallowing process, including oral and pharyngeal phenomena. Physiological development in swallowing. Etiology, symptoms, and classification of various swallowing disorders in children and adults. Methods for detecting and evaluating medical and occasional history. Test procedures and evaluation instruments for orofacial muscular dysfunction and gingival disorders. Interpretation of assessment results in the sense of the need for treatment and prognosis for various gelling disorders. Principles, objectives, and application of different treatment methods for orofacial muscular dysfunction and gelling disorders. Therapeutic techniques for specific problems, proper development of individual intervention for orofacial muscle dysfunction and gastric disorders			
Goals and expected results. The purpose of this course is to gain knowledge and theoretical and practical skills based on swallowing disorders and treatment methods. After passing the course, students will be trained to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1. Comprehend knowledge and skills acquisition at entry-level competence in swallow and swallowing disorders. • 2. Identify and articulate theories, processes, and etiologies in pathology of swallow. • 3. Identify and interpret evidence-based methods, techniques and instruments of prevention and assessment of swallowing disorders. • 4. Describe clinically appropriate management of treatment approach and supportive outcomes in swallow disorders. 			
Forms of teaching and learning <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures, • Blended Learning • Seminar work • Improved technique, • Learning based on stimulation. • MOODLE 			
Assessment methods and passing criteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Success in the Colloquium will give you extra points towards the final exam. • Eligibility criterion 51%. • Completion of colloquium tasks successfully is assessed with a minimum grade E. • Written exam / Practical experience report (related to laboratory work). 			
Lecture / Seminar	Clinical Exercises / Clinical Practice	Self-Study	Total workload
30	30	90	150
Literature:			

- Poposka, A., & Baruti, Sh. (2018). *Skriptë për përdorim të brendshëm*. Prishtinë, Kolegji Heimerer.
- Geißler, M. & Winkler, S. (2010). *Dysphagie: ein einführendes Lehrbuch*. Idstein : Schulz-Kirchner.
- Beushausen, U. (2009). *Therapeutische Entscheidungsfindung in der Sprachtherapie*. München: Elsevier.
- Carrau, RL, & Murry, T. (1999). *Comprehensive Management of Swallowing Disorders*. San Diego: Plural Publishing, Inc.
- Crary, MA, & Groher, ME. (2003). *Introduction to Swallowing Disorders*. St. Luis: Butterworth-Heinemann.

The Occupational Therapy Treatment 1 module is given in the 3rd semester. The students are developing their research skills at this point in their studies. The Primary assessment for this module is in the form of a written essay where the students will demonstrate their skills in finding scientific evidence for treatment plans they will choose to present within a case-study project. The essay will give a practical demonstration of the students' understanding of the subject matter and how to apply it with the occupational therapy process.

Supplementary to their essays, the students will be assessed on their therapeutic techniques using simulation dolls, because the module is a very practice oriented module. This is a time where the students use peer teaching methods based on their research of practice techniques unique to the treatments they will be demonstrating. The students will also be awarded extra points toward their final grade based on their attendance, engagement during the lecture and practice portions of the module and their display of professionalism in the classroom, in order to increase motivation and to create a more attractive learning environment.

Table 3 - Example from Occupational Therapy Profile

Module : (O) Occupational Therapy Treatment I: Neurodevelopmental treatment and sensory integration frames of reference
ECTS : 5
Professor: OTD. Dianna Ullrich
<p>Module description: Emphasizes the use of developmental, behavioral and sensory frames of reference within occupational therapy process to restore, maintain and promote occupational function in children and adults. Indicators of function and dysfunction which relates to postural control, movement analysis, movement patterns, and sensory deficits. Facilitation of correct movement patterns with special handling techniques. Environmental adaptations as compensations for sensory dysfunction.</p>
<p>Results and objectives of learning: The student will: understand and be familiar with the theoretical base, focus and intervention strategies of neurodevelopmental treatment, motor skill acquisition and sensory integration frames of reference especially in pediatrics and neurology; has basic knowledge of special kinds of therapy concepts and is familiar with their principles, including the concepts of Bobath methods and sensory integration; is able to observe, describe, and evaluate the clients motor abilities and functions and their impact on occupational performance; is able to use the specific frames of references for client-centered treatments; Is able to switch between frames of references during treatment and/ or combine them, when it seems necessary.</p>
<p>Methods of teaching and learning:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lectures integrated with computer use or software • Teamwork; • reflective learning; • Role playing; • Practice for treatment skills.

Method of Evaluation: Essay, Presentations, Demonstration of treatment skills. 10% for attendance, 10% for engagement, 10% professional behavior Passing Criteria: 51% of the successful study assignment tasks pass through a minimum grade 6.			
Teaching methods /IT Computer, PPT slides, videos, treatment equipment, posters and other group work tools.			
Report between theoretical and practical part of the module:			
Lectures/Seminars	Clinical exercises/ Clinical practices	Self-study	Hour load
30	30	90	150
Literature:			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Jacobs, K., MacRae, N., & Sladyk, K. (Eds.). (2014). <i>Occupational therapy essentials for clinical competence 2nd edition</i>. Slack Incorporated (Translated in Albanian Language). Alexander, R., Boehme, R. and Cupps, B. (1993). <i>Normal Development of Functional Motor Skills: The First Year of Life</i>. San Antonio, TX: Therapy Skill Builders. ISBN: 076-164187-4 Atchison, B. and Dirette, D. (2012). <i>Conditions in Occupational Therapy: Effect on Occupational Performance</i>, 4th edn. Philadelphia, PA: Wolters Kluwer/Lippincott Williams & Wilkins. ISBN: 978-1-6091-3507-2 Boehme, R. (2004). <i>Approach to Treatment of the Baby</i>. Milwaukee, WI: Regi Boehme. ISBN: 076-164218-8 Case-Smith, J. and O'Brien, J. C. (2010). <i>Occupational Therapy for Children</i>, 6th edn. Maryland Heights, MO: Mosby Elsevier. 			

Physiotherapy Profile

For the assessment we will clarify the different assessments which are being used to test the students.

- Written exam: are used to test the knowledge of the students.
- Group presentation: students are asked to present in the lecture time in small groups, which will be discussed in class and assessed as part of their grade.
- Integrated Practice Skills Exam: these exams are used to let the students demonstrate their clinical reasoning skills and the use of evidence-based practice in the choices they make for a certain case study. The students will receive a few case studies before they enter the exam, so they can prepare these beforehand. Within the exam, one of these case studies will be chosen in which the student may demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Within the Integrated Practice Skills exam we base upon the competence development of the students, through the Dreyfus-model. This model distinguishes three levels of competence achievement on their way to the Bachelors level. The expected performance of the students during assessment grows in complexity of their task and the context, less structured and a decrease in the assistance or aid during their task (students increase in responsibility and independence in their profession). The assessment in the Integrated Skills Exam expects the students to grow in their independence and professional responsibility and therefore gets more complicated every year. An example of this implication is that students in their first and second year will be able to prepare a few given case studies before their exam takes place. However, in their last year, they will hear their case study during their exam.

In the physiotherapy profile we have re-evaluated the assessments used to evaluate the learning outcomes in each module, together with our experts from our partner University of Applied Sciences in Utrecht, Angelique Hagen and Jasmin Pekaric. We have replaced the term 'knowledge exam' by 'written exam', to unify with the other profiles in this program. Additionally, we added the percentage of the evaluation, to clarify the process of the evaluation of the module. We have adapted this in every module, but will present

one syllabus below to clarify the way we adapted this. As can be seen in the module, the assessment consists of a written exam, in which the knowledge is tested. This part stands for 30 % of their final evaluation in this module. As can be seen, the next assessment; Integrated Practice Exam and the Applied Practical Skills exam have a higher percentage (40 %) in which the student will demonstrate their skills and their applied knowledge on case studies. The knowledge obtained in the module is seen as the fundamental part to be able to apply this knowledge in case studies, which is the ultimate goal. Other parts which take part in the assessment of the performance of the students is 10% for attendance, 10% for engagement, 10% professional behavior. The engagement of the students in the lectures and practice is highly important in their success of the module. Therefore, they play part (together 30 %) in the assessment. Projects, group assignments and presentations are part of these 30 % if not specified differently in the modules. During the lecture there will be formative assessment of the skills. Students will receive feedback on their skills, professional performance, active engagement and knowledge.

Table 4: Example from Physiotherapy Profile

Module title: (P) Physiotherapy in disorders of the lower extremity and lumbar spine and pelvic
ECTS Credits: 5
Professor: PhD. Bujar Shabani, PhD Cand. Margarita Van Dijk
<p>Module description:</p> <p>Within this module, the anatomy of the lower extremity and lumbar spine are studied. This knowledge will be both offered in theory as in applied anatomy. This module is preparing the students especially in the competences screening, diagnostics and planning. Not only will the healthy human be discussed, but the physiotherapy assessment of complaints of lumbar spine, pelvic and lower extremity are added.</p> <p>Students are diagnosing simulation patients (people that act like a patient) with relatively simple problems to the lumbar spine and lower extremity. The student learns to produce a physiotherapeutic diagnosis and assessment plan, based on the 'International Classification of Functioning, disability and health' domains. The student obtains experience in ruling out serious diseases (red flags) and recognizing the complained patterns in this region. Also the outcome measurements with a diagnostic and evaluative goal are discussed. Students learn about reliability, validity, reproducibility, responsiveness and practical use of the outcome measurements. Within teaching the physiotherapy competences of treating a patient, there is a 'patient centered approach'. Various case studies of patients of all ages are included, like the elderly. Acute and chronic pain related issues are discussed.</p> <p>Also the integration of evidence in clinical reasoning and treating is an important part in the lectures. Relevant and important articles are discussed in class.</p>

Expected learning aims and outcomes:

The student is able to:

- Explain the ICF model in relation to muskulo-skeletal problems of lumbar spine and lower extremities
- Demonstrate knowledge of pathology related to muskulo-skeletal problems of lumbar spine and lower extremities.
- Perform a specific anamnesis and explanation in patients with lumbar spine, pelvic and lower extremity complaints for patients of all ages.
- Examine patients/clients with problems of lumbar spine and lower extremities by obtaining a history from them and from other relevant sources and demonstrate practical skills of manual examination
- Demonstrate manual therapy techniques in the lower spine, like manual traction, mobilisation and passive range of motion
- Demonstrate a therapeutic interventions (using physiotherapy agents and devices, electrotherapeutic modalities) in patients with complaints of lower extremity and lumbar spine according to evidence based practice and state of the art international scientific research
- Adapt the language and terminology for explanation and education to the patients
- Understand the role of acute and chronic pain in patients with problems in lower back, lower extremity and pelvic
- Find and use evidence based literature to support the examination and therapeutic intervention of lower extremity and lumbar spine.

Teaching and learning methods:

Problem based learning, Practice based learning, Simulation based learning, Research based learning and Blended-learning

Lectures, simulation, role play, practice, presentations, independent study and group work

Evaluation methods and passing criteria:

- 30%

Written

Exam

- 40% In-

tegrated

Practice

Skills

Exam

- 10% for attendance, 10% for engagement, 10% professional behavior

Passing Criteria: 51% of the successful study assignment tasks pass through a minimum grade 6.

Concretization means/ IT:

Power Point projector, video's, demonstrating and practicing practical skills.

Ratio between the theoretical and practical part of teaching:

Lectures/Seminars	Clinical exercise/Clinical Practice	Self-Study	Total hours
30	30	90	150

Literature:

- Barra, P, Kodra, S, Furera T (2010) Pathological Physiotherapy, University publishing house, Tirare (in albanian)
- Bogduk, N. Clinical Anatomy of the Lumbar Spine and Sacrum. Churchill Livingstone, 2005.
- Braddom, R.L. Riaftesimi Mjekesor dhe Fizioterapeutik, Tabernakul, Tirane, 2013.
- Goodman, C. and Snyder, T. Differential diagnosis for physical therapists, screening for referral. Elsevier, 2013.
- Hing, W, Hall, T, Rivett, D. Vicenzino, B, Mulligan, B. The Mulligan Concept of manual therapy: textbook techniques. Elsevier, 2015.
- Leka, H, Hafizi, A, Qamirani, S, Gabrani, S, Osmanlli, D, Topi S (2008) Human Anatomy-basic knowledge, 2nd ad, University Press, Tirana (in albanian).
- Silbernagl, S Despopoulos, A ~ (2014) Bright color atlas of physiology, Tabernakul in Albanian, translated from German)

Organisation of the study programme

- R2** Heimerer College should do more intensive research on reasons of students' drop-out and study delays and should develop countermeasures.

Heimerer College: Preventing study delays and drop-out strategies

Reasons of students' drop-out and study delays

The Heimerer College, through Deans Offices and Heimerer Student Center (HSC) in annual basis analyzes the reasons of students' drop-out and study delays. Since the establishment and functioning of the Heimerer College, the analysis shows that 60% of students graduate on time. From the rest 40% of them, 9% of students' dropout, the rate of students' delays in completing their study is 31%.

From the research on reasons of students' dropout, it is learned that students leave college for all kinds of reasons; but in most of the cases, it is a personal choice. Some of the most common reasons why students of Heimerer College dropout are:

1. Financial Reasons

In a few cases, students could not afford to support themselves without working, and part-time hours are often not enough to cover the cost of the study and living. Students often find college to be too expensive and have other expenses and priorities such as families to support.

2. Personal Reasons

- Most of the students who dropped out have reported to have family issues, unexpected medical problems that are beyond their control.
- Some students together with their family migrate by leaving Kosovo for better quality of life.
- Some female students get married and/or become a mother and drop out due to a change in their status and other family obligations.
- Other students find study to be too stressful and are not sufficiently prepared.
- In some cases, students are unhappy with their path of choice, which they realize during the study.

Students' workload

As it was mentioned in the SER (page no 19) when explained the correspondence of credits (ECTS) to working hours (one credit corresponds to 30 students' working hours), the average amount of work completed during one year of studies for a student is 60 ECTS or 1,800 hours of student working hours, which includes contact hours and self-studies. At least 30% of total hours are contact hours. Weekly teaching load including lectures, seminars, exercises, and labs are within the range of 20 hours. But for individual students the actual time to achieve the learning outcomes vary.

Strategies to prevent dropout and study delays

First should be emphasized that starting from the admission moment and students'

registration, the College through the Heimerer Student Center collects and documents all information related to students' social, economic status, contacts of their families/parents, etc.

The five-year institutional strategy 2018-2022 defines "Increasing the number of students" (Strategy of Heimerer College, 2017-2022; page 19). as a specific objective SO 5 (5.2 Prevention of dropout by enrolled students). Defined indicators intent to increase the percentage of active students and decrease the number of students' drop out every year for 1%. In 2021, according to the strategy, the tolerance for dropout is 2%, which percentage is expected to reduce in 1% by 2022.

In order to meet the strategic objective and to response to above mentioned reasons of students' dropout or study delays; the HEIMERER College applies student support policies, starting with financial support and continuing with the professional support based on individual students' reasons. The following describe some concrete steps and strategies taken by the College to prevent dropout and help students timely graduate from college.

1. Scholarships - Students who successfully pass the entrance exam and have high success in pre-schooling receive a 30% scholarship for BSc studies. Then students can benefit plus 20% scholarship if they are on the Dean's list; meaning they must have a grade above 9.0, have liquidated the year prior and have behaviors that align with institutional values. Financial support is also provided to students with disadvantaged status, those of martyr families in Kosovo and students with poor economic conditions.
2. Students of "A" (distinguished students) gain additional opportunities for short-term engagement in College or in private companies, College' partners to generate incomes.
3. HEIMERER College provides *Extra classes* to help students learn how to better organize their study and prepare them for the rigors of college. It is crucial particularly during the first year for preventing them feeling overwhelmed when making the transition from high school to college. The same practice is applied for students based on need in particular courses, every year during their study.
4. Heimerer College encourages a break, rather than quitting. Deans Offices and Heimerer Student Center (HSC) through *direct contact with students* they remind them to give it another semester and perhaps suggest taking fewer credits next semester if he or she is feeling overwhelmed. Sometimes that makes all the difference.
5. In line with the study regulations, students are offered the opportunity to pause twice or consider a gap year. Max one year for each pause is offered during the three years of study due to students' health problems for instance or other personal reasons.
6. One of the conditions for admission in master's degree as described in the SER is the conduct of interview (see page 17 at SER); where, among other things, the motivation of the candidates for study is evaluated, which can then be used to overcome the challenges that they may face during their study, which eventually may lead them to dropout.
7. Contact with families which has been proven to be effective when students seem stressed by too many expectations as stated by them during direct meetings organized by HSC. Cooperation with family members is important to encourage students to prioritize their education and cut back on things causing them extra stress besides the study itself.
8. The College implements the Academic Counselors model for the benefit of students. One teacher is appointed as Academic Counselor for up to 30 students for upcoming three years in Bsc level and two years in Msc level. Each Academic Counselor discusses students' concerns and connects students to the College's resources for addressing and resolving any problems or issues they may face related to their study. Regular meetings are held (every two weeks, or as needed) in order to encourage and motivate students to participate in various study related activities (see page 21 at SER).
9. Along with a teacher who is assigned as Counselor, a Tutor is also assigned to the student group. The role of the tutor is to support the Academic Counselors and to help high-risk students stay the course and/or graduate. They provide a steady adult presence to encourage them and help them during their learning process. This has been proven effective during the last year; students have advanced with academic grades after the help of tutors.

10. Students also can receive support through the Office of Psychological Counselling which aims to support all students who have psychological issues during their studies.

As a result of the application of these dropout prevention measures or strategies, this year the College has managed to reduce the percentage of dropouts, meeting the strategic objective of the College. The data show that this year less than 0.5% of students have dropped out of study.

Resources

C5 The college must ensure that there is enough time for teachers for their own scientific development and that this is not at the expense of the quality of teaching and student support.

Heimerer College: According to the institutional regulations, that was provided to you, regarding the workload of the engagement of Academic staff, we are convinced that it is in line with the other practices of engagement of teachers in teaching, research, projects, and administrative tasks.

Heimerer College has engaged around 100 teachers in teaching and exercises and around 60 mentors engaged in the practical part. When we compare with the number of students that are around 1200 students it is obvious that the standard workload is not achieved for teachers. They teach less than standard, and this was the reason why teachers were presented satisfied during the interview, stating that they have enough time for personal development. In fact, this was a driving reason for developing new programs, Two Masters and Physiotherapy.

Specific engagements in Teaching (Teaching with students, literature development, exercises, mentoring Thesis, Exams, consultations for students, etc.) are allocated to academic staff and consequently they have 25 hours per week for teaching; 4 hours for research and the rest hours are directed to other tasks related to projects and/or administrative issues.

If we look at the engagements in teaching and research there are a lot of tasks that are also linked with personal development, because advancement of the academic staff also as a personal development is expected to be advancement in teaching and research.

Related to the above-mentioned facts, it should be clarified that institutional policy supports the publication and presentation of publications at national and international conferences with 50% of the total amount. To insure their academic and promotional degrees, our staff should carry out and publish in scientific journals with impact factor at least one study paper per year. This is according to the regulation found attached. Research unit office supports all teachers with specific trainings as well as in designing the studies and statistical analysis.

Furthermore, each program has a document on the research strategy for the period of five years, which serves students for involvement in research activities as well as for the selection of diploma topics. Each program has working groups based on their field of study, where research is provided with data for patients.

There are 20 weeks out of two semesters during the year where academic staff can extend their time in writing articles. The implementation of the research most of the time is done during the semesters. Below is explained how this works:

It is also an institutional strategy of the next 3 years, Objective 4 "Linking the learning process with research" for the research to be carried out within the lesson and it is not only about the purpose of the research, but also to achieve the professional competencies. In each program there are at least 3 integrated modules like Academic writing, Research methods, Statistics, in which students are required to conduct research after gaining knowledge about research methodologies. We can be proud that we have had research conducted by our students together with the academic staff which were published in scientific journals with impact factor.

Even though each program is a scientific programme, we provide study programmes in applied sciences which is all about the use of existing scientific knowledge and latest evidence to practical goals; and which we consider as one of our strongest part. We have many institutions with whom we have signed MoUs where the students conduct the practice, so we have that opportunity to conduct research in the clinical settings. As a result, latest evidence can serve directly to the recipient of the medical services.

Quality assurance

R3 The college should further develop its quality system and also apply it to the clinical practical parts.

Heimerer: The various evaluations organised in our College provide real-time reports on the effectiveness of the program design, delivery, and objectives. These reports and analyses identify the needs for change, bring innovative ideas for implementation, based on them recommendations are given that are then included and implemented, either in programme development or in the teaching process, and in other important processes of the profile in order to increase the quality. Continuous Improvement of Quality System is crucial to have Quality in our college and we strive to develop quality system continuously.

In case of the clinical part, there is a system developed which covers the whole process of clinical/laboratory work, starting from selection of adequate partner institutions which are licenced, continuing with selection of adequate clinical mentors by publishing an open advertisement from those institutions. There are also regular workshops and training with clinical mentors in order to ensure the quality in this process. e process will continue year after year. This aspect has been elaborated in more details above.

R4 The involvement of external experts in the university's internal quality assurance should be considered.

Heimerer: The college has established a Quality Group consisting of the Rector, Vice-rector for Teaching&Learning, Vice-Rector for Research, Quality Office and Administration. We will take your recommendation into consideration and include external experts and our international Partners in the Quality Group related to internal quality assurance.

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

The expert panel votes for a conditional (re-)accreditation of the study programme “Health Sciences for Therapeutic Profiles – Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy (B. Sc.)”. In view of the additional explanations provided by the college, the panel modifies its conditions and recommendations.

The following conditions (C) and recommendations (R) are made:

Programme profile

- C1** Before starting with the new profile Heimerer College must review the new profile and its content structure again. This should be done together with experts from higher education institutions as well as from relevant health professional institutions.
- C2** Heimerer College must develop and implement a training programme for mentors in clinical practice to ensure academic quality of practical learning.

Curriculum

- C3** The college must review the curriculum to check the suitability and the scope of the planned contents once again. This should be done with experts from higher education institutes (esp. partner institutions) and from professional practice.

Quality assurance

- R1** The college should further develop its quality system and also apply it to the clinical practical parts.
- R2** The involvement of external experts in the college’s internal quality assurance should be considered.

7. Accreditation decision of the evalag Accreditation Commission

7.1 Decision

In its meeting on March 22, 2021, the **evalag** Accreditation Commission unanimously decides to (re-)accredit the study programme “Therapeutic Health Sciences – Speech and Language Therapy, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy (B. Sc.)” with the recommendations (R) and conditions (C) mentioned in Chapter 6. The Accreditation is explicitly based on the student numbers for the three profiles given in chapter 3.1.

7.2 Compliance with condition C 2

In its meeting on March 22, 2022, and on the basis of a report submitted by Heimerer College on 15 December 2021, the **evalag** Accreditation Commission unanimously considers condition 2 to be fulfilled. Conditions 1 and 3 remain in force until the first start of the new profile.

Annex: Assessment schedule

Thursday, January 28, 2021 – Preparation of online meetings

18:00-19:30	Internal meeting of expert panel (video conference), discussion of self-evaluation report, review of site visit plan
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Wednesday, February 3, 2021 – Online meetings

09:00-09:30	Internal meeting of expert panel
09:30-10:15	Meeting with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • General Secretary • Dean of Office for Studies and Teaching • Prorector for Research and Quality Assurance • Coordinator of Office for Clinical Practice • Leader of Quality Assurance Office • Guests from Partner Universities (Erasmus+, ...) • Representative of KAA (guest)
10:15-10:30	Brief internal meeting of expert panel
10:30-11:15	Meeting with responsible staff; split into 3 parallel groups: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Sciences for Therapeutic Sciences (B.Sc.) (<i>Virtual breakout room 1, Prof. Pfingsten, Mr. Biele</i>) • Medical Laboratory Science (M.Sc.) (<i>Virtual main room, Prof. Patsch</i>) • Nursing (M.Sc.) (<i>Virtual breakout room 2, Prof. Schuurmans, Ms. Atienza</i>)
11:15-11:45	Internal meeting of expert panel, break
11:45-12:45	Meeting with B.Sc. students and alumni of Heimerer College
12:45-14:15	Internal meeting of expert panel, lunch break
14:15-15:00	Meeting with academic staff (teachers) and mentors/tutors from all 3 disciplines
15:00-15:30	Meeting with employers
15:30-15:45	Brief internal meeting of expert panel
15:45-16:15	Meeting with administration (registrar, library management, laboratory management, ...), technical staff and quality management
16:15-17:30	Internal meeting of expert panel: review of the sessions, assessment along the assessment form, first draft of recommendations and conditions
17:30-18:00	Closing meeting with representatives of Heimerer College and of the study programmes