

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



## **Assessment Report**

**for the Application of Alfaisal University, Riyadh, Saudi Arabia,  
College of Pharmacy  
for the Accreditation of the Bachelor Study Program  
"Doctor of Pharmacy",  
(Bachelor of PharmD)**

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Decision

**February 13, 2025**

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## **1 Introduction**

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

The AHPGS is listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) since 2009. Since 2004, the AHPGS has been a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). In 2006, the AHPGS joined the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). In 2009, the AHPGS also became a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) and since 2012 a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). In 2023, the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME) recognized the AHPGS as an agency with recognition status for 10 years.

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

1. Program aims and their implementation
2. Structure of the study program
3. Admission and Feasibility
4. Examination System and Transparency
5. Teaching Staff and Material Equipment
6. Quality Assurance
7. Gender equality and equal opportunities

## **I. The University's application**

The AHPGS verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the University, namely the Self-Evaluation Report and its corresponding annexes. These are to fulfil the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS standards. With this information, the AHPGS produces a summary, which is to be approved by the University and subsequently made available for the expert group, together with all other documentation.

## **II. Written review**

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

## **III. On-site visit (peer-review)**

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

Following the site visit, the expert group evaluates the fulfillment of the criteria based on the results of the visit and the documents submitted by the HEI. This Assessment Report is based on the results of the visit, the written review of the study programs, and the documents submitted by the University. Finally, the

Assessment Report is made available to the University for the opportunity to issue a response opinion.

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

#### **IV. The AHPGS accreditation decision**

The accreditation commission of the AHPGS examines the documentation made available in the process of application, namely the University's self-evaluation report, its annexes, the Assessment Report, as well as the University's response opinion. These documents lay the basis for the decision of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS regarding the accreditation of the study program.

## 2 Overview

### 2.1 Procedure-related documents

The University delegated the task of accrediting the following Bachelor study program to AHPGS: “Doctor of Pharmacy” (Bachelor of PharmD)

The Self-Evaluation Report for accreditation of the above-mentioned study program (hereinafter the SER) of the Alfaisal University (hereinafter the University) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) in electronic format on April 04, 2024. The decision regarding the accreditation of a study program is carried out by the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS. The contract between the Alfaisal University and the AHPGS was signed on the February 19, 2024.

On June 21, 2024 the AHPGS forwarded the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter OQ) pertaining to the application for accreditation for the study programs to the University. On August 02, 2024 the University submitted the answers to the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter AOQ) to the AHPGS in electronic format.

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

| Annex | Description                        |
|-------|------------------------------------|
| 1     | Teaching Matrix                    |
| 2     | Module Description                 |
| 3     | Teachers’ CVs                      |
| 4     | Curriculum Plan                    |
| 5     | Program Specifications             |
| 6     | Undergraduate Student Handbook     |
| 7     | Annual Program Report 22-23        |
| 8     | Research Graduation Project Titles |
| 9     | Program Evaluation Survey          |
| 10    | Course Report Sample               |

|    |                                        |
|----|----------------------------------------|
| 11 | Student Experience Survey Spring 22-23 |
| 12 | APPE Manual                            |
| 13 | IPPE Manual                            |
| 14 | APPE Student Evaluations               |
| 15 | Campaign Survey Sample                 |
| 16 | SPLE Ranking                           |

In the course of the pre-evaluation, the experts requested additional documents. The university then provided the following documents:

| Description                         |
|-------------------------------------|
| PharmD Program Handbook             |
| Annual Program Report 23-24         |
| Sample Course Report 2024 (PCL 487) |
| SPLE Ranking                        |
| Course Specifications               |
| Final Report Assessments            |

The application, the open questions (OQ) and the answers to the open questions (AOQ) as well as the additional documents build the basis for the present summary. The layout bears no significance, as it solely reflects the agreed standard between the AHPGS and the University.

## 2.2. Information about the University

The Alfaisal University was established in 2008. The first study programs offered were Engineering, Business, and Medicine, which opened in October 2008, before other colleges and programs were opened across the years. The University is a private non-profit university with the aim of offering the latest knowledge in a state-of-the-art environment. The goals of the University are to promote learning, research, and the implementation of technology in a manner that promotes the Kingdom's employment and career objectives for its citizens. The teaching language is English. For the academic year 2023/2024, the total number of students is 5,119 with a female to male ratio of 57 % to 43 %, and a student to faculty ratio of 1:20. The University has six colleges, namely Business, Engineering, Medicine; Science and General Studies; Pharmacy as well as Law and International Relations. There is a total of 31 departments and 30 study programs with

238 full-time faculty staff members. Postgraduate programs are offered in business, engineering, nanoscience, biomedical, or health sciences. The campus of the University is located in the King Faisal's Palace at Al-Maather in the center of Riyadh in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. The primary campus buildings were initially completed in 2009, followed by an expansion of the inner facilities until 2018 and another major construction which ended in 2024 (expansion of the Colleges of Medicine, Pharmacy, Law, and Research). The research facilities of the University are dedicated to supporting the research culture and innovation inside the academic community. Therefore, investments were made in software tools, apps, and research equipment. Additionally, the University maintains an independent Institutional Review Board (IRB) to guarantee ethical adherence in studies involving human participants and animals in the national Committee of Bioethics (NCBE). Recently, an expansive additional building complex has been completed to accommodate the growing population of the academic environment. This new building includes additional facilities such as classrooms, simulation, teaching, and research laboratories, and offices for the staff (SER 1.1).

The "Doctor of Pharmacy" program is part of the College of Pharmacy and was established in 2016. Hence, the first student's intake was in the 2016-2017 academic session. For the 2023/2024 academic year, there are 63 students enrolled, out of which 4 are males and 59 are females. The "Doctor of Pharmacy" program is the only study program offered in the College. It is offered on a full-time basis in the main campus of the University. The program lasts for six years, beginning with the University Preparatory Program (UPP) in the first year and ending with the internship year during the sixth year (SER 1.2).

## 2.3 Structural data of the study program

|                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| University           | Alfaisal University, Riyadh                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Faculty/Department   | College of Pharmacy                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
| Cooperation partners | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Innova Pharmacies in Riyadh KSA,</li> <li>- Lemon Pharmacies in Riyadh KSA,</li> <li>- King Fahad Medical City Riyadh,</li> <li>- King Faisal Specialist Hospital and Research Center Riyadh,</li> <li>- King Khaled University Hospital Riyadh,</li> <li>- King Saud Medical City Riyadh,</li> <li>- Prince Sultan Cardiac Centre,</li> <li>- Dr Sulaiman Alhabib Hospital Riyadh,</li> <li>- Specialized Medical Centre Riyadh,</li> </ul> |

|                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |
|----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|                                                                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Biogen Riyadh,</li> <li>- Hikma Pharmaceuticals Riyadh,</li> <li>- Avalon Pharmaceuticals Riyadh,</li> <li>- Octapharma Riyadh,</li> <li>- Bupa Arabia Riyadh,</li> <li>- Ministry of Health of Saudi Arabia,</li> <li>- Ministry of Education of Saudi Arabia,</li> <li>- Saudi Food and Drug Authority.</li> </ul>                                                                     |
| Title of the study program                                     | "Doctor of Pharmacy"                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Degree awarded                                                 | Bachelor of PharmD                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Form of studies                                                | Full-time, on-campus.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             |
| Organizational structure                                       | Sunday to Thursday from 8 am to 5 pm                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Language of Studies                                            | English                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Period of education                                            | Twelve semesters                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  |
| Credit Hours (CH) according to the internal Credit Hour System | 198 CH                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| Hours/CH                                                       | 50 min of lecture =1 credit hour<br>100 to 150 min of laboratory = 1 credit hour<br>100 to 150 min of clinical training = 1 credit hour                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Workload                                                       | Total: 6,696 hours<br>Contact hours: 2,320 hours<br>Individual work: 2,266 hours<br>Practice: 2,110 hours                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| CP for the final project                                       | 3 CH                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              |
| Launch date of the study program                               | 2016/2017                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                         |
| Time of admission                                              | Fall semester                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| Number of available places on the program                      | The program is licensed to accommodate up to 1000 students. This number also includes future study programs at the College of Pharmacy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
| Number of enrolled students by now                             | 63                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                |
| Particular enrollment conditions                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Saudi or non-Saudi nationality,</li> <li>- High School certificate with a minimum score of 85 out of 100,</li> <li>- Qudurat with a minimum score of 75 out of 100,</li> <li>- Tahseely test with a minimum score of 75 out of 100,</li> <li>- English proficiency test (TOEFL IBT with a minimum score of 45, IELTS with a minimum score of 5 or Level B1 in the OOPT Test).</li> </ul> |
| Tuition fees                                                   | UPP: 60,000 SAR                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   |

|  |                                                                                   |
|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
|  | Year 2-5: 100,000 SAR plus 15% VAT per year<br>Year 6: 24,000 SAR (VAT inclusive) |
|--|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

### 3 Expert Report

The site visit was carried out on December 03, 2024, according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on December 02, 2024 for preliminary talks prior to the site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised prior. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the site visit at the University.

During the site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the College of Pharmacy, the chair, vice chair and the teaching staff of the program “Doctor of Pharmacy” as well as with students currently studying in the program and alumni. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, library, and computer classes. Moreover, experts had the opportunity to examine the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories.

The Assessment Report is structured in compliance with the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The study program will be described and analyzed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the University, the experts’ feedback to the documents, the observations made during the site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University, College of Pharmacy and the college’s Quality Assurance and Accreditation office serve as the foundation for the statements made in the Assessment Report.

In the following, the “Doctor of Pharmacy program will also be referred to as the “PharmD program”.

### **3.1 Program aims and their implementation**

#### **Summary**

The main goal of the program is to form proficient and self-assured pharmacists who possess the requisite expertise, abilities, attitudes, ethics, values, and capacity to collaborate with other healthcare professionals in order to satisfy the requirements of the patients. The structure of the program was developed to provide the graduates with the necessary information, skills, and competences to effectively carry out essential activities in their profession. The goal is also to lead them to develop a strong sense of confidence in these mentioned areas.

The general objectives of the program include (SER 3.1.1):

- Demonstrate a scientific foundation as related to the clinical, pharmaceutical, and social/administrative/behavioral sciences.
- Identify and evaluate research methods and demonstrate research skills relevant to the pharmacy profession that can be applied in different practice settings.
- Integrate systems management concepts in the pharmacy profession, including the management of drug formulary systems.
- Practice evidence-based decision making and implement pharmaceutical care plans.
- Provide comprehensive medication management to optimize medication use and health outcomes, reduce adverse drug events and improve patient safety.
- Promote and implement public health, wellness, and disease prevention concepts.
- Demonstrate effective oral and written communication skills to peers, other professionals, patients, and the public.
- Demonstrate a commitment to continuous professional and leadership development.

In order to educate pharmacists with versatility and professionalism, the program aims to graduate qualified pharmacists who will strive for innovation and excellence in patient care, research, community wellness, and high-quality pharmaceutical services. The graduated students are also expected to engage in local, regional, and international pharmacy practice activities, as well as to participate in life-long learning (SER 3.1.2).

Graduated students are expected to have the following skills, also referred to as key competencies:

- Communication,
- Information technology and numerical skills,
- Integrity,
- Interpersonal skills and responsibility,
- Professional development,
- Lifelong learning,
- Critical thinking,
- Problem solving.

According to the University, the pharmaceutical labor market offers diverse career paths in the following fields:

- Hospitals, clinics, or community pharmacies,
- Industries (manufacturing sites, licensing and regulation departments, sales and marketing, scientific offices),
- Regulatory activities (Food and Drug Authority, good manufacturing practice inspection, customs release, pharmacovigilance),
- Emerging roles (healthcare technology, management, policy, insurance),
- Academia (teaching, research).

Until now, the program has successfully graduated 42 pharmacists who are now working in the following fields (SER 3.2.1):

- 31% work in a hospital,
- 17% work in pharmaceutical companies,
- 7% work in academia,
- 12% enrolled in postgraduate studies,
- 7% immigrated to other countries,
- 26% are still searching for a job.

According to the University, the program aims to meet the future labor needs of the Saudi market. The estimated rise of 1 to 2% in the total employment of pharmacists based on Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030 increases the need for graduated students who can act and perform in a variety of pharmacy-related domains. Pharmacy practices in Saudi Arabia are shifting from the dispensation of medication and drug products to patients to the offering of patient-centered pharmaceutical care which can improve the medication therapy and healthcare

outcomes. To improve the patient outcomes, the program integrates basic, clinical, and research sciences with advanced clinical practice (SER 3.2.2).

### **Judgement**

As the University explains, the decision to offer the PharmD program was driven by the Saudi Ministry of Education's identification of clinical pharmacy as a priority area. The program exceeds the scope of a general Pharmacy Bachelor's degree by including additional credit hours and specialized clinical pharmacy content. The experts acknowledge that the PharmD program at Alfaisal University is strategically designed to address national and regional healthcare needs while aligning with global trends in clinical pharmacy education. The University's vision for the program reflects a strong focus on market-driven education, with periodic revisions to its strategic plan every five years to ensure alignment with evolving demands in the healthcare sector.

Graduates of the PharmD program are primarily trained for roles in governmental hospitals, pharmaceutical companies, and emerging fields such as biotechnology. While some graduates pursue postgraduate studies or work abroad, the total employment rate for graduates stands at 69%. The University's alumni office actively tracks graduate outcomes and evaluates the reasons for unemployment among the minority of graduates not currently employed. As the University explains, graduates who cannot be tracked or pursued their studies in another country are also categorized as unemployed, which explains the remaining 31%.

Looking to the future, the experts commend the University's forward-looking strategy, which includes plans for Master's and PhD programs in areas of high demand, such as pharma cosmetics and pharmacology. This aligns with Alfaisal University's status as the first private university in Saudi Arabia to offer a PhD program, further reinforcing its commitment to addressing national needs and advancing pharmaceutical education and support intensive research activities.

From the experts' point of view the Bachelor study program "Doctor of Pharmacy" focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

### **Decision**

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

### 3.2 Structure of the study program

#### Summary

The program comprises 75 modules, out of which 62 are obligatory and 13 are compulsory optional modules. There are between five and eight modules in total provided for each semester. These modules are to be completed within one semester as per the curriculum plan. The program requires the students to take between 10 and 18 credit hours each semester, depending on the nature of the provided courses. The PharmD program includes the following obligatory stays in practice:

- 160 hours in community pharmacy settings for IPPE I (introductory pharmacy practice experience) during the fourth year,
- 75 hours for IPPE II in hospital outpatient training,
- 75 hours for IPPE III in hospital inpatient training during the fifth year,
- 45 weeks (1800 contact hours) for APPE (advanced pharmacy practice experience) training in sixth year.

Students from the PharmD program can stay for practice in a bunch of pharmacies, hospitals, and centers located in Riyadh (SER 4.1.1).

62 program-specific courses and 13 other courses are taken with students from other study programs:

| Modules/Courses  | No of Courses | Credit hours |
|------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Program-specific | 62            | 164 (161)    |
| Others           | 13            | 34 (37)      |
| <b>Total</b>     | <b>75</b>     | <b>198</b>   |

<sup>1</sup>

The program-specific module objectives of courses offered together with other study programs are monitored to ensure their precise implementation. The courses taken with other programs are mainly in the UPP (University Preparatory

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<sup>1</sup> All following tables were copied from the University's application documents. Neither formatting nor content was changed.

Program) year which is common to all first-year students. A few courses are required to be taken by all the students at the University, while some courses are taken as electives. The clinical training activities are done in collaboration with relevant companies and institutions (SER 4.1.2)

The list of modules offered:

| Nr.      | Title                                    | Sem. | CH        |
|----------|------------------------------------------|------|-----------|
| PCHE101  | Chemistry I                              | 1    | 3         |
| PSHF101  | Human Structure and Function I           | 1    | 4         |
| PAM101   | Algebra                                  | 1    | 3         |
| PENG005  | English 005 (optional)                   | 1    | 4         |
| PENG006  | English 006 (optional)                   | 1    | 4         |
|          |                                          |      | <b>10</b> |
| PCHE112  | Chemistry II                             | 2    | 3         |
| PHSF112  | Human Structure and Function II          | 2    | 4         |
| PPHYM112 | Physics for Medicine and Life Sciences   | 2    | 3         |
| PBIO112  | Principles of Biochemistry               | 2    | 3         |
| PENG007  | English 007 (optional)                   | 2    | 3         |
| PENG008  | English 008 (optional)                   | 2    | 3         |
|          |                                          |      | <b>13</b> |
| ENG231   | Medical Terminology                      | 3    | 2         |
| CHM232   | Organic Chemistry                        | 3    | 4         |
| ANT233   | Anatomy and Histology                    | 3    | 4         |
| PHY234   | Physiology                               | 3    | 3         |
| MAT235   | Calculus                                 | 3    | 3         |
| ARB102   | Elective: Arabic Language I              | 3    | 2         |
|          |                                          |      | <b>18</b> |
| MCH241   | Medicinal Chemistry                      | 4    | 4         |
| BCH242   | Biochemistry                             | 4    | 4         |
| MIC243   | Microbiology                             | 4    | 3         |
| IMM244   | Immunology                               | 4    | 2         |
| BST245   | Biostatistics and Basic Research Methods | 4    | 3         |
| ISL102   | Elective: Islamic Studies I              | 4    | 2         |
|          |                                          |      | <b>18</b> |
| CAL351   | Pharmacy Calculations                    | 5    | 1         |
| KIN352   | Pharmacokinetics                         | 5    | 3         |

|                                     |                                                                                                                               |   |           |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---|-----------|
| PHC353                              | Pharmaceutics I: Dosage Forms and Stability                                                                                   | 5 | 3         |
| MIC354                              | Advanced Microbiology                                                                                                         | 5 | 2         |
| IMM355                              | Clinical Immunology                                                                                                           | 5 | 1         |
| PRC356                              | Pharmacy Practice and Health Care Systems                                                                                     | 5 | 3         |
| ARB113                              | Elective: Arabic Language II                                                                                                  | 5 | 2         |
| ESP224/PS<br>Y101/SOC1<br>01/SCI310 | Elective Courses: English for Specific Purposes, Introduction to Psychology, Introduction to Sociology, and Forensic Science. | 5 | 3         |
|                                     |                                                                                                                               |   | <b>18</b> |
| PHC361                              | Pharmaceutics II: Drug Delivery                                                                                               | 6 | 2         |
| PTH362                              | Parenteral Therapy                                                                                                            | 6 | 2         |
| REG363                              | Pharmacy Regulations and Health Ethics                                                                                        | 6 | 2         |
| SCR364                              | Self-care and Non-prescription Drugs                                                                                          | 6 | 1         |
| BPH365                              | Basic Pharmacotherapy                                                                                                         | 6 | 3         |
| BPH366                              | Basic Pharmacotherapy: case-based seminars                                                                                    | 6 | 1         |
| BPH367                              | Pharmacotherapy of Antimicrobial Agents                                                                                       | 6 | 3         |
| ISL113                              | Elective: Islamic Studies II                                                                                                  | 6 | 2         |
|                                     |                                                                                                                               |   | <b>16</b> |
| MTM471                              | Medication Therapy Management                                                                                                 | 7 | 2         |
| DIT472                              | Drug Information and Evidence-based Practice                                                                                  | 7 | 3         |
| IPH473                              | Integrated Pharmacotherapy I (CVS and Renal I)                                                                                | 7 | 3         |
| IPH474                              | Integrated Pharmacotherapy I (CVS and Renal I): case-based seminars                                                           | 7 | 1         |
| IPH475                              | Integrated Pharmacotherapy I (MSK and RES)                                                                                    | 7 | 3         |
| IPH476                              | Integrated Pharmacotherapy II (MSK and RES): case-based seminars                                                              | 7 | 1         |
| PCL477                              | Patient Care and Health System Management Lab I                                                                               | 7 | 2         |
| PHG478                              | Elective/Selective Pharmacogenomics and Personalized Medicine                                                                 | 7 | 2         |
|                                     |                                                                                                                               |   | <b>17</b> |
| KIN481                              | Clinical Pharmacokinetics                                                                                                     | 8 | 2         |
| ECO482                              | Pharmacoeconomics and Health Outcomes                                                                                         | 8 | 3         |
| IPH483                              | Integrated Pharmacotherapy IV: (Endocrine and Women's Health)                                                                 | 8 | 3         |
| IPH484                              | Integrated Pharmacotherapy IV: (Endocrine and Women's Health) case-based seminars                                             | 8 | 1         |
| IPH485                              | Integrated Pharmacotherapy III (CNS)                                                                                          | 8 | 3         |

|                              |                                                                                                          |    |            |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----|------------|
| IPH486                       | Integrated Pharmacotherapy III: (CNS) case-based seminars                                                | 8  | 1          |
| PCL487                       | Patient Care and Health System Management Lab II                                                         | 8  | 2          |
| CAM488                       | Elective/Selective Complementary and Alternative Medicine                                                | 8  | 2          |
|                              |                                                                                                          |    | <b>17</b>  |
| IPH591                       | Integrated Pharmacotherapy V (CVS and Renal)                                                             | 9  | 3          |
| IPH592                       | Integrated Pharmacotherapy V (CVS and Renal): case-based seminars                                        | 9  | 1          |
| IPH593                       | Integrated Pharmacotherapy VI (Infectious Disease)                                                       | 9  | 3          |
| IPH594                       | Integrated Pharmacotherapy VI (Infectious Disease): case-based seminars                                  | 9  | 1          |
| PCL595                       | Patient Care and Health System Management Laboratory III                                                 | 9  | 2          |
| IPP596                       | Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experience II (out-patient pharmacy)                                      | 9  | 2          |
| RES5X6A                      | Research Project                                                                                         | 9  | 0          |
| PHI597/MR<br>T598/MIM5<br>99 | Elective courses: Pharmaceutical Industry, Marketing for Pharmacist, and Medical Imaging for Pharmacist. | 9  | 2          |
|                              |                                                                                                          |    | <b>14</b>  |
| IPH5X1                       | Integrated Pharmacotherapy VII: (Hematology/Oncology/Palliative care/GIT)                                | 10 | 3          |
| IPH5X2                       | Integrated Pharmacotherapy VII: (Hematology/Oncology/Palliative care/GIT) case-based seminars            | 10 | 1          |
| MSF5X3                       | Medication Safety and Health Informatics                                                                 | 10 | 3          |
| PCL5X4                       | Patient Care and Health System Management Lab IV                                                         | 10 | 2          |
| IPP5X5                       | Introductory Pharmacy Practice Experience III (in-patient pharmacy)                                      | 10 | 2          |
| RES5X6B                      | Research Project                                                                                         | 10 | 3          |
|                              |                                                                                                          |    | <b>14</b>  |
|                              | Total:                                                                                                   |    | <b>198</b> |

The module description/catalog covers the following aspects: module number, level/semester, credit hours, language, learning outcomes/goals/skills, content, and examination.

The program is based on a spiral curriculum that consists of three interconnected phases and revisits topics at varying curricular levels with a growing level of complexity. The phases are not separated from each other, rather, they work

together to give the skills and knowledge needed for later phases. The phases can be described as follows:

- Phase 1: The University Preparatory Program (UPP), a fundamental program that all enrolled students must complete. It comprises 23 credit hours and is administered by the College of Science and General Studies. It prepares the students for the overall academic development and assesses their English language proficiency with a range of evaluation techniques. The courses comprise especially science fundamentals through which the students get to recognize their abilities, concepts, and attitudes necessary for the program learning outcomes.
- Phase 2: The second and third year includes basic pharmaceutical courses like organic chemistry, biochemistry, parenteral therapy, etc., along with biomedical subjects such as anatomy or physiology. These courses strengthen their knowledge in the design, development, evaluation, activity profiling, and disposition of drugs. Some courses already have practical components designed to provide the students with general principles and hands-on experience in areas like drug synthesis or quality control.
- Phase 3: During the fourth and fifth year, professional practice sessions are conducted in simulation laboratories to improve the communication skills, prescription processing, and patient-centered care. The students take part in integrated pharmacotherapy courses, case-based seminars, and clinical skills laboratory sessions. The students get engaged in various pharmaceutical settings through the advanced pharmacy practice experience (APPE). These experiences promote the development of cognitive and decision-making skills that are necessary for the proper practice of pharmacy.

The integrated approach in pharmacy education is gradually introduced to the students from the second year onward. This progression can be described as follows (SER 4.1.3):

- Year 2: three courses following parallel integration (medical terminology; anatomy and histology; physiology). Each week, the students take one physiological system in these three courses, ensuring that there are able to focus on one system every week.
- Year 3: pharmacotherapy of the antimicrobial agents course, integrating pharmacology and medicinal chemistry components within this course.

- Year 4-5: three disciplines are encapsulated into one module (pathology, pharmacology and microbiology/therapeutics). Additionally, two student-driven courses consisting of a case-based seminar and a patient care laboratory course are frequently offered with these integrated courses.

The clinical trainings are divided into three IPPEI courses during the fourth and fifth year and APPE in the sixth year. The sixth year of the PharmD program is referred to as the “internship year” where senior students can gain practical skills through job experiences. This allows them to deal with real-life situations including clinical problems and settings. Therefore, all students are required to complete five mandated core rotations. Out of the selective/elective rotations, a range of 3 to 5 rotations can be chosen, while the remaining 0 to 2 rotations can be selected from the list of free electives. This proposed framework prioritizes rotations that include direct patient care and communication. Designated faculty members monitor the students’ engagement at their places of internships. At the end of each experiential learning experience program, the course reports are sent to the quality assurance office to ensure alignment with the course learning outcomes. Moreover, meetings are scheduled with the site training coordinators and the list of preceptors are revised to ensure they meet the preceptors’ selection criteria. Site policies are discussed with the students by the head of experiential learning during the orientation meeting and by the Site Training Coordinators on the first day of training (SER 4.1.4).

The required qualification of preceptors is summarized below:

- Licensed pharmacist
- Commitment to college Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience – APPE requirements: provide a high-quality rotation, frequent feedback to student, completion of two evaluations for each student (Midpoint and Final)
- For non-clinical rotations: a qualification of Pharm. or B.Sc. Pharm with 1 year of practice experience
- For clinical rotations: A qualification of PharmD or B.Sc. Pharm with PGY1 residency ± PGY2 residency or clinical pharmacy master’s degree ± PGY1 residency and 6 month of practice experience.

The curriculum model used in the program is known as “SPICES”, including the following learning concepts:

- Student-centered/active learning.

- Problem/practice-based learning.
- Community/systems-based learning.
- Elective and systematic approaches.

The purpose of this concept is to integrate the social, administrative, behavioral, clinical, and pharmaceutical sciences while providing a strong foundation in the fundamental sciences. Cooperative methods are used through large group discussions and team-based learning. The students are also encouraged to develop their active learning and self-study skills. Study guides are provided to the students to assist them in creating their own study schedules. The faculty also engages the students in a tutorial environment. Techniques like case-based collaborative learning, hybrid problem-based learning, and team-based learning are integrated in the pharmacotherapy course which are also given in form of case-based seminars. Therefore, small groups of students can engage in this activity to increase critical thinking, group communication, and enhanced presentation abilities. Teaching from volunteer seniors to junior students is arranged by the Academic Success Center, allowing students to become tutors for courses they share with other students from the College of Sciences and General Studies or from the College of Medicine.

The program uses electronic platforms in the teaching process. First, the e-learning platform Moodle is used for the instruction and learning assistance. In addition, Zoom and Microsoft Teams have been used a lot during the COVID-19 pandemic (SER 4.1.6).

The PharmD students get to increase their research skills in some courses with laboratory components including organic chemistry, medical chemistry, pharmaceuticals, parental therapy, and microbiology. Moreover, they have the opportunity to increase their research skills thanks to three modules:

- “Biostatistics and Basic Research Methods” (coded BST245): During this course, the students are guided through the principles of research ethics and through the interpretation of biomedical research publications in the literature. They are also learning how to plan and write research projects, how to write an introduction and methodology sections which emphasize the data collection protocol and analysis, as well as summarizing the findings and crafting an inclusive discussion and conclusion.
- “Drug Information and Evidence Based Practice” (coded DIT472): This course is delivered during the fourth year and offers knowledge on how to

strike a balance between population-based assessment of pharmaceutical outcomes and individual patient care.

- Research project (coded RES5X6): Happening during the fifth year, this project includes three workshop series designed to provide the fundamentals required for the research ("How to write a scientific research proposal", "Conducting and analyzing a scientific research project", "How to write a scientific research paper"). It also includes paper appraisal tests, research proposal writing, data presentation, research progress report, supervisor's student evaluation, final project report, and final project poster presentation. These projects are presented at the annual AU Research Day Students' Poster Competition and other relevant competitions like national or international conferences (SER 4.1.7).

All the modules of the program are taught in English except the two Arabic language courses. In addition, the students can take elective courses in Spanish or German. Another elective course about forensic science offered the possibility to take a course at the Strathclyde Institute of Pharmacy & Biomedical Sciences of Glasgow (SER 4.1.8).

## **Judgement**

The Bachelor study program "Doctor of Pharmacy" has a course-based structure and a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the courses are embedded within the course specifications. The course specifications contain general information about the course, information on the teaching mode, the learning outcomes, teaching strategies and assessment methods, the course content, student assessment activities, e-learning resources and facilities as well as assessment of course quality. However, the experts recommend to include self-study hours in the module descriptions to clarify the intended workload for students.

From the experts' point of view, the structure of the PharmD program at Alfaisal University is designed to provide students with a comprehensive understanding of pharmaceutical sciences, integrating theoretical knowledge with practical training. The program's curriculum reflects a balanced approach, aligning with international standards while addressing local needs. The combination and succession of the courses of the study program are consistent with the specified qualification objectives (described earlier). It is assured that students receive the

support and guidance they need for the organization and accomplishment of assignments and the learning process in general.

The internships provide a hands-on experience in clinical settings. Detailed manuals for coordinators and preceptors outline all requirements and expectations. Students are evaluated twice during each rotation by their preceptors, and they, in turn, evaluate their preceptors, ensuring mutual feedback and continuous improvement. Preceptors and internship sites undergo a thorough background check before approval, and the University collaborates with major medical hospitals nearby to secure high-quality training environments. In cases where students encounter issues with their preceptors, they can report their experiences, and appropriate actions are taken if necessary. The arrangement of internships in the study program allows acquisition of credits.

The experts acknowledge the very detailed course files with its contents and aims, which allows a high level of transparency. In the experts' opinion, the structure of the curriculum seems to make the workload manageable.

The experts also note that the University supports international competencies by offering language training in French, Spanish and German, preparing students for further studies abroad. There are individual options for mobility, but the experts recommend establishing international collaborations at an institutional level, e.g. offering summer schools. A clear mobility gap could be implemented in the study plan, in which no classes or exams take place. This way the students could go abroad without fearing to miss anything at Alfaisal University. Anchoring these partnerships structurally would create consistent opportunities for exchange, joint research, and academic growth.

Overall, the experts conclude that the PharmD program's structure integrates essential theoretical and practical components, ensuring that students receive a well-rounded education.

## **Decision**

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

## **3.3 Admission and Feasibility**

### **Summary**

The Deanship of Student Affairs, Admissions, and Registration is responsible for managing the main admission process for the PharmD program. According to the University, the student admissions system has consistently demonstrated reliability and efficacy over the years, ensuring the equitable and uniform application of the criteria and prerequisites. The admission process is exclusively conducted through an online electronic application which is accessible during the admission season. All essential information about entrance requirements, structure, fees, and services are provided on the University website and technical support is offered. Graduated students from High School can apply to the program, beginning with the University Preparatory Program (UPP), which is a one-year intensive English and basic sciences preparatory program. The selection criteria for the admission into the program are as follows (SER 5.1.1):

- Pass all subjects and achieve a minimum grade of C+ in Chemistry 2, Human Structure and Function 2, and Principles of Biochemistry.
- Achieve a cumulative GPA of 2.5 out of 4.
- Achieve the following scores in one of the following exams: minimum of 500 points for the TOEFL ITP, minimum of 60 points for the TOEFL IBT, and minimum of 6 points for the IELTS.
- English at pass level of 4.
- Selection interview.
- Successful completion of the UPP.

The University ensures to be dedicated to upholding the rights of students with disabilities and advancing inclusivity. Still, there are no compensation measures for students with disabilities and chronic illnesses regarding the admission requirements. However, students who face difficulties due to their disabilities (temporal or permanent disability, medical condition, mental or psychological disorder) are eligible to be treated as special need students and they would provide a appropriate medical report about their condition. Thus, students who are under the special need category are eligible for support and assistance by the University based in their requirements. According to the University, the student-centered approach implies that each case is carefully considered comprehending the special difficulties that students with various disabilities and long-term illnesses experience. Some accommodations can be expected like extended deadlines, different test formats, accommodated attendance guidelines, etc. The Counselling and Skills Development Unit also provides continuous support services including academic coaching, mentorship, and counselling (SER 5.1.2).

The University welcomes transfer students who began their degree at another recognized university and want to complete it at the Alfaisal University. This is done through a course evaluation, which necessitates a thorough examination of the course description and credit hour equivalence. The transfer procedure is evaluated, keeping in mind that the Ministry of Education has set a maximum of 48 credits and a minimum credited grade of “C” for such a transfer. The criteria to be fulfilled are as follows:

- Completion of minimum two semesters at an accredited university or institution.
- Fulfillment of the admission requirements set by the College.
- Authentic transcripts.
- Minimum GPA of 3.5 out of 5 or 2.5 out of 4.

The students must provide their transcripts and course specifications to the Students’ Affairs Unit. The unit then sends them to the University Dean and to the Phase 2 Director who evaluate the documents with the course coordinators. It is then decided if the courses being taught at the University are suitable with regard to the credit transfer. The credit transfer form is ultimately filled in by the Dean’s office and submitted to the students’ affairs for processing and completion of the procedure (SER 5.1.3).

The admission qualification into the PharmD program starts with the one-year University Preparatory Program based on the prospective students’ education system. Students from international systems need to submit documents proving that they finished their high school study in their home country and have their high school document’s evaluation completed in the Saudi Ministry of Education. The students are then evaluated based on their high school performance and interviews by perspective colleges. The English requirements need to be met. The successful completion of the above-mentioned UPP with a cumulative GPA of 2.5 out of 4 is another necessary criterion (SER 5.1.4).

The students at the University can benefit of diverse counselling services throughout the year including academic, vocational, and psychological support. The students are actively encouraged to use the offered resources and services. The different support services can be categorized in the following three elements (SER 5.2.1):

- **Mentorship program:** All full-time faculty members serve as mentors, which allows that each student is allocated a mentor at the start of the first semester. This mentorship provides academic advising and planning, counselling, moral guidance, educational support, instruction in study methods, providing information, and assisting with time management. The mentors submit a Mentee Progress Report, whenever one of their mentees' performances declines during the semester. This form provides a comprehensive analysis of the factors contributing to the fluctuations in the students' performance along with the corresponding recommended measures for improvement. Moreover, the mentors are required to complete a form whenever one of their mentees needs to repeat a year due to academic failure. Finally, the mentorship also provides indirect monitoring through arranged individual meetings between the mentors and the mentees. The office hours of the faculty members are clearly posted on their office doors, with the option to request a meeting via email. Some events related to this mentorship program are organized, including time management events, coffee with the mentor, or from campus to career events.
- **Counselling and Skills Development Unit (CSDU):** This unit is part of the Student Affairs Deanship and is committed to cultivating a conducive atmosphere at the University by promoting welfare, individual growth, and mental well-being via comprehensive counselling services. These services are assured through individual or group sessions counselling, training (including academic workshops), and awareness campaigns (handouts or emails). The unit automatically reaches out to students with a cumulative GPA below 2 out of 4 through the online e-learning system. Moreover, a tranquility support group has been established to provide assistance to students with anxiety problems, offering counselling and specific support.
- **Academic Success Center (ASC):** This center is part of the Library Department, and it provides help with understanding topics and courses as well as the opportunity to enhance skills that are beneficial for the coursework. The center offers up to four 60 minutes consultation sessions each scheduled via the online scheduling software. During these sessions, the students in need are paired with student consultants who have the necessary knowledge and provide academic assistance. Moreover, workshops are organized where students can study important topics from different academic courses.

## **Judgement**

The admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are properly documented and made publicly available. The experts determine the admission procedures and requirements to be appropriate, as they correspond to the standards of the study program. In terms of capacity, the College of Pharmacy is licensed to accommodate up to 1,000 students across all its programs. However, the PharmD program strategically limits its intake to no more than 100 students annually, although currently the intake is below that (11 in the last year). The University has a systematic approach for hiring additional teaching personnel to support the program as enrollment increases, ensuring that resources and faculty capacity grow in line with student numbers.

The experts draw attention to the relatively high number of exams to be passed during both of the study programs. In order to prepare students for the level of difficulty and volume of exams, the type as well as the time of the different examinations is defined and communicated to the students transparently through the course syllabus at the beginning of each course.

The experts confirm that the University takes good measures to guarantee the feasibility of the study programs despite the high workload. The organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study programs. The experts appreciate the fact that students with disabilities or chronic illness are offered compensatory measures when writing exams, such as extra time or writing the exam in another room.

On site, it became obvious that the teaching staff follows an “open-door-policy”. In the first week of each year, students undergo an orientation which familiarizes them with available support services and where the colleges and departments are introduced.

As another support mechanism, an academic advisor is responsible for a small number of students from the beginning of each semester. Students are supported through advisors, course coordinators or personal tutors with their registration process, selecting a study program, financial and personal issues and their performance during the semester. If the students have problems besides academic issue, a social support unit is installed at the University. Financial support is available to students through various mechanisms, including need-based scholarships, Dean’s list awards, education allowances, sibling discounts, and

successive sibling benefits. The experts find the support services at the University to be commendable and conducive to the health and success of the student body.

### **Decision**

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

## **3.4 Examination system and transparency**

### **Summary**

The Examination Committee of the University is there to ensure the caliber of every assessment and examination event in compliance with a specified examination policy. It regularly monitors its work through a series of meetings and procedures to govern and oversee the entire examination process, including the three following steps:

- Pre-examination: check the faculty adherence to the Exam Questions Policy of the University; review the exam questions to be uploaded on Exam-Soft; print exam papers.
- During the examination: arrange exam venues; assign faculty and staff as proctors.
- Post-examination: check the validity of the multiple-choice question or questions item analysis.

The program's Vice Dean is given an update about these operations and the course syllabus is uploaded on the Moodle platform at the start of the semester, disclosing the assessment policy and mark distribution.

Different types of assessment are used, out of which all are aligned with the Course Learning Outcomes and described in the relevant course specifications. The evaluation methods are the following:

- Written essays.
- Case-based seminars presentations.
- Multiple-choice questions (MCQs).
- Short answer questions (SAQs).
- Objective structured clinical exams (OSCE): covering history taking, prescription review, physical assessment, and patient counselling.
- Student presentations (continuous assessment).

The timeline of the exams can be described as follows:

- Continuous assessment throughout the semester: MCQs, essay-based questions, case-based seminars presentations, written essays, OSCEs, and student presentations.
- Mid-term exam: after eight weeks.
- Final exam: at the end of each academic session during the Fall and Spring semesters.

The 4.0 Grade Point Average (GPA) is used to assess and regulate the quantity of work that students must complete. A minimum of a “C” grade is required to pass the exam. If a failing grade “F” is obtained, the student is required to retake the course and subsequently the exam in the following academic session (SER 6.1.1).

The University website offers extensive information about the program including the specific study plan, program objectives and learning outlines, educational process and admission requirements. Further, mentorship-program, experiential education, students and faculty research and awards, pharmacy education unit activities, are also available on the college’s website. The social media pages are used to provide up-to-date information regarding the news, events, and academic life of the University. Moreover, important information is communicated via emails and the calendar of the University website is kept up-to-date with the significant dates, registration periods, commencement of classes, examination periods, etc. Another important element of communication are the orientation meetings happening at the beginning of the semester and providing the vital information about the study plan as well as reminders about the code of conduct, disciplinary proceedings, and grievances. Besides the website, a mobile application is available for information about the class schedules, grades, and other services. Moreover, emails are sent regularly to the students informing them of any changes in the policies, services, facilities, events, and activities. The emails are also sent to remind important dates such as registration deadlines, payment reminders, etc.

The Deanship of Admission and Registration posted a document on the website outlining the University’s adherence to the Ministry of Education’s guidelines for undergraduate study and examinations. The clear disclosure of examination procedures and schedule enables an effective management of the numerous assessments happening during the semester.

The Student Handbooks of the University and the program are also available as a comprehensive guide that informs students about the laws and regulations of the University and the college, including student rights and responsibilities, admission, registration, student services, financial and scholarship services, academic progress and placement on probation, etc. The students regularly receive notifications from the Finance department about outstanding debts or from the Facilities Department about new services and activities.

The attendance policies are openly stated, and the students have the opportunity to electronically record their attendance for all classes via the use of a QR code. Students with disabilities or chronic illnesses have their examinations organized on a case-by-case basis with the requisite level of support. Finally, Hospital Training/Academic Affairs provide internship students with supplementary guidelines and protocols on standards of behavior (SER 6.2.1).

### **Judgement**

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. The study programs have a course-related examination system. Its implementation, including the grading system, course load regulations, repetition of courses and exams is regulated and transparent for the students. From the experts' point of view, the examination serves to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. Nevertheless, in the experts' opinion, the study program includes a very high number of exams which causes a high workload not only for students but also for the teaching staff. The transparent information of examination methods and of the examination schedule at the beginning of each term makes the high number of assessments during and at the end of each semester manageable. An examination can be repeated twice. Students who cannot attend the test due to health issues or other unforeseen circumstances are allowed to take the test on another agreed day. If the examination is failed twice, students must redo the course in the following semester. Some courses allow students to retake the course during the summer, provided they meet all attendance requirements. Decisions regarding make-up exams and course repetition are made by the examination committee, ensuring consistency and transparency in the process. The minimum passing grade for courses is set at C, and grading weights are distributed across various assessment components, with the final exam carrying the highest weight.

However, the program allows students to repeat courses to improve their GPA, with a maximum of 12 credit hours eligible for repetition, which supports their academic progression. Thus, the experts conclude that the examinations, although numerous, serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved or not and are focused on students' knowledge.

The requirements to students' performance in examinations are regulated and published in the course handbook. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organizations, is appropriate. In some cases, the students report that the exams for elective modules fall on the same day as the exams for compulsory modules. The experts are aware that this is particularly difficult to coordinate because the elective modules are not offered on a program-specific basis. Nonetheless, they recommend avoiding such overlaps if possible.

The University guarantees that students with disabilities or chronic illnesses receive compensation regarding time limits and formal requirements of the study process, as well as all final and course-related performance records.

To further support students, Alfaisal University offers preparation courses for the Saudi Pharmacy Licensure Examination. These efforts have contributed to a success rate from 40 out of 41 graduates passing the exam on their first attempt. The experts note that the PharmD program demonstrates a strong commitment to academic excellence, reflected in its students' performance on the Saudi Pharmacy Licensure Examination (SPLE). Graduates of the program rank in Category A, with results 10% above the national average, and the program boasts one of the highest retention rates among pharmacy programs in the country.

The University ensures that information about its activities, particularly the programs it offers, is easily accessible to prospective and current students, graduates, other stakeholders and the public. The published information includes detailed insights into the selection criteria for programs, intended learning outcomes, qualifications awarded, and the procedures employed for teaching, learning, and assessment. Furthermore, pass rates and available learning opportunities to students as well as graduate employment information are shared.

## **Decision**

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

### 3.5 Teaching staff and material equipment

#### Summary

For the academic year 2023/2024, there is a total of 65 faculty members. Moreover, some faculty members from both inside and outside the college teach in the program. The following table shows the faculty distribution and affiliated institutions:

| Alfaisal University & Affiliated Institutions Faculty                |       |           |       |        |           |       |                          |               |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|-----------|-------|--------|-----------|-------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Faculty                                                              | Male  |           |       | Female |           |       | Total within affiliation | Total Faculty |
|                                                                      | Saudi | Non-Saudi | Total | Saudi  | Non-Saudi | Total |                          |               |
| Alfaisal University (FT)<br>(From colleges of medicine and sciences) | 7     | 21        | 28    | 3      | 9         | 12    | 40                       | 65            |
| COP (FT)                                                             | 2     | 6         | 8     | 5      | 4         | 9*    | 19                       |               |
| COP (PT)                                                             | 2     | 0         | 2     | 0      | 0         | 0     |                          |               |
| Full-time Equivalent#<br>(Adjunct)                                   | 3.25  | 0         | 3.25  | 2.75   | 0         | 2.75  | 6                        |               |

\*Note: 63 faculty including the full-timer 3 Teaching Assistants and 2 Lab Assistants. Furthermore, 2 full-time female Saudi administration assistants working under COP-AU.

# Every 4 adjunct faculty are calculated to be equivalent to 1 full-time faculty.

Note: this includes 2 new faculty (1FT & 1PT) have joined the college in August 2024.

The University has twelve full-time professionals with six to eight hours per semester of professional teaching. Additionally, there are six adjunct professors. The percentages of the program taught by the faculty are as follows:

- Professors: 32,69%.
- Lecturers: 23,09%.
- Adjunct faculty: 41,28%.
- Practitioners: 2,94%.

The total number of staff required for the program at full-time enrollment corresponds to 16 week-hours per semester, hence the 198 credit hours are distributed into 3.5 hours per faculty. The full-time faculty workload and academic rank distribution are shown in the following table:

| Department              | Academic Rank        | Number of Faculty | Percentage Taught | Credit Hours   |       |                |       |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------------|-------|----------------|-------|
|                         |                      |                   |                   | Fall           | Week  | Spring         | Week  |
| Deanship                | Associate Professor  | 1                 | 2.7%              | 2 <sup>1</sup> | 32    | 2 <sup>1</sup> | 32    |
| Pharmaceutical sciences | Professor            | 1                 | 6%                | 4              | 64    | 5              | 80    |
|                         | Assistant Professor  | 2                 | 12%               | 4.34           | 69.44 | 5.1            | 81.6  |
|                         | Associate Professor  | 1                 | 3.1%              | 2              | 32    | 2.6            | 41.6  |
|                         | Senior Lecturer      | 1                 | 1%                | 1              | 16    | 0              | 0     |
|                         | Lecturer             | 3                 | 6%                | 4.5            | 72    | 4.27           | 68.32 |
|                         | TAs/LAs <sup>2</sup> | 3                 | 0%                | 4              | 64    | 4              | 64    |
| Pharmacy Practice       | Assistant Professor  | 0                 | 0%                | 0              | 0     | 0              | 0     |
|                         | Associate Professor  | 1                 | 2.8%              | 2              | 32    | 2.2            | 35.2  |
|                         | Senior Lecturer (PT) | 1                 | 3.7%              | 1              | 16    | 4.6            | 73.6  |
|                         | Lecturer             | 1                 | 2%                | 1.33           | 21.28 | 1.83           | 29.28 |
|                         | TAs/LAs <sup>2</sup> | 2                 | 0%                | 1              | 16    | 1              | 16    |

<sup>1</sup>+1 in fall as well as spring due to teaching in COM.

<sup>2</sup> TAs/LAs: Teaching Assistants/Laboratory Assistants; do not contribute directly to teaching load credits however they are involved in practical sessions preparation (accounted as 1 hour per session) and support, exam invigilation and other related activities.

Note: 2 faculty (1 in Pharmaceutical Sciences + 1 in Pharmacy Practice Departments) were promoted from Assistant to Associate Professors ranking in May 2024.

The faculty to student ratio with full enrollment capacity is 1:20. Meanwhile, the current ratio for the year 2023/2024 is 1:3 (SER 7.1.1).

In order to ensure the successful implementation of the program, the faculty and staff personnel undergo a rigorous selection process based on interviews and credentialing to align with the missions and visions of the University. According to the University, the faculty members possess the necessary expertise in the subjects taught in the program as it is aimed to establish itself as a top-tier, student-focused training program. The process of recruitment is organized as follows (SER 7.1.2):

- Submission of a position requisition form by the relevant Head of Department including a comprehensive job description. The request is also reviewed by the Dean and approved by the President of the University.
- The Human Resource Department coordinates with the Dean of the College for advertisement venues. The open post is mostly advertised on the University website in the Jobs section, and occasionally through local and national newspapers, career fairs, or professional journals.
- The recruitment process is launched and carried out by the Faculty Search Committee directed by the Head of Department, ensuring the fairness and consistency of the process. A shortlist is prepared for those who will be interviewed.
- The Dean supervises the selection process and makes recommendations for appointments which will be discussed and approved by the College Council.
- The request has to be sent to the University Hiring Committee which will review the hiring files and recommendations of the College Council. The decision of the committee is discussed with the President for final approval and communicated to the Dean of the College.
- The HR Department shall coordinate with the Dean of the College about the provisional offer that will be sent to the nominated candidate and continue the rest of the hiring procedure.

According to the University, opportunities for staff and faculty development through continuing education are available, actively encouraged and closely monitored. The University regularly offers academic and professional programs aimed at faculty development. The following list of offers can be made:

- College Biomedical Research Seminar Series: Year-round lecture series aimed to present and exchange the most recent developments in healthcare and research.
- Library Department lectures: regular lectures are offered to improve the information literacy and research skills. The workshops offered include subject guides, library tours, information skills classes, and the Information Literacy Program.
- Marketing Communications Department: it offers creative services, program marketing campaigns, corporate branding media, professional advice, and other strategic initiatives.

- Department of Information Technology: offering continuous courses all year long including hands-on training about the Moodle platform and the e-Learning portal.
- Pharmacy Education Unit: this unit offers educational workshops and lectures within the Pharmacy field.

The faculty members may also choose to take part briefly beneficial professional development programs and conferences either self-funded, as an outside grant (invited speaker) or covered by the approved college's annual budget. The following list shows an example of workshops, seminars, and training sessions in which the faculty participated: ARISE program, AI powered creativity series, NCAAA orientation meetings, SERS detection of antibiotics, etc. (SER 7.1.3).

Qualified adjunct professors from within or outside the University take part in the lectures. The Experiential Learning Unit members plan and monitor the learning schedule depending on the students' preferences. Furthermore, the members of this unit monitor and assist students during the internship. Finally, the clinical and non-clinical preceptors supervise the students during their internship rotation at different sites. The entire study program is coordinated at different levels by the Phase Directors, Heads of Departments, Vice-Dean and the Dean of the University (SER 7.2.1).

Students are taught in single classrooms equipped with smartboards, video cameras, screens, and sound systems. The male and female students each have their own floor. All students have equal access to the facilities of the University, which include a library, dining options, study spaces, personal lockers, and respective gender prayer rooms. During the past few years, the following improvements have been made in terms of premises (SER 7.3.1):

- Establishment of new and upgraded computer laboratories.
- Creation of smart classrooms.
- Expansion of internet bandwidth.
- Expansion of wireless coverage.
- College of Pharmacy new building and laboratories

The library offers physical books as well as resource sections on the second and third floors. It is equipped with computer workstations and an e-library accessible through the University website. The e-library includes a wide range of books, articles, databases, e-journals, dictionaries, etc. According to the University, the

support of research is an essential goal, which is why the library is dedicated to offer relevant library collection and services that make information easier to access. The following list is an inventory of the resources available:

- 351.594 books.
- 222 databases.
- 215.000 e-journals.
- 504 specialized subject guides covering the University courses.
- 215.107 periodical titles.
- 450 seats for people visiting the library.
- 20 private group study rooms.
- 2 bibliographic instruction rooms.
- 2 computer labs and 2 specialized computer labs.

The opening hours of the library are as follows:

- Sunday to Wednesday: from 8am to 11pm.
- Thursday: from 8am to 9pm.
- Friday and Saturday: from 2pm to 8pm.

The e-library materials are available to all students, faculty, and staff all the time by using the email login credentials (SER 7.3.2).

The IT and faculty departments have worked together to provide continuous improvement of the computer and media equipment and oversight in several areas. It includes the introduction of computer laboratories in new and improved facilities, the creation of smart classrooms, and the expansion of wireless and internet connectivity all over the campus (SER 7.3.3).

Through its annual Internal Research Grant (IRG) program (now open throughout the academic year), the University makes research funding available to all colleges. The applications are evaluated based on the competitiveness, and submission frequency. Moreover, every college has a given budget which is available for the purchase of anything that is required to facilitate the student's teaching. A portion of this budget is also used to purchase instruments and equipment to support the research. Finally, various internal research grants criteria are available from the Office of Research and Innovation (SER 7.3.4).

## **Judgement**

The experts note that the PharmD program at Alfaisal University is supported by a qualified and diverse teaching staff, whose professional development is actively facilitated through a structured framework. The University provides regular workshops and seminars organized by the Faculty Development Unit to assess and address the needs of faculty members. New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the programs and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. New staff are required to participate in didactic training workshops, and additional training on emerging topics such as artificial intelligence and policy developments are also provided. Laboratory technicians benefit from specialized training workshops, further enhancing the overall educational infrastructure. Overall, the teaching and academic staff at the Alfaisal University shows a very high level of commitment and potential for the execution as well as further development of the study program they are responsible for. The experts conclude that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics among the University and the faculty administration. The experts find the number of human resources allocated to the program to be sufficient to carry out its functions.

The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development transparently, and actively encourages their participation in workshops, training courses and conferences intended to improve their abilities, which is confirmed during the talks with the staff on site. The research and teaching portfolio of the faculty is balanced to encourage both academic instruction and scholarly activities. Research constitutes 60% of the workload for most academic staff, while lecturers dedicate 75% of their time to teaching. Internal research funding is available, with clear and efficient application processes. Faculty can apply for grants throughout the year, with decisions typically made within 2-3 weeks. Once approved, grants must be utilized within two years, and recipients are required to submit biannual progress reports. However, new grant applications are restricted until the current grant is completed. This system promotes accountability and ensures equitable distribution of research funding. Faculty also have opportunities to collaborate with industries, further enhancing their research scope.

The experts visited the premises of the College of Pharmacy, where the skills labs of the Bachelor study program “Doctor of Pharmacy” are located. The skills labs are equipped with all relevant devices. From the experts’ point of view, the quality of the laboratories and clinical areas used to train students in the program are sufficient.

As a whole, it was ascertained by the experts that the Bachelor study program “Doctor of Pharmacy” has ample teaching facilities at its disposals.

### **Decision**

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

## **3.6 Quality assurance**

### **Summary**

The University has established a quality assurance and accreditation system which complies with the five standards established by the national regulatory body (NCAAA). It also adopted the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) to ensure effective quality assurance practices. The quality assurance system works in collaboration with the Quality Assurance and Accreditation Department. The Director of this Department reports directly to the President of the University. The Department is there to:

- Supervise the comprehensive design, execution, and assessment of the quality assurance practices,
- Monitor the progress towards program accreditations,
- Offer extensive assistance and support to the Quality Assurance and Accreditation System Office (QAA Office).

The QAA Office works under the close supervision of the Department. The head of the Office, with the help of the office staff, oversees the activities of the Quality Assurance System and reports to the Dean of the University. The formation of the subcommittees was based on the five national criteria, including (SER 8.1.1):

- Program administration and quality assurance.
- Teaching and learning.
- Students.
- Faculty.
- Learning resources, facilities, and equipment.

According to the University, the College maintains a strong culture of quality processes and continuous improvement. The QAA Office oversees the entire educational process while it is itself overseen by the QAA Department. Every academic

and administrative division within the University has responsibilities in the overall quality assurance system. Each member of the teaching staff has to complete a self-evaluation and to support improvement initiatives. Moreover, the University uses benchmarking to assess its performance in comparison to the industry best practices and norms. The satisfaction of the stakeholders is evaluated through questionnaires or surveys including the feedback of students, faculty members, administrative staff, alumni, employers, and other external bodies. The program evaluation is a systematic approach using qualitative and quantitative methods to know understand the students' opinions about the teaching methods, assessment process, and the efficiency of the courses. The program evaluation also includes the evaluation of the students' satisfaction with the services offered at the University (resources, facilities, etc.). The Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) were created in accordance with the Saudi Arabian regulations on the practice of pharmacy set by the Saudi Pharmaceutical Society (SPS), the Accreditation Council for Pharmacy Education (ACPE), and the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCFHS). The PLOs ensure that the graduates have all the necessary knowledge, ability, and skills to meet the health needs of the community. Additionally, the College's annual Faculty Performance Appraisal System (FAR) enables regular review of the faculty's performance in terms of teaching, research, and services. The results are also considered as a documentation data for the quality assurance analysis on faculty performance, development, and feedback. The evaluations are conducted individually for each academic year, measured, and summarized on a Likert scale (1-5). Teaching scores below 3.75 are recognized as cut off values for low achievement. These assessments are also considered for appraisal a promotion application. The annual FAR also guides the Dean office and Head of Department to meet each faculty and provide targeted feedback on the performance which is valued for improvement and reconciliation. The following list shows the surveys which are taken (SER 8.1.2):

- Course and faculty evaluation survey.
- Student experience survey.
- Program evaluation survey.
- Alumni survey.
- Employer survey.
- University library survey.
- Student affairs survey.
- Academic counselling survey.

- IT services satisfaction survey.
- Facility satisfaction survey.
- Assessment of learning outcomes survey.

The primary goal of the module evaluation is to enhance teaching, performance, and evaluation. The results of the surveys are used to monitor, assess, address, and improve the overall quality of teaching, student services, administration, and facilities. All satisfaction surveys are automated within the University Evaluation and Review Framework, which represents the main component of the quality assurance system. Periodic reviews of the courses are conducted at the end of the semester, yearly, mid-cycle, or every five to six years based on the feedback for the purpose of continuous improvement. The students are viewed as principal clients of the education system. They are involved in the following surveys (SER 8.1.3):

- Course evaluation survey,
- Course and faculty evaluation survey,
- Student experience survey,
- Program evaluation survey,
- Final year experience, instructor evaluation form.

The practical relevance of the program is seen through the array of job opportunities available for the graduates. The evaluation of the practical components of the curriculum is made through the following methods:

- Students' feedback after every Introductory Practice Experience IPPE course (I-III).
- Students' feedback after every rotation in sixth year internship phase; Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE).
- Preceptor evaluation of every student for each rotation.
- Saudi Pharmacy Licensure Examination (SPLE) pass rate.
- SPLE average pass mark.
- Alumni surveys.
- Employers' surveys.
- Graduate hiring rate.

The SPLE pass rate of the University of 93% is comparable to the national one (92%). The average pass score is 610, which is higher than the national one which is of 590. The University was ranked on the third place in 2023 based on the

national SPLE performance of female students. Due to the low number of male students, the average performance of male students could not be analyzed (SER 8.1.4). Recently overall, the college has achieved  $\geq 10\%$  of national average in SPLE with an average passing rate of 98.5% and average passing grade of 619, thus, succeeding a **category A** for pharmacy programs according to Saudi classification ranking in SPLE.

The total students' workload of 6.696 hours is based on the 198 credit hours spread over 12 semesters which is comparable with similar programs locally and internationally. Its feasibility over the years has been confirmed by the students (SER 8.1.5).

The number of students enrolled in the first year to the UPP for 2023/2024 with PharmD admission intent in the next year was 20. The following tables respectively show the number of students for the current academic year 2023/2024 and for the past three academic sessions (SER 8.1.6):

| Academic year   | 2023/2024 |        | Total |
|-----------------|-----------|--------|-------|
| Gender          | Male      | Female |       |
| PharmD Students | 4         | 59     | 63    |

| PharmD Graduates | 2020/2021 |        | 2021/2022 |        | 2022/2023 |        | 2023/2024 |        |
|------------------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|-----------|--------|
|                  | Male      | Female | Male      | Female | Male      | Female | Male      | Female |
|                  | 1         | 5      | 3         | 13     | 1         | 13     | 0         | 6      |
| Total            | 6         |        | 16        |        | 14        |        | 6         |        |

## Judgement

From the experts' point of view, the University has a well-structured system of quality assurance spread across all of its unit. The University has developed and documented a concept of quality assurance in the education process, teaching and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of the study program "Doctor of Pharmacy".

The University consistently monitors and periodically reviews its programs to ensure alignment with established objectives, responsiveness to the evolving

needs of students and society, and the facilitation of continuous program improvement. The consultancy committee includes representatives from local, national, and international universities, as well as pharmaceutical companies and the King Faisal Specialist Hospital, which serves as the primary training site for students. The advisory board, comprising alumni, industry professionals, researchers, and academic leaders, further supports the program by ensuring it remains relevant to market and research needs. Curriculum updates are implemented in alignment with University and Ministry of Education guidelines. Up to 20% of the curriculum can be adjusted internally, while changes exceeding this threshold require Ministry approval. The curriculum undergoes a comprehensive review every five years, with adjustments such as the planned inclusion of more content on natural product chemistry in response to emerging trends in alternative medicine. Major changes are also planned following accreditation, reflecting the program's proactive approach to continuous improvement. These systematic reviews are integral to the University's commitment to maintaining the relevance of study programs and fostering a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The evaluation process encompasses various aspects, including the regular examination of program content in light of the latest research in the discipline, consideration of changing societal needs, assessment of student workload, progression, and completion rates, evaluation of the effectiveness of procedures for student assessment, collection of feedback on student expectations, needs, and satisfaction regarding the program, and examination of the suitability of the learning environment and support services for the program's objectives. Students participate in course evaluations, providing feedback on both the course content and teaching methods. This input is taken seriously, with actions such as non-renewal of teaching contracts based on student evaluations, demonstrating the program's commitment to addressing student concerns. Additionally, the University has established a batch leader system, where a representative conveys collective student feedback to faculty and management. As course reports and evaluation results are not currently published, the experts recommend closing the feedback loop by systematically communicating evaluation results and subsequent actions to students and stakeholders. This would enhance transparency and further strengthen the quality assurance process.

The University possess a robust data collection system and gathers comprehensive data on its study programs and other activities. Various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are captured by the Alfaisal University. A range of information

regarding study programs and activities is consistently captured e.g. student progression, success rates, and dropout rates are inherent considerations in the analytical processes. With an established feedback mechanism, the University regularly measures student satisfaction with their programs, the learning resources and the available student support. The University also actively tracks and analyzes the career paths of its graduates. The University seamlessly integrates the collected information into its existing internal quality assurance system. Mechanisms are in place to ensure that the perspectives of students and staff are considered in decision-making processes.

Regular program reviews and revisions are conducted, actively involving students and other stakeholders in the process. The information collected from these reviews undergoes analysis, and program adaptations are made to ensure the program is up-to-date. Any actions planned or taken as a result of these reviews are communicated to all relevant stakeholders. Furthermore, the University ensures the publication of revised program specifications, fostering transparency and keeping stakeholders informed of changes resulting from the systematic review process.

## **Decision**

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

### **3.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities**

#### **Summary**

Male and female students are given the same opportunities in terms of entrance standards, studying, and involvement in curricular and extracurricular activities. The design of activities ensures the equal involvement of both male and female students. This considers emerging socioeconomic concerns, distinctive family lifestyles, and diverse backgrounds. Currently, most students admitted are non-Saudis living in Saudi Arabia. The teaching style used allows both genders to be taught together in a single classroom. They are mentored, supervised, and scheduled to participate in laboratory sessions together. In order to guarantee the welfare of every student, those with psychological, medial, or disability concerns must provide a copy of their medical record to the college and the Student Counselling Office. Moreover, there are two on-campus health facilities with

licensed medical personnels. The University has also partnered with nearby hospitals and medical facilities to assure the access to specialized healthcare services. For international students, advisors are there to monitor the academic progress each semester. They also have access to the same privileges and services than national students. Finally, based on the academic achievement, the University provides financial aid and scholarships to national and international students, including merit-based or need-based scholarships (SER 9.1.1).

The counselling services provide guidance to students with disabilities or chronic illnesses to facilitate their academic achievements. The University has made investments to guarantee that all campus spaces (including buildings, laboratories, libraries, and classrooms) are accessible. This covers wider doorways, elevators, building access wheelchair ramps, and accessible restrooms to aid their mobility. Moreover, medical support is offered in the University Clinic, which is open during work and study hours (8 am to 9 pm daily). The Counselling and Skills Development Unit upholds the integrity of the academic program standards while offering assistance which enables students with special needs to pursue their objectives (SER 9.1.2).

## **Judgement**

The University demonstrates its commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for all students and shows openness for diversity and social development. Overall, the experts conclude that the University's actions on the provision of gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances are implemented in a transparent manner.

## **Decision**

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

## 4 Conclusion

The experts commend Alfaisal University's College of Pharmacy for its clear vision and strategic planning, particularly its efforts to establish Master's and PhD programs to further enhance the academic and research profile of the University. The international and diverse environment of the College of Pharmacy as well as the whole University fosters a collaborative atmosphere, and the positive interaction between students and teachers contributes to a supportive and family-like atmosphere that benefits learning and personal development.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the site visit, the experts came to the conclusion that the study program "Doctor of Pharmacy" offered at the Alfaisal University fulfils the above-described criteria. Hence, the experts recommended that the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS make a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

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

- The University should establish Master's and PhD programs in the College of Pharmacy to ensure sustainability and support intensive research activities.
- The University should include self-study hours in the module descriptions to clarify the intended workload for students.
- The University should enhance internationalization efforts by encouraging students to participate in mobility programs, such as attending summer schools. A clear mobility gap could be implemented in the study plan, in which no classes or exams take place.
- The University should avoid overlaps between elective and obligatory exams.
- The University should provide systematic, electronic feedback to students on their evaluations to close the feedback loop and enhance transparency.

## **5 Decision of the accreditation commission**

### **Decision of the accreditation commission February 13, 2025**

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

The site visit of the University took place on December 03, 2024 according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

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

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group of the University regarding the Assessment Report.

The Bachelor study program requires the obtainment of 198 credit hours according to the internal credit hour system. The regulated study period in the program "Doctor of Pharmacy" is six years (twelve semesters): One year within the University preparatory program, four years within the College of Pharmacy and one internship year. The program comprises 75 modules, out of which 62 are obligatory, program-specific and 13 are compulsory optional modules. The language of instruction is English. The Bachelor study program "Doctor of Pharmacy" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Bachelor of PharmD". Admission takes place every fall semester. The first cohort of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 2016/2017.

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

The Bachelor study program "Doctor of Pharmacy" is accredited for the duration of five years until September 30, 2030.

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

The accreditation commission also recommends adding some additional information to the graduation certificate. To increase international comparability, the University could use the template for Diploma Supplements developed by the Council of Europe, European Commission and UNESCO.