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

Assessment Report

for the Application of
Jouf University, Saudi Arabia
College of Applied Medical Sciences
for the Accreditation of the Master Study Program
"Clinical Laboratory Sciences",
Master in Clinical Laboratory Sciences

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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 in-formation, 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' sup-port), as well as the program management (program administration, external assurance of study quality).

Following the site visit, the expert group evaluates the fulfilment 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 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 programs to AHPGS: "Medicine and Surgery", "Oral and Dental Surgery", as well as the following Master study programs: "Clinical Laboratory Sciences", "Public Health", "Infection Prevention and Control", "Prosthetic Dental Sciences", "Nursing" and "Psychological Counselling".

The Self-Evaluation Report for accreditation of the above-mentioned study programs (hereinafter the SER) of the Jouf University (hereinafter the University) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) in electronic format on March 24, 2025. The decision regarding the accreditation of a study program is carried out by the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS. The contract between the Jouf University and the AHPGS was signed on the March 20, 2025.

On July 15, 2025 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 28, 2025 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 Jouf University follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Along with the application request towards accreditation of the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences", 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):

Specific documents for the study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences"

Annex	Description
1	01-Module Description
2	02-Teachers' CV
3	03-Teaching Matrix
4	04-Program Specifications
5	05-Annual Program Report
6	06-Admission Requirements

7	07-Enrollment Procedures and Statistics
8	08-Gender Equality
9	09-Examination Policies
10	10-Program Handbook
11	11-Joint Training Manual
12	12-Thesis Writing Guide
13	13-Consistency with NQF
14	14-Vision, Mission, and Goals
15	15-Field Experience Specifications
16	16-PLOs Measurement Plan
17	17-Staff Evaluation of Vision, Mission and Goals
18	18-Course Evaluation Report
19	19-Academic Accreditation Commission Evaluation
20	20-Students' Evaluation of Learning Experience
21	21-Course Reports
22	22-Infrastructures
23	23-Literature Reference List
24	24-Teaching Staff Achievement and Attendance Certificates
25	25-Formation of Staff Committees
26	26-Comments on Curriculum
27	27-Graphical Overview Study Program.docx
28	28-Student to Faculty Ratio
29	29-KPI's Analysis Report
30	30-Admission and Support Evidences (Untranslated)
31	31-Course Teaching Plan
32	32-Institutional Regulations
33	33-Standards and Regulations
34	34-Fast-Track Research Funding Application
35	35-Online Platforms
36	36-Final Exam Attendance
37	37-Molecular Diagnostics Practical Guide
38	38-List of Exemplary Thesis Topics

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

Annex	**Description**

A	A-Policy of Encouraging Faculty Participation in Research and Scientific Activities
B	B-Intellectual Property Rights Protection Policy
C	C-Academic Quality Assurance Policy
D	D-Policy of Communication with Graduates
E	E-Council Self-Evaluation Policy
F	F-Outstanding Performance Award Policy
G	G-Monitoring the Quality of Teaching and Learning
H	H-National Qualifications Framework
I	I-Policy for Developing and Creating Academic Programs and RASCI
J	J-Examinations and Student Evaluation Policy
K	K-Policy of Verifying the Standards of Achievement for Students
L	L-Stimulation and Support of Employees' Participation in Community Activities
M	M-Professional and Personal Development Policy
N	N-Student Retention Policy and Increased Completion Rates
O	O-Policy of Attracting External Beneficiaries
P	P-Rights and Benefits in Providing Advice and Services to Outside Sectors
Q	Q-Support Mechanism for Faculty Conducting Joint Research with External Bodies
R	R-Policies for Marketing and Commercial Investment of Innovations and Productions
S	S-University Risk Management Policy
T	T-Workload Policy

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

2.2 Information about the University

Jouf University was established in 2005 and is located in Sakaka, in the Al-Jouf region of Saudi Arabia. The University currently enrolls approximately 17,000 students across 14 colleges and offers 46 academic programs at the Bachelor's, Master's, and Doctoral levels. The University is accredited by the National Commission for Academic Accreditation and Assessment (NCAAA). All programs are either fully accredited or in the process of accreditation. The University reports that its colleges cover a broad range of disciplines, including humanities, sciences, engineering, medicine, and business administration. Health-related programs are among its most developed areas. According to the University, the Clinical and Health Sciences are ranked 401–500 in the Times Higher Education Subject

Rankings, Pharmacy and Pharmacology are placed 251–300 in the QS World University Rankings by Subject, and the Medicine program ranks 601–650 in the same QS subject ranking.

The University highlights its focus on aligning academic offerings with labor market demands and the objectives of Saudi Arabia's Vision 2030. It also emphasizes its investment in infrastructure, describing its campus as offering modern facilities that support both academic and extracurricular activities. In the area of research, the University outlines several priority fields, including health and wellness, sustainable environment and resource supply, renewable energy, and the economics of the future (SER 1.1).

The Department of Clinical Laboratory Sciences was founded in the academic year 2003/2004 with the aim of training Saudi professionals in clinical, educational, and research-oriented medical laboratories. Initially linked to the College of Science at King Saud University in Riyadh, the department became part of the College of Applied Medical Sciences with the establishment of Jouf University in 2005. The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" has been operational since August 2023.

As the University explains, the department offers both Bachelor's and Master's programs, combining theoretical and practical components with specialty and technical training, seminars, and workshops. The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" currently includes three specialized tracks: hematology, clinical chemistry, and clinical microbiology. According to the University, 36 students are currently enrolled in the program, including 23 female and 13 male students. In 2023, 22 students were admitted, with one later withdrawing, and in 2024, 15 students joined the program. The program provides advanced training in laboratory diagnostics, research methodologies, and modern laboratory technologies. It also emphasizes faculty- and student-led research projects, clinical training collaborations, and interdisciplinary learning (SER 1.2).

2.3 Structural data of the study program

University	Jouf University
Faculty/Department	College of Applied Medical Sciences
Cooperation partner	/.
Title of the study program	"Clinical Laboratory Sciences"

Degree awarded	Master of Clinical Laboratory Sciences
Form of studies	Full-time, on-campus
Organisational structure	Thursday from 4pm to 9pm and Friday from 8am to 5pm
Language of Studies	English
Period of education	Four semesters
Credit Hours (CH) according to the internal credit hour system	36 credit hours
Hours/CH	1 theory credit hour = 1 hour 1 lab/practice credit hour = 2 hours 1 hospital training credit hour = 2 hours
Workload	**Hematology:** Total: 2,385 hours Contact hours: 285 hours Individual work: 1,590 hours Practice: 510 hours **Clinical Chemistry & Medical Microbiology:** Total: 2,340 hours Contact hours: 300 hours Individual work: 1,560 hours Practice: 480 hours
CH for the final paper	8 credit hours
Launch date of the study program	August 2023
Time of admission	Spring Semester
Number of available places on the program	45
Number of enrolled students by now	36
Particular enrollment conditions	- Saudi nationality or scholarship, - Bachelor's degree in clinical laboratory sciences with a minimum GPA of good (2,75/5), - One-year internship in clinical laboratory sciences, - Certificate equivalence if bachelor was outside Saudi Arabia, - English proficiency with official language test (TOEFL or IELTS), - Tests and personal interviews.
Tuition fees	74,000 SAR (16.800 Euo)

3 Expert Report

The site visit was carried out on October 13-14, 2025, according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on October 12, 2025 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 Applied Medical Sciences, the chair, vice chair and the teaching staff of the program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" 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.

In the course of the on-site visit, the University submitted the following additional documents at the request of the experts:

- Exemplary research projects

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 Applied Medical Sciences and the representatives of the "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" program serve as the foundation for the statements made in the Assessment Report.

3.1 Program aims and their implementation

In accordance with ESG 1.2 Design and Approval of Programs

The study program focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic or artistic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

Summary

According to the University, the mission of the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is to prepare highly qualified and skilled graduates who can contribute to education, scientific research, and community healthcare at Jouf University. The program's objectives include ensuring high-quality teaching and training to prepare competent professionals in clinical laboratory sciences, equipping graduates with the knowledge, values, and skills necessary for teaching and research, and fostering research competencies that prepare students to pursue doctoral studies. In addition, the program aims to graduate proficient clinical laboratory scientists who are able to serve the needs of the community (SER 3.1.1).

The program is designed to prepare professionals who can apply advanced practices grounded in the theoretical and scientific principles of laboratory testing. The program aims to train healthcare practitioners who are able to meet community needs while contributing effectively to areas such as patient care, education, and administration. The program ensures that graduates are qualified to deliver knowledge through medical research and are equipped with the fundamental knowledge, values, and skills necessary for teaching and research. It further seeks to enhance graduates' expertise in diagnostic medical laboratories, while also aligning with political, social, economic, and health contexts. The University emphasizes that graduates are expected to demonstrate personal integrity, respect, honesty, and adherence to Islamic ethical and legal principles when interacting with patients, community members, and healthcare teams. This alignment with broader contextual factors is reflected in the program's vision, mission, and goals (SER 3.1.2).

The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is aligned with Level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework of Saudi Arabia (NQF-KSA), reflecting advanced specialization and professional competence. Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) are organized across three domains (SER 3.1.3):

- **Knowledge and Understanding**: Graduates are expected to evaluate the theoretical and scientific principles of laboratory testing and result interpretation. As the University explains, they should also recognize normal organ functions and the mechanisms of various pathological conditions, as well as implement scientific research using appropriate methods of data recording.

- **Skills**: The program prepares graduates to apply advanced experiments and techniques in major fields of clinical laboratory sciences. They are expected to analyze and interpret complex clinical cases to produce reliable results, apply research critique skills to defend their work, and evaluate research data within specialized clinical laboratory tracks.
- **Values, Autonomy, and Responsibility**: The program emphasizes personal integrity, respect, honesty, and Islamic ethical behavior when working with patients, community members, and healthcare teams. As the University explains, graduates are also encouraged to demonstrate leadership, collaboration, stress management, and teamwork, while upholding ethical principles and professional values in the medical field.

According to the University, the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" prepares graduates for a wide range of career opportunities across academic, clinical, governmental, and industry sectors.

- **Academic and Educational Roles**: Graduates may pursue positions as university lecturers or research scientists.
- **Clinical and Healthcare Roles**: Opportunities include working as clinical lab specialists, microbiologists, hematologists, or clinical chemists.
- **Forensic and Governmental Roles**: Graduates may work as forensic scientists or laboratory specialists in governmental agencies such as the Saudi Food and Drug Authority or municipal laboratories.
- **Industry and Business Roles**: Potential positions include product specialists in laboratory and diagnostic solutions, consultants in health marketing, technical support specialists, or product development specialists.

As the University explains, graduates are qualified to work in hospitals and healthcare centers, research institutions, educational institutes and universities, pharmaceutical companies, governmental organizations, and the laboratory supplies and diagnostic solutions industry. The program’s comprehensive training ensures that graduates are equipped with both the knowledge and the practical skills necessary to excel in these diverse professional fields.

The program aims to graduate proficient clinical laboratory scientists who are able to contribute to community healthcare. Labor market forecasts indicate that the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia requires approximately 130,000 applied medical sciences professionals, while currently only about 30% of this demand is met by Saudi nationals. In this context, the program addresses a clear national need by preparing

highly qualified graduates capable of supporting education, scientific research, and healthcare services (SER 3.2.2).

As the University states, the first batch will complete their studies in the current year, so the employability rate is not yet available.

Judgement

From the experts' point of view, the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" pursues clear and well-defined qualification objectives that are consistent with the strategic mission of Jouf University. The experts recognize that the University follows a coherent educational strategy that connects undergraduate and postgraduate education. While most Bachelor programs are accredited nationally, the University aims to obtain international accreditation for its postgraduate programs, thereby enhancing its global visibility and competitiveness. This approach underlines the University's commitment to continuous improvement and quality assurance at all academic levels.

From a regional perspective, the experts emphasize that the program addresses the growing demand for qualified clinical laboratory specialists in the Al-Jouf region. The University maintains strategic and institutional partnerships with local health institutions, which not only facilitate practical training opportunities but also contribute to high employability among graduates. As the University reports, there is currently a shortage of qualified clinical laboratory specialists, which underscores the program's relevance and social importance.

With regard to curriculum design, the experts note that all academic programs are aligned with the strategic plan of the University and that curriculum development also considers national initiatives launched by the Ministry of Education or other relevant authorities. The University council retains the authority to review and approve program structures, ensuring flexibility and responsiveness to labor-market needs. Programs are evaluated every two years after the graduation of each cohort. The University also applies a sustainability policy to smaller master's programs: continuation or discontinuation is decided based on market demand, student interest, and overall relevance to regional needs.

Internationalization represents an element of the University's strategic development. Although enrollment in the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is currently limited to Saudi nationals due to governmental regulations in the health sector, the University plans to open the program to international

students in the near future. The experts welcome these ambitions and encourage the University to attract international students, and foster more active participation in international research collaborations. To further establish internationalization at Jouf University, the experts recommend to implement cooperation agreements with international universities to foster student and staff mobility. Given cultural and structural constraints, the experts suggest inviting international scholars for guest lectures or short visits to increase academic exchange and global visibility.

Overall, from the experts' point of view the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" 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. The objectives are clearly defined, aligned with the University's mission and the national framework, and supported by adequate institutional strategies for research, quality assurance, and future development.

Decision

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

3.2 Structure of the study program

In accordance with ESG 1.3 Student-centered Learning, Teaching and Assessment

The study program aims to provide students with specialized and interdisciplinary knowledge as well as professional, methodological and general competences. The study program has a modular structure that is closely linked to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)[1] and a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the modules contain all necessary information, as required in the ECTS User's Guide (particularly with regard to the details about learning content and outcomes, methods of learning, prerequisites for the allocation of ECTS credits, workload).

The combination and succession of the modules of the study program are consistent with the specified qualification objectives (described earlier).

[1] http://ec.europa.eu/education/tools/docs/ects-guide_en.pdf

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 arrangement of internships in the study program allows acquisition of ECTS credits. Provided that the program offers exchange mobility gaps, they will be integrated into students' curriculum.

Study programs with special profile requirements (e.g. dual, part-time, occupational or distance learning study programs) comply with particular aspects that are considered as appropriate and proportionate. These particular aspects are continuously observed in the study program.

Summary

The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" consists of 36 credit hours distributed across general and specialized modules, a thesis, and field experience. The program includes 10 required general courses totaling 13 credit hours (36.1% of the program) and elective specialized tracks in clinical microbiology (5 courses), hematology (4 courses), and clinical chemistry (5 courses), which together contribute 12 credit hours (33.4%). A major component of the program is the thesis, carrying 8 credit hours (22.2%), while field experience within each specialized track contributes 3 credit hours (8.3%). The curriculum is structured across four levels, with levels 1 to 3 covering general and specialized content, and level 4 dedicated entirely to completing the thesis. Field experience is embedded within each track to ensure hands-on learning and practical specialization (SER 4.1.1).

The program consists exclusively of program-specific modules designed to meet its objectives, including required general courses, specialized tracks, and a thesis, all aligned with the intended learning outcomes. The program does not include shared modules with other study programs at Jouf University, nor are courses studied jointly with students from other programs. External cooperation is limited to hospitals where students complete their field experience. This practical component enables students to apply theoretical knowledge in real-world clinical settings while gaining hands-on experience in their chosen specialization track (SER 4.1.2).

The levels 2 and 3 are divided into three tracks: Medical Microbiology (MM), Hematology (H), and Clinical Chemistry (CC). The list of modules offered:

Nr.	Title	Sem.	CP
MCLS611	Pathophysiology	1	1
MCLS612	Molecular Diagnostics	1	2
MCLS613	Advanced Immunology	1	1
MCLS614	Medical Genetics	1	1
MCLS615	Laboratory Management and Quality Assurance	1	2
			7
MCLS616	Advanced Biostatistics	2	2
MCLS617	Seminar	2	1
MCLS621 /MCLS631/ MCLS641	Medical Bacteriology (MM) or Red Blood Cell Disorders (H) or In Born Error of Metabolism (CC)	2	3 or 3 or 2
MCLS622 / MCLS632 / MCLS642	Medical Virology (MM) or Transfusion Medicine (H) or Advanced Analytical Techniques in Clinical Chemistry (CC)	2	2 or 3 or 3
MCLS623 / MCLS633 / MCLS643	Advanced Medical Parasitology (MM) or Advanced Hemostasis (H) or Clinical Endocrinology (CC)	2	3 or 2 or 3
			11
MCLS618	Scientific Research Methods	3	1
MCLS619	Research Proposal Specialized Track	3	1
MCLS620	Infection Control and Prevention	3	1
MCLS624 / MCLS634 / MCLS644	Antimicrobial Agents (MM) or Hematological Malignancies (H) or Clinical Practice in Hematology (CC)	3	2 or 4 or 2
MCLS625 / MCLS635 / MCLS645	Advanced Medical Mycology (MM) or Clinical Practice in Hematology (H) or Toxicology and Therapeutic Drug Monitoring (CC)	3	2 or 3 or 2
MCLS626 / MCLS646	Clinical Practice in Microbiology (MM) X (H) Clinical Practice in Clinical Chemistry (CC)	3	3 or 0 or 3
			10

MCLS699	Thesis	4	8
			8
	Total:		**36**

The module description/catalogue covers the following aspects: number, title, semester, credit hours, lecture hours, practical hours, self-study hours, language, learning outcomes, content examination (Annex 01).

The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is structured to build knowledge, skills, and competencies progressively across its duration, totaling 36 credit hours (SER 4.1.3):

- Year 1 (Level 1 – General Courses, 7 credit hours): Students establish a strong foundation through required modules such as pathophysiology, molecular diagnostics, advanced immunology, medical genetics, and laboratory management and quality assurance. These courses provide the theoretical and scientific basis for advanced study.
- Year 1 (Level 2 – General and Elective Specialization, 11 credit hours): Students choose one of three specialization tracks: clinical microbiology, hematology, or clinical chemistry. Modules such as medical bacteriology, hematopathology, and advanced biostatistics deepen expertise, develop technical skills, and foster analytical and clinical problem-solving abilities.
- Year 2 (Level 3 – Total 10 credit hours, including a Field Experience, 3 credit hours in each specialty): Students complete practical training in hospitals, where they apply theoretical knowledge and laboratory skills in real-world clinical settings within their chosen specialization.
- Year 2 (Level 4 – Thesis, 8 credit hours): The final phase centers on an independent research project that integrates knowledge and skills gained throughout the program. Students conduct advanced laboratory research, perform scientific analysis, and solve complex clinical problems.

The study program does not include a separate internship period, as students have already completed internship training at the bachelor's level. Instead, the program provides comprehensive clinical training through a three-credit-hour field experience course in each specialization track. As the University explains, this training is conducted in accredited hospital laboratories under the supervision of qualified staff. The field experience is designed to enable students to apply advanced experiments and techniques in clinical practice while analyzing critical challenges and

problems to ensure accurate and reliable results in laboratory investigations (SER 4.1.4). The minimum qualification required for a clinical supervisor is a PhD.

The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" employs a variety of teaching strategies to support student learning. These include interactive lectures, laboratory sessions, seminars, journal clubs, tutorials, group discussions, field visits, and self-directed learning (SDL) (SER 4.1.5). Digital tools are integrated to support flexible, student-centered learning. The learning management system Blackboard is the central hub for course materials, announcements, quizzes and assignment submission; its discussion forums enable structured peer interaction. Virtual classroom sessions are used for focused revision or additional support when needed, and a variety of online assessment formats (quizzes, assignments, formative tests) complement in-person instruction. This blended approach ensures taught concepts are practiced in real settings and assessed through both direct (exams, projects, presentations) and indirect (course evaluations, supervisor feedback) methods (SER 4.1.6).

Research integration is a central component of the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences," enabling students to develop advanced research skills and contribute to scientific knowledge. Beginning in the second level, students select a specialization track—hematology, clinical microbiology, or clinical chemistry—which guides their research focus. At the third level, students prepare and submit a research proposal under the supervision of a faculty advisor, which is reviewed and approved by the departmental council. The research thesis, carrying 8 credit hours, is completed in the fourth level under the same supervisor. Supervisors are typically PhD holders and play a key role in guiding student research, meeting with students at least twice per week and requiring monthly progress reports. Students who fail to complete their thesis within two semesters or who consistently show insufficient engagement may face academic consequences, including warnings and potential cancellation of enrollment. The thesis defense is described as a rigorous process. Students submit hardbound copies of their work for evaluation and then defend the thesis before a committee composed of the supervisor and two additional faculty members. The supervisor contributes 50% to the final evaluation, while the committee collectively assesses the scientific content, quality, and originality of the work, including checks for plagiarism. Outcomes may include acceptance, acceptance with modifications (major or minor), or rejection. After a

successful defense, students submit four final copies for approval and archiving (SER 4.1.7).

The program does not include study-abroad opportunities or formal international partnerships, it incorporates field experience in local hospitals to provide practical training and real-world application. As the program is newly established and no cohort has graduated to date, formal partnership arrangements with international universities are still under development. Currently, there are no visiting students or enrolled students participating in short-term study abroad or exchange programs. However, discussions are underway with institutions in the United States and the United Kingdom to establish future exchange opportunities, which the University anticipate will enhance mobility options for upcoming cohorts.

As the University explains, the program is nationally comparable to those at leading Saudi universities, such as King Khalid University, King Faisal University, and King Saud University, and internationally aligns with programs at institutions like the Catholic University of America and the University of Alabama at Birmingham (SER 4.1.8).

Judgement

The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" has a course-based structure and a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the courses are embedded within the course specifications. The course specification for each course contains information on the course name, course code, study load, semester, prerequisite, learning outcomes, description/syllabus, soft skills, forms of learning, learning methods, assessment of learning outcomes. The combination and succession of the courses of the study program are consistent with the specified qualification objectives (described earlier). Additionally, the experts identified medical genetics as an important topic for the curriculum and recommends its integration.

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.

With regard to interdisciplinarity, the experts observe that Jouf University provides a suitable institutional framework and possesses considerable potential for interdisciplinary cooperation. Several programs, such as "Health Administration," are

implemented jointly between the College of Medicine and the College of Administration, while others like "Public Health" and "Infection Prevention and Control" are coordinated between the College of Applied Medical Sciences and the College of Medicine. These structures create favorable conditions for interdisciplinary teaching and research. However, in the view of the experts, the University has so far made only limited use of these opportunities. Interdisciplinary exchange currently takes place primarily at the faculty level through research cooperations or through the admission of students from different disciplinary backgrounds. There is no systematic integration of interdisciplinary courses or joint research activities with other colleges on a student level at this stage. The experts encourage the University to strengthen these connections, in order to enhance the programs' practical and clinical orientation and to broaden students' perspectives. The planned establishment of the new University Hospital within the next 15 months is expected to further enhance interdisciplinary collaboration and provide additional practical learning opportunities. From the experts' point of view, data collection and ethical procedures will gain particular relevance once the hospital becomes operational. Hospital-based research will require ethics approval, data protection mechanisms, and secure sample handling protocols. The experts underline the importance of implementing strict biosafety and ethical standards, especially to prevent exposure risks for undergraduate and graduate students working in clinical laboratories.

The experts also appreciate the University's efforts to integrate digitalization and artificial-intelligence tools into teaching and learning. A core course introduces students to the ethical and practical use of AI technologies and the University has implemented mechanisms to ensure responsible application. Students are trained in how to acknowledge AI assistance in academic work, and specific software tools are used to verify AI-generated content, particularly in research projects and theses.

The experts acknowledge the very detailed course files with their 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.

Research plays an important role in the structure of the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences". The program combines academic research with professional training. The experts acknowledge that the curriculum provides students with the necessary methodological and analytical competencies to design and conduct research projects independently. Students may choose their

supervisor and research topic according to their professional interests, with each topic reviewed and approved by the departmental council to ensure academic relevance and ethical compliance. Every thesis must obtain approval from the ethics committee before implementation. Weekly meetings between students and supervisors are mandatory, providing ongoing academic guidance and progress monitoring. The research process follows a structured sequence and students begin developing their research proposal early, typically in the first or second semester, and continue working on it throughout the program.

The research strategy of Jouf University is designed to align research priorities with national development goals, particularly in the fields of social well-being, sustainability, and public health. The experts appreciate that students are introduced early to scientific research and encourage the University to further include students to participate in applied projects that address local community needs and national priorities. In the long term, the University plans to expand its academic and research profile by introducing PhD programs, increasing collaboration with national and international partners, and encouraging faculty–student research teams. These plans are considered by the experts as valuable steps toward strengthening the University's research culture and international visibility.

Decision

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

3.3 Admission and Feasibility

In accordance with ESG 1.4 Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

The admission requirements and, if applied, student selection procedures are specified. They correspond to the standards of the study program.

Feasibility of the study program is guaranteed. The amount of student workload is appropriate.

Student support services, as well as specialized and general consultations, are provided by the University in a sufficient and appropriate manner.

As a whole, the organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study program.

Summary

Admission to the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" requires meeting both general University requirements and program-specific criteria. Applicants must be Saudi nationals, born to a Saudi mother, or hold an official scholarship if non-Saudi. They must possess a bachelor's degree from a recognized institution, submit a complete application, and provide proof of good conduct and medical fitness. English proficiency is mandatory, with a STEP score of at least 55 or an equivalent IELTS/TOEFL score, valid within three years. As the University explains, program-specific requirements include holding a bachelor's degree in clinical laboratory sciences with a minimum GPA of 2.75 on a 5-point scale (or equivalent). Applicants must have completed an internship, obtained professional classification from the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties, and undergo an interview conducted by the department. The selection process assigns weight to GPA (50%), English proficiency (30%), and work experience (20%, up to 4 years). The admission procedure is overseen by the Vice Rectorate for Graduate Studies and Scientific Research, which publishes requirements on the University's website. Applications are reviewed by a departmental committee that conducts interviews, after which the Department Council determines the number of accepted candidates and their tracks. Accepted applicants receive official admission notices, while rejected candidates are informed electronically with stated reasons (SER 5.1.1).

The admissions process for the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is designed to be equitable and inclusive, applying the same standards to all applicants, including those with learning disabilities. Admission decisions are based on academic suitability and program-specific requirements, without discrimination on the basis of disability. As the University explains, applicants are required to disclose any learning differences, disabilities, or medical conditions during the initial application stage. This disclosure enables the University to assess compatibility with the program and plan appropriate accommodations. If admitted, students with disabilities work with a dedicated advisor to implement tailored support measures, ensuring equitable access to academic resources and services throughout their studies (SER 5.1.2). There are currently no students with disabilities or chronic illnesses enrolled in the two ongoing batches of the Clinical Laboratory Sciences program. However, the institution is well-equipped to support students with disabilities. Facilities include dedicated parking spaces, accessible entrances

with ramps, elevators in all buildings, and wheelchair-accessible restrooms. In addition, classrooms and laboratories are designed to accommodate mobility aids, and priority seating is available where needed. The university also provides support services such as academic advising, counseling, and reasonable accommodations to ensure an inclusive learning environment for all students.

The University has defined policies for the recognition and transfer of academic credits from other accredited national or international institutions. These require equivalency in course content, a minimum grade, and timely completion. A maximum of 40% of the total credit hours can be transferred. The process is overseen by academic departments and finalized by the College Council, with exceptions reviewed by the University's Permanent Committee for Academic Affairs (SER 5.1.3).

According to the University, academic counselling is provided through faculty advisors and the University's Center for Academic Advising. Students receive support with academic planning, personal and social challenges, and career orientation. Structured tools and templates guide regular advisor–student interactions. Faculty staff maintain office hours for individual support, and communication is facilitated via email, Blackboard announcements, and feedback channels. Targeted assistance is available for specific student groups: creative students receive mentorship, high-achieving students gain access to additional resources, and underperforming students are supported through tutoring and progress monitoring. Research mentoring is offered for student projects and conference preparation. Clinical and laboratory supervision is ensured through assigned faculty members. Additional support includes orientation sessions, skill development workshops, and access to campus-wide services such as libraries, sports facilities, and wellness resources, promoting a well-rounded student experience (SER 5.2.1).

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. With regard to student allocation and track selection, the experts note that around 80 % of applicants prefer the hematology track, while only about half of them can be admitted based on merit. The selection process appears appropriate, yet the criteria for balancing applicant demand across tracks should be communicated more clearly to ensure transparency and fairness.

The experts draw attention to the relatively high number of exams to be passed during both of the study programs. The University states that the system of mid-term and final exams is determined by the government. 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 specification 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. The experts find the support services at the University to be exemplary and conducive to the health and success of the student body. Students with illnesses or special circumstances are granted flexible arrangements such as online sessions, sick or maternity leave, and adjusted examination schedules. These measures ensure academic continuity and inclusivity. The experts also note that students who work alongside their studies are adequately supported through personal supervision and flexible scheduling.

Regarding psychological support, the University provides comprehensive services to safeguard student wellbeing. All students undergo a pre-screening to identify health concerns, and those in need receive ongoing follow-up, counselling, and psychological consultation. The program trains peer mentors in stress-management techniques, fostering a supportive community. Financial assistance is available through an agreement with the Saudi Developmental Bank for students unable to cover tuition fees, and faculty members benefit from institutional health-care support.

Through these measures the University demonstrates its commitment to maintaining a healthy, resilient student body.

Decision

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

3.4 Examination system and transparency

In accordance with ESG 1.8 Public Information

Examinations serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. The requirements to students' performance in examinations are regulated and published. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organization, is appropriate.

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

Information concerning the study program, process of education, admission requirements and the compensation regulations for students with disabilities are documented and published.

Summary

The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" follows Jouf University's Examination and Student Evaluation Policy, adapted to align with course-specific learning outcomes (Annex 9). All courses are assessed by a mid-term written exam (carried out mid-course), a final practical and a final written exam (carried out at the end of semester). In addition, continuous assessments are carried out through assignments, in class quizzes and presentations (marked against checklists). The final project is presented in-front of an examination committee comprised of 3 academics. It is discussed and granted acceptance or rejection. Make-up final exams are provided for students who missed their finals and presented a valid reason that is accepted by the exams committee. The examination policy is in line with the university bylaws for postgraduate studies. The assessment policy is announced to all students at the beginning of the program and is available on the university website. Students with disabilities have the right for extra assistance during the examinations (for example large font size exam prints, physical assistance, …etc) and students with chronic illnesses

receive extra care and their illness-related needs are fulfilled (for example diabetic students monitored or receiving treatments during the exam).

Each course has a defined assessment plan detailing methods and timelines, which is shared with students at the beginning of the course via the learning management system (Blackboard). Feedback regarding the assessment activities is collected from students, faculty members, and the quality unit during the program, by the end of each semester as well as by the end of the program through surveys and reports.

The minimum passing grade is 75%, and the University applies a 5-point GPA system:

Percentage	Grade	Symbol	Weight (out of 5)	Weight (out of 4)
95-100	Exceptional	A+	5.0	4.0
90-less than 95	Excellent	A	4.75	3.75
85-less than 90	Superior	B+	4.5	3.5
80-less than 85	Very Good	B	4.0	3.00
75-less than 80	Above Average	C+	3.5	2.5
70-less than 75	Good	C	3.0	2.0
65-less than 70	High Pass	D+	2.5	1.5
60-less than 65	Pass	D	2.0	1.0
Less than 60	Fail	F	1.0	0

The University ensures that all key information regarding the study program is publicly accessible through the official college website. This includes a detailed study plan outlining course sequencing, credit hour distribution, and the integration of theory and practice. The educational process is described with reference to teaching methods, learning resources, clinical training, and assessment strategies. Admission requirements, including eligibility criteria and selection procedures, are clearly presented. Examination regulations are also available, covering assessment types, grading policies, academic integrity, and procedures for appeals and re-examinations. In addition, the website highlights extracurricular activities, community engagement, and research opportunities that complement the academic curriculum. The College also communicates with stakeholders through newsletters, social media, and public events to maintain transparency (SER 6.2.2)

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. 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. However, 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 once. 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. 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 specifications. The frequency of examinations, as well as their organizations, are appropriate. 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.

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.

From the experts' point of view, the relevant information concerning the study program, the process of education, the admission requirements and compensation regulations are documented and published. The experts also recommend providing additional information with 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.

Decision

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

3.5 Teaching staff and material equipment

In accordance with ESG 1.5 Teaching Staff and in line with ESG 1.6 Learning Resources and student support

Professionalism and a sufficient number of human resources assure the successful implementation of the study program. Qualifications of the teaching personnel correspond to the requirements of the study program. Recruitment and appointment of teaching positions are appropriate. Interdisciplinary links to other study programs are taken into consideration.

Measures for the professional and personal development of the teaching personnel are provided.

Qualitative and quantitative sufficiency of the equipment and space resources assures the successful implementation of the study program.

Summary

According to the University, the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is taught by full-time faculty staff composed of highly qualified professionals from diverse national and international backgrounds. The staff includes 4 associate professors and 15 assistant professors. Both male and female faculty members are provided with equal opportunities to teach master's students; however, some female faculty members decline teaching assignments due to evening and weekend class schedules. Beginning next semester, female faculty will contribute equitably to the morning cohort of the master's program in accordance with their respective areas of expertise.

The student-to-faculty ratio is 1:8.1 at full enrollment capacity.

According to the University, the recruitment of faculty members for the Master study program is conducted through a structured, multi-stage process aligned with strategic priorities and international academic standards. Departments assess their staffing needs and submit requests specifying academic rank, specialization, and qualifications. These requests are consolidated by the College Recruitment Committee and approved by the College Council before being announced through official recruitment channels, including the Saudi Arabian Cultural Missions and academic networks. Applicants are required to hold a PhD or equivalent degree from internationally ranked institutions, maintain academic continuity, demonstrate

relevant experience, and possess peer-reviewed publications in recognized journals. Shortlisted candidates are evaluated via online interviews, and final selections are approved by the College Council and endorsed by the Vice Rectorate for Academic Affairs (SER 7.1.2).

Faculty development is overseen by the Skill Development Committee, which organizes targeted workshops and seminars in areas such as teaching strategies, student engagement, leadership, and academic writing. Activities are based on annual needs assessments and are documented through feedback and evaluation reports. Research is supported by the Deanship of Postgraduate Studies and Scientific Research, which provides funding for projects, publications, and conference participation. The University also offers incentives such as publication fee reimbursements, performance awards, and recognition prizes to promote a research-oriented academic culture.

In terms of support staff, the University employs a range of technical and administrative staff. Technical staff include laboratory technicians, IT specialists, and clinical support personnel, while administrative operations are handled by non-teaching staff assigned to areas such as logistics, human resources, and facility management. Roles are clearly defined through formal job descriptions and organizational structures (SER 7.2.1).

The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is delivered on the main campus of Jouf University within the College of Applied Medical Sciences. Classrooms are described as well-organized, equipped with electronic instructional media, and furnished with comfortable seating. The program is also supported by well-established laboratories that serve teaching, training, and research purposes. As the University explains, the facilities include three lecture halls and a shared activities hall used for seminars, in addition to nine specialized laboratories. These laboratories cover key areas such as histopathology, clinical chemistry, hematology, molecular biology, bacteriology, mycology and parasitology, blood bank and immunology, endocrinology, and advanced microscopy. Capacities range from 20 to 30 students, and facilities are equipped with resources such as projectors, whiteboards, internet access, and laboratory-specific instruments. This infrastructure provides the necessary environment for both theoretical instruction and practical laboratory training (SER 7.3.1).

The central library at Jouf University provides essential academic resources to support the Master study program. The collection includes 39 books and e-books

related to the program available in English and some in Arabic. The library also subscribes to various periodicals, both in print and digital formats, covering key topics in medicine and related fields. Digital access is offered through platforms such as the Saudi Digital Library, PubMed, Scopus, Web of Science, Elsevier, and Wiley. These resources are accessible on- and off-campus via university credentials and Blackboard. The library is open from Sunday to Thursday, 8:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m., while digital resources remain accessible at all times. The inventory is regularly updated to ensure relevance and accuracy, with outdated materials replaced by current editions. A centralized library system manages lending and access (SER 7.3.2).

The University provides computer labs and high-speed internet to support digital learning and research. PCs are available for students and faculty in both male and female sections (SER 7.3.3).

Funding for faculty research in the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is provided through several mechanisms. Faculty members may receive direct grants to support their investigations, covering all related costs, including publication fees. The Deanship of Graduate Studies and Scientific Research issues annual calls for research proposals, which are submitted electronically. Proposals undergo an anonymous review process, and applicants are formally notified of the final decision regarding their submission (SER 7.3.4).

Judgement

New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the programs and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. Overall, the teaching and academic staff at the Jouf 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. As motivations to teach at the Jouf University, the faculty staff cite good working conditions, the good reputation and the family-like feeling between the staff.

The experts find the number of human resources allocated to the program to be sufficient to carry out its functions. The teaching staff is well qualified and in possession of academic and technical credentials and experience adequate to their tasks.

The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development transparently, and 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. Each faculty member receives an individual development plan. General training courses cover teaching methodology, quality assurance, and academic leadership, while specialized workshops are offered at the program level. The professional development of faculty members is monitored through Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) defined in the University's strategic plan.

The experts note that academic career progression at the University follows a clear, government-regulated pathway: faculty advance through the ranks of assistant, lecturer, assistant professor, associate professor, and finally full professor, with each promotion contingent on demonstrated excellence in community engagement, research, and teaching. The University encourages participation in national and international conferences, provides full PhD scholarships for academic advancement, and covers publication fees to promote research output. Newly recruited faculty members participate in an induction program designed to support their integration into teaching and research activities. Research activities within the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" are supported through both internally and externally funded projects conducted in cooperation with local and regional institutions.

The experts visited the premises of the College of Applied Medical Sciences, where the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is located. However, high-cost equipment, such as electron microscopes, requires specialized technical skills and maintenance support. Reliance on external service providers could create scheduling or operational risks. The University should establish internal maintenance training or long-term service agreements to mitigate these risks.

As a whole, it was ascertained by the experts that the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" has ample teaching facilities at its disposals. Students and staff have full access to the University's digital library and electronic databases, ensuring the availability of up-to-date academic literature.

Decision

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

3.6 Quality assurance

In accordance with ESG 1.1. Policy for Quality Assurance and ESG 1.10 Cyclical External Quality Assurance.

In line with ESG 1.7 Information Management and taking into consideration ESG 1.9 On-going Monitoring and periodic review of programs

The University has developed and documented a concept of quality assurance in education process, teaching and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of the study program.

The results of the internal quality assurance management are applied for the continuous development of the study program. In doing so, the University takes into close consideration the quality evaluation results as well as the analyses of students' workload, their academic accomplishments and feedback from graduates.

Summary

According to the University, the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" ensures quality in teaching, learning, and research through the Quality and Academic Accreditation Unit (QAAU), under the supervision of the Deanship of Development and Quality (DDQ). The program applies the PDCA (Plan-Do-Check-Act) model as a framework for continuous monitoring and improvement of educational standards. The QAAU operates in accordance with the University's Quality Manual and is responsible for conducting internal audits, facilitating program reviews, organizing faculty training, and monitoring key performance indicators. These efforts are supported by several specialized committees and department-level quality coordinators. An advisory council, comprising internal and external experts, provides strategic input on academic quality and accreditation (SER 8.1.1).

Program and course quality is evaluated through structured mechanisms involving direct and indirect assessments. Course reports, submitted each semester using the up-to-date NCAAA template, include assessment results and proposed improvements. These reports are reviewed by the QAAU and relevant committees before final approval by the College Council. At the program level, the Annual Program Report (APR) is prepared by the Program Coordinator, guiding development plans and actions for improvement. The QAAU compiles a summary of all action plans and oversees their implementation and follow-up to ensure closure of the quality loop (SER 8.1.2).

Stakeholder involvement is a central component of the quality system. The program conducts regular surveys, including Course Evaluation Surveys, Program Evaluation Surveys, Student Experience Surveys, and Stakeholder Surveys (e.g., alumni and employer feedback). These surveys assess course delivery, program relevance, academic advising, and graduate readiness. The QAAU analyzes the data, which is then discussed in institutional meetings and used to develop targeted action plans for continuous enhancement (SER 8.1.4). Student participation is further ensured through representation in departmental meetings, reinforcing their role in the decision-making process.

The practical relevance of the study program is systematically evaluated through employer and alumni surveys, and alignment of Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) with professional standards. External reviewers and accreditation bodies, including SCFHS, assess whether the curriculum meets national and international expectations. Input from the advisory council and tracking of key performance indicators such as graduate employability and clinical examination results all contribute to the ongoing adaptation and improvement of the curriculum (SER 8.1.5).

The University regulates student workload through defined credit-hour limits, typically ranging from 9 to 12 credits per year. Flexibility is provided for students nearing graduation, while students with lower GPAs are assigned reduced loads to support academic success. Academic advising, time management workshops, and workload adjustments under special circumstances ensure the workload remains manageable. The feasibility of student workload is continuously monitored using performance metrics such as GPA trends, failure rates, and dropout statistics. Student evaluations are regularly conducted to assess satisfaction with research guidelines and supervision (SER 8.1.6).

The program presents the following statistics (SER 8.1.7):

Table 1: Number of students and success rate

	Total number of students Academic year 2023-2024				Success rate Academic year 2023-2024		
Semester	**Level**	**M**	**F**	**Total**	**M**	**F**	**Total**
Semester 1	**Level 1**	8	13	21	100%	100%	100%
Semester 2	**Level 2**	8	13	21	100%	100%	100%
	Total number of students Academic year 2024-2025				**Success rate Academic year 2024-2025**		
Semester 1	**Level 1**	5	10	15	NA	NA	NA
	Level 3	8	13	21	NA	NA	NA

M; Male – F; Female

Table 2: Statistics of Master of Science in Clinical Laboratory Sciences Program based on the track

Statistics of academic year 2023-2024												
Track	**Applicants**			**Accepted**			**Dropped out**			**Graduated**		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Hematology	12	10	22	4	8	12	0	0	0	NA	NA	NA
Medical Microbiology	6	15	21	4	5	9	1	0	1	NA	NA	NA
Statistics of academic year 2024-2025												
Track	**Applicants**			**Accepted**			**Dropped out**			**Graduated**		
	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total
Clinical Chemistry	8	5	13	3	2	5	0	0	0	NA	NA	NA
Hematology	3	9	12	2	8	10	0	0	0	NA	NA	NA

M; Male – F; Female

Judgement

From the experts' point of view, the University has a well-structured system of quality assurance spread across all of its units. The University has 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 "Clinical Laboratory Sciences".

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. 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.

The University possesses a robust data collection system and gathers comprehensive data on its study programs and other activities. The information gathered depends, to some extent, on the type and mission of the institution. Various Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) are captured by the institution. A range of information regarding study programs and activities is consistently captured by the institution. Student progression, success rates, and dropout rates are inherent considerations in the institution's 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 institution 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. The experts observe that the University takes evaluation feedback seriously. For instance, changes to course timing, additional exam opportunities, and the introduction of practical assessments. All evaluation results are systematically reviewed and discussed by academic committees, ensuring that constructive feedback leads to tangible enhancements in teaching and program delivery.

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. Curriculum review follows a structured schedule: minor changes are made annually, while major revisions take place every five years with input from external stakeholders, including employers and hospital representatives. Field placements are also evaluated through student and supervisor feedback. 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. To ensure accountability, the University maintains a formal complaints mechanism that allows students and staff to raise concerns about instructional quality or professional conduct. From the experts' point of view, the University should consider structured alumni activities or alumni programs to strengthen graduates' ties to the

institution and to provide current students with access to and exchange with alumni in professional practice (e.g. mentoring, career talks and networking).

Decision

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

3.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities

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.

Summary

According to the University, the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is committed to fostering an inclusive and equitable academic environment. The program ensures that all students, regardless of gender, personal, or social background, receive equal access to high-quality education. Both male and female students are taught in equally equipped, modern facilities and receive instruction from the same qualified faculty. Equal opportunities are provided in all academic and extracurricular areas, including research activities and leadership roles.

The University also provides structured support for students who develop disabilities or chronic illnesses after admission. Measures are in place to ensure that affected students can continue their studies without compromising patient safety or academic standards. The campus is equipped with ramps, elevators, accessible restrooms, assistive technologies, and on-site medical and psychological services. Faculty and staff are trained to accommodate individual needs and to maintain a supportive learning environment. Compensatory measures include individualized assessments, adapted examination formats, provision of mock exams, targeted support services, and the reassignment of clinical duties when necessary.

Judgement

The University demonstrates its commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for all students within the cultural conditions 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. The experts also acknowledge the University's progress in promoting gender equity and encourage further advancement of women in academic and leadership positions.

Decision

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

4 Conclusion

From the experts' point of view, all eight evaluated programs demonstrate clear and well-defined aims that are aligned with labor-market demands and community needs, with a strong emphasis on regional healthcare delivery. Throughout the meetings, the expert group observed high levels of motivation and commitment among students and staff. Students expressed overall satisfaction with the quality of teaching, academic guidance, and support services. Admission procedures and examination regulations are transparent, and the advisory and complaint systems function effectively and are well known to students.

Considering the University's large number of health-related programs, the experts suggest further strengthening interprofessional learning to better reflect the realities of modern healthcare delivery. Particularly with the establishment of the new University Hospital, they encourage the University to continue this development.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the site visit, the experts came to the conclusion that the Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" offered at the Jouf 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 further strengthen its international profile by concluding cooperation agreements with foreign higher education institutions to promote student and staff mobility.
- The University should invite international scholars for guest lectures or short-term academic visits, including virtual/online contributions to enhance academic exchange and global visibility.
- The University should establish a systematic integration of interdisciplinary courses and joint research activities, both across other colleges and within the same college at the student level to enhance the program's practical and clinical orientation and to broaden students' perspectives. The

University should utilize the planned establishment of the new University Hospital to further promote interdisciplinary collaboration and provide additional practical learning opportunities.

- The University should continue to introduce students early to scientific research and further involve them in applied projects that address local community needs and national priorities.
- The University should expand its academic and research profile in the long term by establishing PhD programs and increasing collaboration with national and international partners.
- The University should encourage the formation of faculty–student research teams to strengthen the institutional research culture and enhance international visibility.
- The University should provide additional information with the graduation certificate to increase international comparability by using the Diploma Supplement template developed by the Council of Europe, the European Commission, and UNESCO.
- The University should continue its efforts to promote gender equity and further advance women in academic and leadership position.
- The University should clarify and communicate transparent criteria for allocating applicants across tracks (e.g., hematology) when demand exceeds capacity, including waitlist and reallocation options.
- The University should consider structured alumni activities or alumni programs to strengthen graduates' ties to the institution and to provide current students with access to and exchange with alumni in professional practice (e.g. mentoring, career talks and networking).
- The University should implement a maintenance strategy for high-cost instruments (e.g., electron microscope), including vendor training for in-house technicians, service-level agreements, and contingency plans for downtime.

5 Decision of the Accreditation Commission

Decision of the Accreditation Commission December 11, 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 October 13-14, 2025, 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 regarding the Assessment Report. The Master study program requires the obtainment of 36 credit hours according to the internal credit hour system. The regulated study period in the program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is two years. The program includes 10 required general courses and elective specialized tracks in clinical microbiology (5 courses), hematology (4 courses), and clinical chemistry (5 courses). The language of instruction is English. The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Master of Clinical Laboratory Sciences". Admission takes place every spring semester. The first cohort of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 2023/2024.

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

The Master study program "Clinical Laboratory Sciences" is accredited for the duration of five years until September 30, 2031. The accreditation is based on the circumstances described in the Assessment Report.

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.

An appeal against this decision may be filed within two weeks of its notification. The appeal must be submitted in writing or recorded at the office of AHPGS Akkreditierung gGmbH, Sedanstraße 22, 79098 Freiburg, and must include a statement of reasons.