THE PROGRAMME OF FIRST CYCLE (BACHELOR’S DEGREE) STUDIES OF NURSING

NURSING (State Code – 612B70002)

SELF-EVALUATION REPORT

Rector of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences  Prof. Remigijus Žaliūnas

Head of the self-evaluation team  Assoc. prof. Aurelija Blaževičienė

Kaunas

November, 2013

Amendment July, 2015
### Profile of the study programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study programme</th>
<th>Nursing</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State code (first 7 symbols)</td>
<td>612B700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study field</td>
<td>Biomedical sciences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study area (code)</td>
<td>Nursing (11B1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study programme branches (if there are any)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study type</td>
<td>University studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study cycle</td>
<td>First</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Study mode (duration in years)</td>
<td>Full-time studies (4 years)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Credits</td>
<td>240 ECTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Entrant’s education</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree and qualification</td>
<td>Bachelor of nursing, general practice nurse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Programme registry date</td>
<td>May 19, 1997, re-registered February 17, 2004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Self – evaluation group of the programme of Nursing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Degree, Name, Surname</th>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Dr. Aurelija Blazeviciene</td>
<td>Head of the self-evaluation group</td>
<td>Administration, coordination, development of the final self-evaluation report, presentation of the Nursing faculty.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Dr. Olga Riklikiene</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>The programme aims and learning outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Dr. Daiva Kriukelyte</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>The curriculum design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Jovita Demskyte</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>The teaching staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Virginija Bulikaite</td>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Facilities and learning resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Grazvyde Masiliuniene</td>
<td>Member, social partner</td>
<td>Development of final self-evaluation report, gathering and presentation of opinion of social partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Ingrida Zemaitaityte</td>
<td>Member, student</td>
<td>Study process and students’ performance, Programme management</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Head of self-evaluation group:
Head of Nursing and Care Department Assoc. prof. Aurelija Blazeviciene,
Phone: work (8-37) 327247, mobile 8 682 45938
E-mail: aurelija.blazeviciene@gmail.com
# THE STRUCTURE OF SELF-EVALUATION SUMMARY

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INTRODUCTION

Lithuanian University of Health Sciences (hereinafter - LUHS) is the largest educational institution for training of health care specialists. It has long standing traditions and its history goes back to the Faculty of Medicine at Vytautas Magnus University, which later became the Institute of Medicine. According to the resolution by Seimas of the Republic of Lithuania on the 30th of June, 2010 Kaunas University of Medicine and Lithuanian Veterinary Academy were merged. LUHS is the largest university of biomedical sciences that continues the best traditions of both educational institutions.

The University has two collegial management bodies – the Council and the Senate and a sole management body – the Rector, who is elected by the Council. Chancellors and Vice-Rectors provide help for Rector. Medical Academy and Veterinary Academy are the main units of the University, which also includes Faculties, Research Institutes, University Hospital, Veterinary Clinics, Centre of Practical Training and Experiments, Theoretical and Clinical Departments, Faculty Institutes, Research Laboratories; other structural and functional units, which provide the needs for studies, research, health care and social, and cultural life.

Teaching staff of LUHS consists of 167 professors, 225 associate professors, 333 lecturers and 484 assistant professors (by December 31, 2012). These entire staff provides qualitative studies of the first, second and third circle in biomedical sciences. The University offers 27 study programmes. More than 6200 students including 517 foreign students from more than thirty-five countries are studying in these programmes.

The Faculty of Nursing (hereinafter - FN) was established in 1990 and consists of five departments: Rehabilitation Clinic, Geriatric Clinic, Department of Nursing and Care, Sports Institute, and Behavioural Medicine Clinic.

The mission of the Faculty is to prepare highly qualified specialists of nursing, midwifery, physical therapy, and occupational therapy by giving them knowledge, professional skills, and forming the system of their attitudes and values, also by letting them participate in scientific investigations of nursing, midwifery, rehabilitation, gerontology, physical therapy and occupational therapy. They can also participate in the formation and implementation of health policy decisions.

Four bachelor programmes of the first cycle are conducted at the faculty: Nursing, Midwifery, Physical therapy, and Occupational Therapy and four master programmes of the second cycle: Clinical Nursing, Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation, Health Rehabilitation Through Physical Exercise, and Art Therapy. The latter is a joint programme with Kaunas Art Faculty of Vilnius Art Academy. The graduates from these programmes have a right to work in all health care institutions. LUHS is the only university in Lithuania having the right to conduct doctoral studies (PhD) in nursing.

This self-evaluation report contains data about the first cycle programme Nursing, which was started in 1992.

The self-evaluation group was formed by the Rector of the University. All members were responsible for a certain task in the report field. The summary of the self-evaluation was discussed at the meeting of Nursing and Care Department staff on the 13th of September 2013 (minute No.SLF-04-4-14) and at the meeting of the faculty board on the 16th of September 2013 (minute No. SLF-13-09). The summary of self-evaluation has been prepared according to the requirements of external audit for the study programmes.

The first external audit was done in 2010 and the programme was accredited till 15-07-2014. After that the University has been improving the programme according to the recommendations of the experts. The latest external audit was done in 2014.

AMENDMENT AFTER THE SUBMISSION OF SELF-REPORT IN 30 DECEMBER 2013 (hereinafter –Amendment):

- Both the teaching staff and students’ numbers have changed, and by December 31, 2014, teaching staff of LSMU consisted of 161 professors, 229 associate professors, 298 lecturers, and 454 assistant professors. The

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3 The Description of the external audit and accreditation order, confirmed by the Minister of Education and Science of LR on 24 July, 2009, No ISAK-1652. (Amendment of the order No V-1487, 29-07-2011 by the Minister of Education and Science of LR)
4 The Methods of study program evaluation, accredited by the order of Director of the Study Quality Centre on December 20, 2010.
University is conducting 29 study programmes. More than 6481 students including 613 foreign students from more than 35 countries are studying in these programmes.

- New department – Department of Children Rehabilitation – was established in 2014, thus the Faculty of Nursing consists now of six departments.
- The master level programs in Rehabilitation field were reorganized, and a new program “Health Promotion and Rehabilitation”, uniting previous two programs, is opened in 2015.
- New master level program in Nursing “Advanced Practice Nursing” is offered from 2015.

ANALYSIS OF THE PROGRAMME

1.1. The programme aims and learning outcomes

The demand of the programme, aim and objectives

A person can work as a nurse in Lithuania, if she/he has a professional qualification of a nurse and a valid licence of nursing practice. In 2011 in Lithuania was 23833 nurses together with midwives. The number of nurses per 100 000 population was 793 in 2012 – higher than EU-12 and lower than EU-15. The mean age of nurses was 45.3 years.

Amendment: 22374 nurses and 907 midwifes were in Lithuania by the end of 2014 (decreasing tendency).

According to the outline of healthcare system reorganization nursing services was expanded in reorganized into primary health care level, and therefore a big part of nursing care was relocated into communities. Nurses have to fulfil more and more functions and have more responsibilities in health care team, especially with the extensive use of innovations and high technologies in health care sector. The prognosis of nursing resources demands revealed that the demand is higher than the current number of working nurses. In the coming 15 years, the country will loose a little more than a quarter of nurses, who will quit their professional activities, while the demand projections showed that the number of nurses should grow. Approximately 5000 nursing students should be admitted into the nursing programmes till 2025, if the same current number of nurses to be retained in the country. The demographical changes suggest that nurses are especially requested in care for the elderly and home care services, and the nursing personnel should increase further.

It is important to prepare health care specialists with higher university education, who would work independently and professionally, and could organize modern nursing care at primary level and at hospitals. They should also be able to work as teachers of nursing, as mentors during students’ clinical training and would act highly professionally while implementing national nursing policy.


5 The Law of Nursing and Obstetrical Practice, 009-07-14, Official gazette. 2009, Nr. 89-3801 (2009-07-28),Vilnius
6 Centre of Health Information, Institute of hygiene http://sic.hi.lt/html/spr.htm
10 On the confirmation of nursing service at ambulatory health care institutions and at home. The Order of Lithuanian Minister of Health, No. V-1026, 14-12-2007
14 Munich Declaration “Nurses and Midwives: a force for health”. Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2000
According to the survey of competent authorities from 26 Member States (2012), 16 Member States educate general practice nurses only at university level, two Member States, including Lithuania – at universities (BA degree) and vocational colleges\(^{15}\). At the moment general practice nurses are prepared at three universities of Lithuania (LUHS, Klaipeda University, and Vilnius University) and at six colleges (Kaunas, Klaipeda, Panevezys, Siauliai, Utena, and Vilnius). Every year around 400 students finish first cycle studies of nursing. The Nursing programme at LUHS has been established at 1992 and was the first university nursing programme in the country.

During two decades the University accumulated a lot of valuable experience in the preparation nurses and ensured the continuity of studies according the Bologna process at all three study cycles: bachelor, master, and doctoral.

**The mission of Nursing programme** – to prepare nurses, who understand the principles, theories and methods of nursing, have broad knowledge of nursing science, and who are able independently and critically to evaluate the nursing needs of healthy persons and chronically ill people with different somatic and mental health diseases, and acquired adequate personal and professional value system. They must also be able to evaluate the nursing needs of different social groups at their working places, schools, homes, health care centres, hospitals, and other health care institutions.

**The outcomes of the Nursing programme** – graduates from the nursing programme, having acquired the qualification of a nurse, may work as nurse of general practice at different public and private health care facilities of all three levels, also at children’s health care and educational institutions (more on the page 8, section 1.5).

### 1.2. Programme popularity among entrants

The entrance to Lithuanian higher education is organized by the Association of Lithuanian Higher Education Institutions (LAMA BPO)\(^{16}\). The dynamics of general admission to the Nursing programme is shown in table 1. *(Amendment: up-dated after 2013)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Data about the entrants into the nursing program</th>
<th>2014 (amendment)</th>
<th>2013</th>
<th>2012</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2010</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Planned number of entrants/ admitted</td>
<td>73/75</td>
<td>34/42</td>
<td>24/27</td>
<td>22/21</td>
<td>15/15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>State-funded/ self-funded</td>
<td>17/58</td>
<td>8/34</td>
<td>1/26</td>
<td>0/31</td>
<td>0/13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(including 15 state targeted financing)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Applicants by first (nursing) choice</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Applicants by all choices</td>
<td>982</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>807</td>
<td>635</td>
<td>437</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 1.3. Programme compatibility with the institutional, state, and international documents

**Connection of the programme aim with the higher school mission and development strategy**

As noted in LUHS Statute\(^{18}\), the main aim of the university is to develop a healthy and educated society and the most important objectives are: 1) provide studies, which give a person higher university education and qualification and foster an educated, ethically responsible, creative, and enterprising personality; 2) to broaden students’ research knowledge and to educate them as scientists by carrying out investigations and experiments and by national and international cooperation in research and practical fields; 3) to enable the graduates to provide health care services for Lithuanian citizens; 4) to improve qualification and retrain specialists; 5) to expand international cooperation in the main fields of activity.

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\(^{15}\)Survey on the training of general care nurses in the European Union. DG Internal Market, 2012

\(^{16}\)www.lamabpo.lt

\(^{17}\)LUHS. Regulation on students’ entrants of targeted financing seats. Approved by Senate on 22 November 2013, No. 38-08

\(^{18}\)LUHS Statute. The LRS Decision on June 30, 2010 No. XI-973 (a new version of LR Seimas Decision on June 28, 2012, No. XI-2147
The main activities of the University are – studies, research and health care\textsuperscript{19}. One of the strategic objectives of LUHS in years 2011-2016 is “to provide university studies of the highest quality, based on research investigations, which are compatible with the up-to-date sophisticated technologies and to develop a universal, responsible, creative and enterprising personality”\textsuperscript{15}. The Strategy plan was developed with the aim to ensure the quality of the training of biomedical specialists and to ensure the equilibrium between the supply and the demand of such specialists at competitive job market.

So the programme Nursing is compatible with the LUHS mission, strategic plan and further expansion.

\textit{The aim of the programme, meant for acquiring regulated professions}

The Nursing programme the same as other health care specialists, comply with specialists’ preparation programmes in other EU member states, and are harmonized with the Directive 2005/36 /EC of the European Parliament and of the Council. This directive defines the minimal requirements for nurses’ education and the mutual recognition of professional qualifications \textsuperscript{12}. In the classification of professions\textsuperscript{20} profession of a nurse is listed as a separate (2230). In order to promote the free movement of health professionals in EU, nurses’ qualification, acquired in Lithuania, is automatically recognized in any EU Member States. The theoretical part of the Nursing programme and the content of clinical training totally comply with the Directive requirements.


University first cycle Nursing programme is in accord with the provisions of Bologna Declaration. Having acquired a bachelor degree, nurses will be able to study at LUHS and other universities master’s programmes and after that take PhD studies.

\section*{1.4. The validity of the programme objectives}

\textit{The connection with the aim of the programme}

The aim of the first cycle Nursing programme is to prepare highly qualified specialists, who will be able to work independently and in a team, while implementing European health policy “Health for All in the XXI. Main WHO Principles of Public Health Care in the European Region”\textsuperscript{21} and “Health 2020”\textsuperscript{22}, also the health care strategy described in the Lithuanian National Health Concept\textsuperscript{23}. One of the objectives of the programme is to educate specialists with the holistic approach towards the patients who will able to fulfil the patients’ needs.

\textit{The compatibility of objectives with the type and cycle of studies}

Nursing programme provide a student with university education, based on new knowledge and technologies, and evidence based practice, that enables to foster developing a highly educated, ethically responsible, creative, and broad-minded personality. Students carry on investigations, make different projects, and maintain international contacts.

The aim of the first cycle (bachelor) Nursing programme is to prepare highly qualified specialists, therefore students must study general university and specialized subjects. During the first cycle studies specialists are prepared, who will be able to work independently and in a team, therefore 2403 hours of the programme is devoted to clinical training in the clinical environment (direct patient care) (amendment). University first cycle Nursing programme are based on cognitive skills and research competence development, it corresponds the VI qualification level of National Qualification Framework (university education)\textsuperscript{24}.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{19} LUHS 2011-2016 Expansion Strategy Landmarks [http://www.lsmuni.lt]
\item \textsuperscript{20} Lithuanian Classification of Professions [http://213.197.179.229/mod/klasifikatorius/]
\item \textsuperscript{21} Health for all in the 21st century. 1999
\item \textsuperscript{22} The new European policy for health – Health 2020: vision, values, main directions and approaches. WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2011. EUR/RC61/9.
\item \textsuperscript{23} Lithuanian National Health Concept. [www.sam.lt]
\item \textsuperscript{24} The Resolution of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania “On approval of the framework of the Lithuanian qualifications”, 4 May 2010 No. 535. Vilnius
\end{itemize}
1.5. The outcomes of the study programme

**Attainability and versatility of learning outcomes**

**The contents of learning outcomes**

**Students who have successfully completed undergraduate studies in Nursing program:**

1. Will know the latest methods of professional activity, terminology, and in professional usage.
2. Will know physiological and pathological processes of human development in term of health and disease and will be able to assess them.
3. Will gain and understand knowledge of biomedical, humanitarian, and social sciences.
4. Will perceive human feelings, needs and expectations through empathy, will know and apply the principles of communication, ethical, and legal attitudes.
5. Will know the basic theoretical and general pharmacological effects of drugs and patterns on the body.
6. Will understand, critically evaluate and effectively apply the nursing theories, principles and nursing models.
7. Will be able to identify the etiological problems and changes of health of a person, group and community in a holistic way, will provide help, in accordance with the principles of the individual nursing of the patients at different levels of health care institutions.
8. Will be able to formulate and prove the hypotheses, research aims and objectives, will be able to demonstrate analytical, interdisciplinary thinking and to develop evidence-based nursing practice.
9. Will be able to work and be a leader in a team, to organise and coordinate the continuity of care, take a creative approach to the problems of professional activity, foster independence and their professional and personal responsibilities, to assess the quality of care.
10. Will use Information and Communication Technology (ICT) that is a priority when working in the modern health care system.
11. Will recognize the life-threatening conditions, precisely evaluate, and properly provide the necessary first aid.
12. Will accurately and methodically carry out assigned therapeutic nursing and diagnostic procedures, will assess and evaluate their effectiveness.
13. Will be able to organize and perform health education for healthy and ill persons, and promote healthy lifestyle and self-care
14. Will be able to disseminate knowledge of professional activity and experience when caring out nurse continuing education, and acting as a mentor.

**The level of complexity of the study outcomes**

Scientific knowledge, human values and clear individual environment (physical and psychosocial), health and nursing concept are integrated in the nursing care programme.

Nursing is an art and a science that requires understanding of the specific knowledge and skills to use. It is important for the modern nurses not only knowledge and techniques of nursing science, but also, but also the knowledge that are based on the humanitarian, technical, social, physical, medical, and biological sciences. Last-mentioned ones are necessary knowledge to understand, critically evaluate, and effectively apply the practice of professional nursing theories and principles (corresponding with contents of the outcomes 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 10 on the page 8 above).

Nurses perform a unique role using the latest professional methods, methodological information and communication of knowledge and practical skills, they meet needs of the healthy people of all ages, the persons with multiple risk factors and ill persons having a variety of somatic or mental health problems (corresponding with contents of the outcomes 7 and 10 on the page 8 above).

Nursing is based on each person’s human dignity, recognition and respect, empathic understanding, that human being is a whole unit. Nurses need to acquire competencies of application of individual nursing for various
patients of all age groups and at different levels of health care institutions (corresponding with contents of the outcomes 4 and 7 on the page 8 above).

Requirements for university education are not only to prepare highly qualified professionals, but also to ensure that graduates will be able to apply research knowledge in practice, to test research hypotheses, and develop nursing research (corresponding with contents of the outcome 8 on the page 8 above).

Advanced nursing activity in teamwork and the development of nursing practice require nurses to perform the duties competently everywhere and always in accordance with the legislative, administrative, national health policy (corresponding with contents of the outcomes 4 and 9 on the page 8 above).

The nature of nurses responsibilities and competencies is a holistic approach to identify the person, group, and community health concerns, to provide care, plan and organize nursing process, to assess changes in patients' health and quality of provided care, to solve problems in a professional field in creative way, adopting evidence based practice (paragraphs 9 and 12 on the page 8 above).

Critically thinking nurses play an important role in timely recognition of life-threatening conditions, accurate assessment of them, properly provided first aid, and evaluating the effectiveness of aid (corresponding with contents of the outcome 11 on the page 8 above).

In the process of education nurses focus on health, a healthy person, healthy environment, healthy communities, health promotion, strengthening of optimal health care and patient education of self-care (corresponding with contents of the outcomes 2 and 13 on the page 8 above).

Non-formal training requires knowledgeable nursing practice teachers (mentors). Therefore, without the necessary cognitive and practical skills, the transferable skills are necessary for nurses to systematically transfer the professional knowledge, skills, and practical experience while participating in professional education, training and professional development of nurses and performing the role of a practice teacher (mentor) (corresponding with contents of the outcome 14 on the page 8 above).

The complexity of the outcomes of the study programme Nursing is determined by the characteristics of a nurse professional activity:

- a complexity of technological, organizational and professional tasks,
- high or nearly absolute professional autonomy,
- a large responsibility for the decision making (issue of the health and life),
- a work in multidisciplinary team,
- a constantly changing professional environment,
- leadership and management in nursing,
- creative, critical thinking and evidence-based problem solving.

4-year duration of the study is necessary for successful implementation of the objective and results of the programme, in accordance with their complexity. A graduate degree program, graduate skills and knowledge are based on the general and subject-specific competencies that are focused on contemporary international nurses preparation principles, based on international higher education, professional education and training standards of nurses. A set of competencies acquired during the training process allows the graduate to work in the country and the EU Member States, or to continue studies in the second cycle (master degree level).
**Compatibility of study outcomes**

**Outcomes of the study at the level of the programme**

The program is structured according to the obligatory for nurses functional, cognitive and general competences, which must be gained by the graduates at the end of first cycle study program (Table 2).

**Table 2. The outcomes of the study programme**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Knowledge</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Practical skills¹</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A1</td>
<td>Will know the up-to-date professional methods</td>
<td>C1</td>
<td>Will creatively solve problems in nursing, will apply the ethical decision-making and individual care, will assess the patient's health changes, providing the quality of nursing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A2</td>
<td>Will use professional terminology and its usage context and objectives</td>
<td>C2</td>
<td>Will nurse applying the principles of nursing of patients in the different age groups and in health care institutions of different level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A3</td>
<td>Will know the human anatomical, physiological and pathological characteristics</td>
<td>C3</td>
<td>Will recognize life-threatening conditions, accurately assess and properly provide the necessary first aid</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A4</td>
<td>Will gain and understand knowledge of biomedicine, the humanitarian and social sciences</td>
<td>C4</td>
<td>Will carry out prescribed therapeutic nursing and diagnostic procedures accurately and methodically, assess their impact on the patient's body</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A5</td>
<td>Will gain the knowledge of the principles of communication, ethical and legal attitude</td>
<td>C5</td>
<td>Will know how to organize and carry out education for healthy and ill persons</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A6</td>
<td>Will know the principles of basic and clinical pharmacology and the characteristics of the main drug groups</td>
<td>C6</td>
<td>Will recognise the symptoms of the most common diseases, and the spread of the and possible complications, and will purposely plan and organize the nursing process</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A7</td>
<td>Will know the role, activity and functions of health educator and nursing practice teacher (mentor)</td>
<td>C7</td>
<td>Will monitor medication dosage, will carry out the basic nursing procedures required for the initial pharmacological correction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Cognitive skills²</th>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Transferable skills³</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>B1</td>
<td>Will understand, critically evaluate and effectively apply the theories and principles of nursing</td>
<td>D1</td>
<td>Will communicate and lead in teamwork, make creative solutions to the problems of professional work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Will be able to identify health issues of a person, group and community in a holistic way, anticipate the methods of care</td>
<td>D2</td>
<td>Will use technical knowledge and practical methodological skills required for work in a changing health care system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B3</td>
<td>Will demonstrate inter-disciplinary thinking, will be able to formulate and test the hypotheses, research goals and objectives</td>
<td>D3</td>
<td>Will expertly transfer professional knowledge and practical experience, to carry out continuing education and training for nurses to perform the functions of the mentor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B4</td>
<td>Will understand the legal and administrative health policy</td>
<td>D4</td>
<td>Will be able to evaluate the developmental process of a person in his/her physical, psychosocial and economic environment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B5</td>
<td>Will perceive human feelings, needs and expectations through empathy</td>
<td>D5</td>
<td>Will participate in nursing research and develop evidence based nursing practice.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹ skills necessary to succeed in practical activity and practical application of knowledge to achieve objectives;  
² skills necessary to know the properties of various objects, phenomena and the understanding of the causes of regularity;  
³ skills are used not only in the field of activity, which is prepared in a programme of study.

**Interface between the programme and the outcomes of the study level subject**

_Nursing_ programme learning outcomes are compatible with each other, do not duplicate, complement each other, and constitute a complete unit of knowledge, cognitive, practical and transferable skills that are obligatory to gain (see Table 2 and Table 4). Studies are carried out in a modular way. Each module has an aim, objectives, content, and the final outcome. The modules are arranged in a logical principle - if a certain outcome was not achieved in previous module, a student cannot continue the module where the knowledge from previous module
is required. There are more generic subjects of nursing programme in the first year of studies, which requires a number of cognitive abilities. More specific clinical nursing subjects are taught in fourth-eight semesters, when are necessary practical, cognitive, and transferable skills (see Table 2). Special attention is devoted there to practical skills that are directly in line with the above-mentioned outcomes (see Table 2). The second table shows the outcomes, which are expected to achieve by studying a particular module. The set of acquired skills is in line with the European Parliament and Council directives on professional education and recognition of professional qualifications, i.e. the directive 2005/36/EB. It also corresponds with the Lithuanian Medical Norm MN 28:2011 “General practice nurse. The Law. Duties, competence and responsibility”\textsuperscript{25}, and the act of “The law of nursing and obstetrical practice”\textsuperscript{26}.


\textbf{Evaluation of the outcomes of the study}

The University applies diagnostic, formative and summative evaluation of student achievement\textsuperscript{27}. Diagnostic assessment used to: check the minimum necessary preparation of students for the lectures and helps teachers to choose study methods and (or) to adapt the curriculum, allowing students to reach more effectively the intended subject (module) of study results. Formative assessment applied to the subject (module) course in order to critically evaluate and adjust students learning. In the parts of study programmes (or study programmes), in which practical and social skills are important (problem solving of problem-oriented learning, practice, residency programmes, etc.) in order to assess the general competencies, the formative assessment is carried out by feedback method of many sources (methodology of the university teacher – group - the individual's-self assessment etc.). The cumulative assessment is used to assess students’ achievement of the subject (module) studies. The cumulative score is a part of the assessment.

The university teachers who prepare the subject (module) programme provide methods for the assessment of students learning outcomes, the study program committee approves the prepared strategy of the subject (module) evaluation (see section 5.4. \textit{Evaluation of learning outcomes}). The description of the subject (module) provides a strategy for assessment, time periods, the criteria, the percentage of the total assessment (if it is applicable). Students’ achievement assessment procedures are the same subject (module) as defined in the programme of study in the expected outcomes and are compatible with the content and methods of the subject (module) study. Methodological assistance in the selection of methods for the evaluation of teachers is provided by the Centre of the teachers’ educational competence of LUHS.

Applying the cumulative assessment to its components is assessed the study outcomes of certain subject (module) programme. The subject matter of the assessment strategy is announced to the public in the department of the subject (module) of study before the subject (module) studies; the teaching subdivision must establish, publicize and introduce students to the evaluation criteria before studies. The cumulative score is calculated within the framework of the evaluation of ten points, the summation of all the ratings are from 1 to 10 and multiplying the amount by a coefficient that corresponds to the percentage of the training part. Cumulative part consists of no less than 50% of the final assessment. If students failed a final exam, but have built up at least 80% of the cumulative assessment, the student has the right to retake one exam with the permission of the Dean. The student has the right not to hold a final exam, if the cumulative part is sufficient for a positive final score. The student’s theoretical knowledge and practical skills are valued separately; assessment of practical skills is the composition of the cumulative score too. All exams are to be written in writing form. The student can see his/her final assessment of the module with only his/her own individual code in the Study Information System (SIS). An explanation of the assessment of his/her knowledge may be given after examination at the request of the


\textsuperscript{26} The Law of Nursing and obstetrical practice, 14 - 07 – 2009, No XI 343, Vilnius

\textsuperscript{27} LUHS. Regulation on students’ achievements assessment. Approved by Senate on 19 – 11 - 2012
student. In addition, if the student is not satisfied with the final assessment, he/she has the opportunity to appeal, which is dealt corresponding with the procedure of regulation of study. The students are familiarised with the wide range of subject matter requirements at the beginning of each subject study. Also this information is given in the descriptions of the subjects in SIS. If at the end of the semester a student did not receive the intermediate credit, he/she is considered to be non-advanced and information about the student is reported to the dean. The Dean has the right to continue the maintenance of the registration period, if the debt does not exceed two intermediate credits no more than one semester. If a student does not pass the final credit, he/she must repeat the subject matter of the study.

Criteria for the assessment of student achievement are consistent with the expected outcomes of the studies: practical skills are assessed through practical tasks; theoretical knowledge is evaluated in the tests. The practical skills are assessed through a process of study in various subjects, and rated in accordance with the requirements and listed in specific items.

**Amendment:** from 2014, the Objective Structured Clinical examination (OSCE) was implemented as one of the assessment methods. The evaluation of practical skills is carried out applying OSCE. During this examination, all students are examined at the same stations performing the standardized tasks, and are evaluated by the same evaluators-teachers. Each station has a very specific task, which is presented and evaluated in the same standardized manner. Methodological support was offered for teachers to gain skills and knowledge to implement OSCE (observation and participation in evaluating nursing knowledge and skills in other universities abroad (Dundee University, Scotland); participating in training courses in medical education (Edinburgh University Summer course); inviting a teacher from Dundee University to share experience; organizing the seminars and training inside our University).

At the end of each semester, students perform clinical training that is a part of the development of practical skills. Practical skills are documented and reported in a „Diaries of Clinical Training” where detailed study outcomes to be achieved by each student during clinical training are listed (Annex. No.1). The competencies, which are expected to be achieved during clinical training, correspond EU directive 2005/36/EC and **DIRECTIVE 2013/55/EU (amendment)**.

The final work is held in the fourth year of study, the preparation is for 12 credits. Bachelor’s thesis is to examine the problem of current nursing, health policy, its formulation in order to use the results of practical midwifery action or further scientific research work. The final preparation of undergraduate work and its assertion are regulated by LUHS Regulation of the studies and LUHS Nursing faculty “Regulation of the studies of the first and second level and continuous studies”28, Lithuanian University of Health Sciences, Faculty of Nursing, regulation of undergraduate (bachelor’s) programmes final thesis defence, where the progress of the preparation of the final work is presented in a comprehensive, comprehensible and clear way; including the selection of the theme, the appearance of the work, work presentation of the work to a public meeting. Detailed instructions for students of rehabilitation and nursing degree field of scientific work preparation are presented in the university publication “Scientific work preparation on rehabilitation and nursing fields”30.

**Updating based on the outcomes of the study**

Study results are constantly updated in response to changing EU and Lithuanian legislation, regulating the professional competencies and skills (e.g. since the adoption of the new “The law of nursing and obstetrical practice”), take into account the internal quality assessment outcomes (see chapter 6.2), and opinion and suggestions of social members (graduates, employers, professional organizations).

**Summary**

The aim of the *Nursing* programme meets University mission, and the learning outcomes of the *Nursing* programme correspond to the international recommendations. System of monitoring do all graduates are achieving stated learning outcomes on proper level is under development.

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28 LUHS. Regulation of the studies of the first and second level and continuous studies. Approved by Senate, June 7, 2013, No 32-03
2. THE STRUCTURE OF THE PROGRAMME

2.1. Study plan

The appropriateness of the scope of the study

The duration of studies is four years (240 ECTS). The program of study consists of 8 semesters, 30 credits of each semester the scope of 30 credits (600 hours). The program is made up of subjects, which are combined into modules (see Table 4).

Table 2.1. The structure of the programme corresponds to the EU31 and national32 requirements for studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects of the study field (including elective courses)</th>
<th>Credits of the subjects on the Nursing study programme</th>
<th>National requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subjects of the study field (including elective courses)</td>
<td>208 credits</td>
<td>≥165 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>General university education subjects</td>
<td>20 credits</td>
<td>≥15 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preparation and defence of the graduation thesis</td>
<td>12 credits</td>
<td>≥12 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totally the programme</td>
<td>240 credits</td>
<td>240 credits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clinical training</td>
<td>2403 hours (89 credits)</td>
<td>≥15 credits</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consistency of study subjects

Studies are carried out in the modular principle, i.e., allied subjects are grouped together into a single module with a common goal. Each of them is made from 2-4 modules, no more than 5 exams.

During the first and second years the structure of the programme enables the students to gain the important basic knowledge and skills, based on the integration of theory and practice, to emphasizing the importance of nursing care and formation of professional principles. In the first year of study, students become familiar with the basics of clinical nursing, in acquiring the knowledge of normal physiology, pharmacology, medical biochemistry, sociology and ethics. During these semesters basic nursing practical skills are formed, the students are introduced to the nursing process and nursing models (N.Roper and D.Orem). The subjects meet the requirements of the EU directives33, 30 and DIRECTIVE 2013/55/EU (amendment).

At higher courses clinical subjects are grouped into modules such as “The adult nursing”, “Special nursing”, “Fundamentals of Clinical Nursing”, “Geriatric nursing”, and others. It helps to develop practical and cognitive skills necessary to deal with a newborn, child, adult and elderly welfare. The formed transferable skills can be adapted to the monitoring of a patient of any age and health status.

The study in the fourth course is focused more on community, family care, prevention, nursing administration, biomedical law and the methodology of scientific work, biostatistics, whereas the students prepare a final Bachelor work (project). These modules are integrated with each other, because the community of nursing students carry out tasks, based on the methodology of scientific research. Therefore, the transferable skills are very important in this semester. Compulsory subjects in all semesters are necessary to the students in order to acquire the knowledge, cognitive skills, practical and transferable skills.

Practical exercises and practice (“clinical training” to be used instead of word “practice” - amendment) take place in Hospital of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences Kaunas clinics, therapeutics and children sections; in psychiatric, oncology and geriatric clinics, Kaunas Clinical Hospital, district hospitals. Also, supportive care and treatment take place in nursing hospital and family clinic.

The Faculty of Nursing and Nursing and Care Department of LUHS separately executed some major improvements. In response to the comments of the experts of the previous external evaluation, the duration of

33 The European Parliament and Council directive 2005/36/EB. On the minimum training requirements of mutual recognition of professional qualifications for nurses and midwives.
the clinical training was increased, and the increased number of trained mentors was included into clinical training of the students of Nursing programme.

Firstly, the Nursing programme subjects and modules have been reorganised, increasing time of the clinical training at the patient’s bed up to 2403 hours.

Secondly, The Nursing and Care Department has organised and carried up the training for mentors in nursing together with the Centre of Postgraduate studies of LUHS since 2010. The training course of continuing education for practicing nurses “Mentorship in Nursing” takes 36 hours. The outcomes of the course are: a better understanding of the nursing students during clinical training and the practical implementation of the goals and objectives of the programme, knowledge of mentorship models and theories, mentor’s role and functions, guidance and support skills for clinical training of the nursing students, stronger theory and practice integration and cooperation between educational institutions. In 2011 certificates of the mentor in nursing were awarded to 47, in 2012 – 20 nurses, 2013 – 23 nurses, who practice at teaching hospitals and mentor nursing students of LUHS.

Thirdly, in order to increase awareness of practicing nurses about clinical training of nursing students, 54 hours (2 credits) subject "Clinical supervision and mentorship in nursing" was started in the second cycle Clinical nursing master’s programme since 2011. The aim of the subject is to develop the capacity of nurse communication, cooperation, and develop managerial skills necessary for mentorship and supervision of nursing students during clinical training.

Finally, LUHS prepared and published the textbook “Mentorship in Nursing” in 2011.

Students, mentors and tutors cumulate and document evidence of clinical training in the “Diaries of Clinical Training” that are prepared by Nursing and Care Department teachers, tutors and mentors. In the “Diaries of Clinical Training” the teaching objectives and the outcomes are indicating, quantitative and qualitative evaluation criteria for assessment and evaluation are presented. Since 2012 long practice at the end of the school year of LUHS nursing student were started to grade with marks (instead of credits), with the cumulative score formula.

Clinical training are hold at therapeutical, mental health, oncological, pediatric, surgical and other units of Hospital of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences Kaunas Clinics, Kaunas Clinical hospital, municipality hospitals, the nursing and supportive care hospitals, and primary health care insitutions (in community, General Practitioners’ institutions).

Also, students can have clinical training in other health care institutions, which correspond with the requirements for clinical training placement of our university.

During the clinical training of the first study year, students get familiar with hygiene and techniques of nursing procedures, learn to perform anthropometric surveys, procedures of personal hygiene, patient transportation, handling, feeding, measurements and markings of body temperature, pulse, arterial blood pressure; injections and infusions, catheterisation of the bladder, gastric lavage, oxygen therapy, enema. They learn to file medical documents.

During the second year clinical training, students learn to perform nursing manipulations and evaluate the state of the patient, to set nursing problems, select nursing actions, to implement them, and evaluate the effectiveness of nursing actions.

On the third study year clinical training, students gain competencies in surgical units: learn to dress the wounds, to prepare the patient for operation and to maintain during postoperative period. Students evaluate the status of the surgical patients, establish nursing problems, select nursing actions, implement them and evaluate the effectiveness of nursing actions.

Fourth study year students perform their clinical training at the intensive care units, child care and paediatric units, psychiatric units, and in the community. At the intensive care units, students learn to evaluate the patient’s life-threatening conditions, to provide emergency assistance, evaluate the effectiveness of nursing care and to nurse a patient in the intensive care unit. At the children’s‘psychiatric units students learn to assess patients

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34 Nursing Faculty Dean’s Resolution. No.SLF- 13- 10; 09 December 2013
status, determine nursing problems, select nursing care actions, to implement them and evaluate the effectiveness of nursing actions. In a community practice time students learn how to assess community’s health problems, to set up a training plan, to implement and evaluate it. They learn to apply a variety of methodologies and training programmes.

The subjects are arranged in the programme in the way, that the students acquire analytical and critical thinking and during the fourth year of the study can systematize the information, to set up a nursing care plan, to make decisions. This modular layout enables to achieve learning outcomes.

Elective subjects enable students go deeper into preferable subjects. Elective subjects are presented at LUHS study information system (SIS) for students to select and register in accordance with LUHS regulation of the studies procedure.

Full-time students complete their studies after they have passed final examination and defended bachelor’s thesis.

Students’ critical thinking is formed during all study years. Thes students start preparing final bachelor’s thesis at the end of third year. The must select a topic that is relevant to examine the problem of nursing, health policy, and its formation [Annex No. 4]. The research results will be used for practical nursing activity or for further scientific research work.
### Table 4. Interface between the programme and the outcomes of the study level subjects

Study programme and the subjects interface is prepared by expected learning outcomes (see Table. No 2)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Semester</th>
<th>The name of the study subject</th>
<th>Study outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>A 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>1 Module. Humanitarian and social science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 Module. Biomedical Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>3 Module. Fundamental of Nursing I</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4 Module. Techniques of Clinical Nursing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>5 Module. Environment and Health Science</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6 Module. Nursing Model</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>7 Module. Fundamentals of Clinical Nursing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>8 Module. Adults Nursing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>9 Module. Pedagogic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>10 Module. Nursing management and research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VII</td>
<td>11 Module. Special Nursing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VIII</td>
<td>12 Module. Geriatric Nursing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Study contents for the legislation

Nursing programme is prepared in accordance with:

**National legislation**

- Order of Republic of Lithuania, Law on Higher Education and Research 30 April 2009 No Xi-242
- Approval of Methodology for Evaluation of Higher Education Study Programme. Approved by 20 December 2010 of the Director of the Centre for Quality Assessment in Higher Education. Order No 1-01-162
- Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania No V-2212 “Regarding approval of description of study cycles”, 21 November 2011
- Law on Higher Education and Research of the Republic of Lithuania. 20 Apr 2009, No XI-242
- The Law of the Minister of education and science of the Lithuanian Republic on the 12th of June, 2007 No.Įsak-1152 change in law “on General requirements for study programmes”
- Lithuanian Government’s „Resolution on the list of study areas and directions according them the study at higher education institutions follows, and a list of qualifying degrees approval“ on the 23rd of December, 2009. No. 1749
- Bolognia qualifications framework, Dublin descriptions of the second cycle study and Lithuanian qualifications framework of 7th level of qualification requirements (Resolution No 535 of the Government of the Republic of Lithuania “Regarding approval of Description of the Lithuanian qualifications framework”, 4 May 2010)
- Order of the Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania No V-501 „Regarding the approval of Description of general requirements for the awarding a degree of the first cycle and integrated study programs“ 9 April 2010, and the Order No V-1190, “Regarding the Amendment of the Order of the Minister of Education and Science No V-501, 9-Apr-2010 „Regarding the approval of Description of general requirements for the awarding a degree of the first cycle and integrated study programs“, 15 July 2010
- Nursing subject benchmarking statement (project) prepared at the SKVC by an expert group operating according to the agreement on public procurement of paid services (No. 7ESF9- 10, 1 October 2010; Amendment 2015)

**International law**

- Munich Declaration “Nurses and Midwives: a force for health” (Copenhagen, WHO Regional Office for Europe, 2000).
- Health - for all in the twenty-first century. Major principles in European region of WHO public health. LR SAM. 2000
Fleming V., Holmes A. Basic Nursing and midwifery education programmes in Europe. A report to the World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe. March 2005


LUHS legislation

Study Regulation of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences undergraduate and graduate and integrated studies. Approved by decision of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences senate on the 7th of June 2013. Resolution No. 32-03.

Regulation on preparation and defence of bachelor’s degree programmes’ thesis of LUHS Medical academy nursing faculty. (Approved by the meeting of Nursing Faculty Council on the 20th of June, 2012, the number of minute SF-12-09, access http://lsmuni.lt/media/dynamic/files/1282/bakalauro_reglamentas_spausdinti_2.pdf);


Regulations of First-Cycle, Second-Cycle and Integrated Studies at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences. Approved by the LSMU Senate on 20 June 2014, by Resolution No. 47-05

The above mentioned documents are the most important. Other relevant and significant documents are cited in the text and provided in the footnotes.

Study plan comprehensiveness and rationality

Teaching subjects, grouped into modules, help to achieve learning outcomes. Structure of the study programme allows students during the first and second years get acquired with nursing knowledge, skills and abilities based on the theoretical and practical training, while discussing the values that is based nursing on.

During the third and fourth studies years care of the old and geriatrics, community nursing, family nursing, and others are taught for the students with the aim to develop clinical, psychological, and social skills necessary for communicating with the patient and his/her family members. During the last two years students are able to synthesize and evaluate information, nursing care, based on practical evidence and provide appropriate solutions’methods. The students develop professional and ethical principals, obtain communication skills and abilities effectively collaborate with patients and other members of the interdisciplinary team. The study programme enables to achieve students’ analytical and critical thinking, applied in nursing practice.

Applied teaching forms (lectures, workshops, seminars, clinical training) and methods (discussion, case presentation, reflection, group and individual work, skills demonstration in simulation classes) help to achieve the expected learning outcomes.

Amendment in the study programme since the last accreditation procedure 2014

The changed curriculum was implemented at the beginning of 2014/2015 academic year. Hours designated for clinical training are clearly identified in Nursing Study Plan for 2015 /2016 academic year, Study Subjects (Annex 1); Clinical training diaries. Clinical training is organized entirely in the health care institutions (genuine clinical setting) under a supervision of clinical training teachers (mentors) (classroom hours and simulation that are used for developing practical skills, are not inluced in to clinical training hours). Clinical training diaries were revised and renewed according to the Nursing Study Plan for 2015 /2016.
Summary

Programme structure, content, and scope of study are appropriate to achieve learning outcomes and meet the Lithuanian and European legislation requirements. The subjects are organized in a consistent sequence and are not duplicating. The programme structure has changed due to increased numbers of hours dedicated to clinical training. Student – centred and outcome based approach is still quite new for the staff and needs further development. To develop student’s practical skills, clinical skill training rooms have been outfitted and a modern hybrid laboratory has been equipped. In addition to that, students can develop their practical skills in the Medical Simulation Centre.

3. THE TEACHING STAFF

3.1. Staff Recruitment

Validity of the staff structure

The main criteria for the recruitment of academic staff are the needs of the departments and matching qualification requirements. Qualification requirements are provided by legislation:

- Republic of Lithuania. Law on higher education and research. 20-Apr-2009, No XI-242 (Official Gazette, 2009, No 54-2140);
- LUHS Statute (Official Gazette, 2010, No 81-4231; Approved 30-06-2010);
- Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania. Order No V-501, 9-Apr-2010 „Regarding the approval of Description of general requirements for the awarding a degree of the first cycle and integrated study programs“ ;
- LUHS Senate resolution No 4-3, “LUHS teaching staff and research staff acceptance to the positions procedure”, 23 December 2010; Amendment: New document approved 20 June 2014 No. 47 - 03
- LUHS Senate resolution No 16-21 “LUHS Head of the department, head of the clinic election regulation”, 23 December 2011;

LUHS is signing employment contracts of limited duration - five years, which make secure a turnover and renewal of the teaching staff. Teachers who hold primary contract with the Faculty usually teach students of the Programme of Integrated Studies Medicine and teachers who holds primary contract with the University Hospital usually are responsible for resident training. Despite contract primacy, all teachers are recruited through the competition, for a five years period.

Appropriate teachers and students ratio is guaranteed at the lectures, seminars, practical work, laboratory work, and based on as study process organized in accordance with the Lithuanian republic Labour Code35; approved and regularly updated by LUHS Senate’ „Regulation of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences teachers staff workload and payment“36, 37, where is regulated teacher’s workload. The extent of teaching load and its distribution are specified by the LUHS regulation of teaching load and wages-fund calculation for the LUHS units. The unit teachers are employed with a single contract of employment to work with the students of all study cycles and programmes. The working time for one full-time teaching position is 30 hours per week. The structure of a full-time teaching position includes: planning and implementation of studies, research, application of the research results to studies, storage of scientific knowledge, health care activity related to the study process, development of creative activity, cultural upholding, participation in other significant activities of the University

36 Senate resolution No.16-16 23 December 2011
37 Senate resolution No. 48- 01 30 June 2014
and University Units. The Head of a Department allocate the structural parts of a teaching position and ensures the implementation of the study process and study-related activities of the Department; and creates conditions for a teacher to meet the minimum performance evaluation requirements for the position of LUHS teaching and research staff.

There is an optimal ratio between students preparing final thesis and their supervisors: is aimed, that one supervisor shouldn’t have more than 3-4 students preparing for final thesis. Every student, who prepares final bachelor thesis, can choose a supervisor. Teachers, who supervise graduates’ final works, help students to prepare publications for conference proceedings.

Teacher qualifications are high and allow achieving program goals and objectives. Teacher workload is distributed in an optimal teaching, scientific and other activities. Even 70.2 % of teachers of the programme of Nursing have a doctoral degree and meet the requirement of legal acts of the Republic of Lithuania that at least half of the studies subjects should be taught by scientists (having PhD). LUHS Nursing programme is ensured with the number of technical staff - every LUHS unit (department/clinic/ institute) has studies’ administrator responsible for the help in organizing study process; there is a technician responsible for the material department’s values and it’s care. All teachers and students in case of necessity, have the opportunity to get a support of the technical staff.

Teachers’ turnover is a very low; there are main causes - a natural change of the staff (including retirement, maternity leave) and the end of the contract. This staff change does not make any affect on the programme’s quality.

3.2. Personnel Competence

Staff experience and operational compliance to the study program

The teachers’ competency in the relevant areas, enabling the implementation of the programme objectives and expected learning outcomes, is the key criterion selecting to teach certain subjects. Teachers, employed in Nursing programme, not only have sufficient years of teaching experience, but also have the highest qualification of practical clinical skills. A few of them are recognized experts at WHO, the TAIEX, CQAHE, LUHS Science Foundation, other programmes. They are members of the various working groups at Lithuanian Ministry of Health, participate in various national and international projects, members of editorial boards and reviewers of national and international scientific journals. They publish articles in scientific and educational journals; write textbooks and other teaching materials. The teachers are active lecturers at the centre of LUHS postgraduate studies and are responsible for the courses of professional continuous development for nurses and other health care professionals.

In the programme of Nursing the unity of studies, research and clinical practice has been implemented. Teachers perform educational, but also the scientific and clinical work, organize and implement postgraduates studies, programs of nurses' professional development (Annex No.3). Nursing programme’s specialized nursing subjects are taught by the teachers, who are nurses and combine theoretical knowledge and clinical experience (Annex No.3 and Anex 2).

LUHS Nursing programme is administered by the Nursing Faculty (Dean Professor Dr. Jurate Macijauskienė with 19 years teaching experience and 17 years of scientific experience, a researcher in a Nursing science field, a chairperson of committee for doctoral studies in Nursing of LUHS, a national consultant for nursing at the Ministry of Health). Nursing programme are organized and coordinated by the University Study Centre. This is a LUHS department, organizing, and coordinating the undergraduate studies.

38 Minister of Education and Science of the Republic of Lithuania, Order No V-501 „Regarding the approval of Description of general requirements for the awarding a degree of the first cycle and integrated study programmes” 9-Apr-2010
Head of Nursing and Care Department assoc. prof. A. Blaževičienė had been responsible for the implementation of a programme and for the constant supervision of its quality. She, being a nurse and having a master of public health science, defended her PhD thesis in 2007 and has 11 years' pedagogical and scientific experience. Associate professor Aurelija Blazeviciene is a Head of the Nursing and Care Department since 2008.

According to the approved order, for the pursuasion of the programme and its quality is responsible Nursing study programme committee, approved by rector’s order. The chairman of the committee is assoc.prof. A. Blaževičienė, members - prof. L. Jaruševičienė, assoc. prof. O. Riklikienė, J. Demskytė, G. Masiliūnienė (Kaunas Clinical Hospital, Director for Nursing), and students I. Zeltzakyte.

Teachers' professional development is encouraged in various ways. Teachers have opportunities to participate in various national and international events; including conferences, seminars, intensive programmes, training courses and so on. Under the signed contract faculty exchange programmes (ERASMUS LLP and other bilateral agreements) may take place at foreign higher education institutions as visiting lecturers. Also teachers not only participate in conferences and seminars with spoken and stand reports, but also there are active members of conferences, seminars, and organizational groups. In 2003 at LUHS was established an educational centre of excellence for teachers development of pedagogical qualification. The centre ensures continuous teachers development, and international educational level of expertise.

**Amendment in the study programme since the last accreditation procedure in 2014**

Over the analysed period, teachers of the study programme have improved their pedagogical competence in training courses at the University of Edinburgh Educational Competence Centre, „Teach the teachers - TTT“ course was organaized by LSMU and OSCE training. Also, prof. Anne Bavier from the Connecticut University, former dean of the Nursing School, provided seminars and shared her experience on teaching methods and their application to practice.

**Summary**

A large team of highly qualified teaching staff participates in the programme of Nursing. All nursing subjects are taught nurses. The unity of research, education and practice is realised in the programme; conditions for teachers’ improvement are created. As the material supply of the university increases, the activities for teachers’ educational skill improvement are actively promoted.

**4. FACILITIES AND LEARNING RESOURCES**

**4.1. The Facilities**

The first cycle Nursing programme is conducted under the general order of LUHS studies organization, in regulation of studies time and place with the other university’s programmes (responsible - LUHS Study Centre). There are 15 common auditorium used for lectures and seminars: there are three common auditorium, which can accommodate up to 200-300 students, six auditorium accommodate up to 100 students, five classrooms with capacities of 20-60 students and one for ten students.

There are classes are assigned to the LUHS Nursing and Care Department. There are two classrooms (20 and 10 seats at LUHS Cardiology Clinics), and one of the classroom for the students’ consultations. There are six of the classrooms (25 and 20 seats and 3 of the audience of 30 people) for the teaching of students at Kaunas Clinical Hospital (Laisvės al. 17).

Facilities meet the requirements for a safe work and hygiene. All class rooms are equipped with the tables, chairs, white magnetic boards, screens, multimedia, computers, some of which are equipped with TV, DVD players. Practical classes are organized in Kaunas Clinical Hospital, practical skills training classes and University hospital.

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39 Rector resolution 19 November 2012.
40 Rector resolution No.SC-1-005; 4 January 2013.
In order to form students’ practical skills simulations of a subcutaneous, intramuscular and skin injection, injection into an arm vein, catheterization and stomy care and a human patient simulator (High tech) are used. There are functional beds in one of the classrooms and a set of other necessary tools to form skills.

In LUHS 2013 - 2015 strategical activity plan, a creation of LUHS Medical Academy Nursing Faculty Studies and Research Building is planned, and the project is in progress at the moment.

4.2. Learning resources

To meet the student’s needs LUHS Library and Health Sciences Information Centre (Eivenių str.6) was built in 2007. The library is opened on weekdays from 7.30 a.m. to 10.30 p.m., and on weekend from 10.00 a.m. to 8.00 p.m. The library contains 400 workplaces, 70 computers for individual work, 3 group (problem-based) learning classrooms, 8 workplaces in Multimedia class, 12 places in computer training class, seminar and conference rooms. Wireless Internet, self-service copying and printing, free scanning is available at the library. There is a sufficient number of teaching materials to ensure achievement of study objectives and outcomes (about 140000 publications (textbooks, teaching and methodical aids) in the open funds of the library). There is a lot of teaching literature in foreign languages too. The library subscribes to Lithuanian and foreign medical journals. Book issuing and receiving system is fully computerized and automated. There is a virtual library too, which helps from distant places to be available all the information. RefWorks information management program is subscribed for academic community. The resources of the university library are constantly renewed according to the needs of teachers and students. The academic community is periodically informed about the newly received publications and about the renewal of databases: the messages are sent to the Departments, the information can be found at the library website, the exhibitions of books are organized and the lists of books with annotations are sent to the Departments. Every year LUHS Library and Information Centre spends 600 - 1000 thousand LTL for the books, periodicals and updating academic publications database.

The implementation of the project on „Nursing, Occupational Therapy and Physiotherapy Areas of Study in Innovative Teaching/Learning Methods and Forms“ (No. BPD2004-ESF-2.4.0-03-05/0090) was financed by the EU Structural Funds and ensured the preparation of new study materials for the development of a new programme in the Nursing area of study. During the process of implementation of the following project on “The Resumption and Promotion of Internationalisation of the Nursing, Veterinary Food Safety and Public Health Study Programme (SVEVIT)” (No. TP1-2.2-MES-07-K-02-050), which was financed by the EU Structural Funds, and new educational books on nursing have been acquired.

Students and academic staff are using 2200 University computers, software is modern and legal. Students and academic staff are trained to use information databases, and training courses on database search engine are continually arranged.

Subject methodical materials have been placed on the University Intranet server since 2012.

Amendment in the study programme since the last accreditation procedure in 2014

A continuous update of scientific literature and databases according to the needs of students and teachers. Renewed equipment. An Internet connection has been set up in all the auditoriums and computer labs. Students have access to the majority of Library resources from computers outside the University. In September 2015, the Faculty of Nursing (including the Department of Nursing and Care) will relocate to new equipped premises.

Summary

The number of auditorium, laboratories and other facilities at LUHS is sufficient to ensure a successful teaching and learning process. LUHS library is fully supplied with books, methodical and scientific publications necessary for studies. Voluminous projects are carried out at LUHS, the funds of which are allocated for the improvement of
the material basis of the medical programme. The weak point of the material basis is the lack of compact University campus. There are three teaching complexes in different places of the town.

The surroundings will be further improved – auditorium, teaching laboratories and classrooms will be renovated during 2011-2013 according to the project “The renovation of the infrastructure and basic facilities necessary for studies at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences” and using its funds. The central University building and the Teaching laboratory building will be renovated; Centre of Medical Simulation was opened in 2014.

5. STUDY PROCESS AND STUDENTS’ PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT

5.1. Selection of students

The admission of Lithuanian students is carried out according to the general rules of admission to higher schools. The rules are confirmed by LAMA BPO (Lithuanian Higher Education Association of Joint Admission) and at the LUHS Senate.

By enrolment to the full-time university studies and to the integrated studies in 2010, 2011 and in 2012 competitive score was formed summing up the grades of two competitive subjects (Biology and the Lithuanian language), and of two determined additional high school grades, adding no more than two grades for the same programme examinations of special skills (tests) grade (Chemistry and Mathematics).

One of the main shortages of general admission to higher education is a limited number of ‘baskets’in area of Biomedicine. This impedes to accept motivated students to the specific programme and to take highly motivated students to study in the Nursing programme because this programme competes with other highly prestigious professions such as Medicine, Odontology and Pharmacy. However, the Minister of LR Education and Science accepted the Law No.107-V on February 12th in 2013 with regard to the number of places in the preliminary state-funded undergraduate and integrated studies that students were accepted to in 2013. The Law made dissociation of the programme in Nursing, Medicine, Odontology and Pharmacy, thus, making more favourable conditions to study in the programme of Nursing. The change of the admission rules has increased the number of students studying in State funded seat (see Table 1).

In order to ensure the admission of highly motivated students capable of carrying out studies of the Programme, the lowest competitive score should not exceed 20% of the lowest competitive score received by the student who is entitled to the State funded place.

Programme implementers care about the information and promotion of the programme in the society, trying to draw up students’ intention to study. The programme implementers invite students to participate in the Fair of High Schools, which is held twice a year in Vilnius and Kaunas, as well as organize Open Days at the University during which students are introduced to the programme peculiarities, options and perspectives. The LUHS Student Association organizes Career Days, also visits schools, publish informative articles in the press, display the information on TV, and etc. The measures are appropriated according to their interest in the programme and show the effectiveness of fairs, but the effectiveness is difficult to exteriorize in numerical terms. After the evaluation of all the measures comprehensively it can be said that the publicity strategy is right because more and more students are accepted to nursing education.

The motivation of the accepted students is enhanced by the material means (e.g. scholarships, various motivational scholarships) and by the academic measures (e.g. the ability to participate in the LLP ERASMUS exchange programmes as well as in other programmes that allows proper choice of practice locations). The studies begin with the Introduction into Studies subject, which explains in detail the mission of the profession as a nurse, as well as reveal the matters of identity and other valuable professional issues.

Students drop out during three years of implementation of the programme is very low. Admitted students changed LHSU Faculty of Medicine in 2010 as well as in 2011 two students moved to LUHS other faculties. The motivation of entered students and learning outcomes of good results is demonstrated by the low drop out of students (see Table 6).
### Table 6. Drop Out of Students

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year of Entering</th>
<th>Entered</th>
<th>Excluded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010/11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>3 (20%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011/12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>2 (10%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012/13</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0 (0%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013/2014</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014/2015 (amendment)</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>3 (4%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### 5.2. Study process

Study course schedule[^41] made under the regulation LUHS undergraduate and graduate studies that was approved by the Senate of Lithuanian University of Health Sciences on June 7th in 2013 by the Resolution No.32-03[^42]. There is no session week at the end of the semester because most of the subjects are delivered as cycle-based, so exams and credits are distributed evenly during the course of the semester to avoid over-exertion in certain periods.

Lectures, seminars and practice classes are usually held in MLK, the Central Hall, the University Hospital, and the practice is carried out in Kaunas Clinical Hospital. The plan of the improvement of education in Nursing has been developed and approved by the Senate[^43,^44]. It has been developed to allow the reinforcement of training facilities and, consequently, the improvement of studies as well as the rational management of students’ time during the semester.

The teachers involved in this programme quite actively participate in the mobility activities. According to the signed contract for the Faculty exchange programmes (ERASMUS, LLP) the Faculty of Nursing is provided 19 approved contracts (including other bilateral contracts). The teachers’ participation in Nursing exchange programmes provides the possibility of going to other European universities as well as to deliver lectures and to develop their knowledge and competence. Not only the running programme teachers are going to other universities, but also foreign teachers are coming to the Nursing Faculty to deliver lectures and to conduct scientific-practical workshops. The dynamics of teachers’ mobility during the assessment period is demonstrated in Tables 7 and 8.

### Table 7. Teachers of Nursing and Care Department Outgoing for Academic Work

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percentage of all teachers who are involved in this programme</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 - 2011</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>Finland, Norway, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Germany, Holland, Italy, Belgium, Sweden, Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 - 2012</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>Finland, Norway, Portugal, United Kingdom, Germany, Holland, Italy, Belgium, Sweden, the USA, Canada, Spain, Denmark, Portugal, Romania, Island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 - 2013</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>Sweden, Norway, the United Kingdom, Germany, Holland, USA, Denmark, Portugal, Romania, Kazakhstan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 - 2014</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>28.8</td>
<td>Sweden, Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 – 2015 (amendment)</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>19.5</td>
<td>Sweden, Turkey, Finland, Kazakhstan, the United Kingdom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[^41]: [http://lsmuni.lt/lt/activity/studies/study-center/study-schedules/](http://lsmuni.lt/lt/activity/studies/study-center/study-schedules/)
[^42]: Regulation of the studies of the first and second level and continuous studies. Approved by Senate, June 7, 2013, 32-03
[^43]: LUHS Senate resolution on “Lithuanian Health Science University Nursing faculty studies and development of infrastructure, on September 5, 2012, No. 23-03
Table 8. The Number of Teachers Incoming for Academic Work in the Basic Cycle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Academic Year</th>
<th>Number of incoming teachers</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010 - 2011</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Finland, Holland, Portugal, the United Kingdom, Scotland, Portugal, the USA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011 - 2012</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sweden, Norway, Turkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012 - 2013</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Holland, Finland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2013 - 2014</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Turkey, the USA, Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014 – 2015 (amendment)</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>Turkey, the United Kingdom, Latvia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The students of the Nursing Programme have the opportunity to participate in professional networks such as Linea Rosa, NORDMAN, Nordinett (NordPlus funded), where multi-professional intensive training programmes are organized. In 2013 the Nursing and Welfare Department organized an international IP course “Wellbeing Technology” on different methods to help create more effective and evidence-based practice in health care by using new technology solutions, which was attended by students from 6 countries.

**Amendment in the study programme since the last accreditation procedure in 2014**

Nursing and Care department joined new International Tematic Network Trollnet who was financed Nord Plus programme.

### 5.3. Support for students

Academic support for students is ensured as is presented in the following:

- After entering to LUHS students are introduced to the study curator and coordinator, the study programme committee and with other people who are responsible for study administration. Studies begin with the "Introduction to Studies" course during which junior students are acquainted with the university study peculiarities as well as with the specificity of the programme, its results, outcomes and the assessment of outcomes. The information about the study subjects and schedules is given in the LUHS website. Large amount of valuable information is available in the Student Union website www.lsmusa.lt. Students are informed about the possibility of participation in the LLP ERASMUS student exchange programmes (LUHS International Relations Study Centre is responsible for the administration of these programmes);

- Continuous support of the system is ensured during all the study period. At the beginning of each module students are always presented the contents, aims, outcomes, assessment, list of literature and schedule of the module. Personal consultations are organized in the departments. In addition, students are presented the employment opportunities. Meetings with potential employers and career days are organized.

Based on LUHS Study Regulation students are given opportunities to study according to the individual programme, except for the students who study in Nursing programme and have full-time studies who use this possibility very rarely: only during baby feeding period. The assessment of students’ learning outcomes are recognized and validated according to the same rules as for those who study according to the usual study schedule.

The students can receive psychological support during their study process (The Youth Cabinet is functioning: student volunteers and psychologists are involved in this work). The University "Sports Centre" facilitates a variety of sports activities (basketball, football, swimming, tennis, and etc.) in which students can be involved “Neris” activities or dance in folk dance ensemble "Ave Vita".

**Social support** is also available for students. The administration of scholarships and support for students is determined by the LUHS Senate approved documents. Students may be granted social scholarships, which are awarded and administered by the State Study Foundation⁴⁵. This fund is composed of the State Budget assigned funds as well as the funds which are given by the State Budget Fund delivered for payment of State financed

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⁴⁵ On allocation of social stipends for students of higher schools and the approval of administration procedure No.1801 (Official Gazette, 31-12-2009, No.158-7187)
places and study fees. The best students are awarded with the motivational grants by the Senate in 2011 on the basis of the LUHS Senate Resolution No. 11-04 issued on June 28th, 2011. Successful students in the event of disasters or emergencies once per semester may be also awarded a motivational grant. The distribution of the Fund goes as follows: 93% for the motivational scholarships, 4.5% for one-off grants, and 2.5% as a reserve part of the Fund.

Students who study in the Nursing Programme have the opportunity to get registered and be awarded with the scholarship of B. Petrikas every year.

The University possesses five dormitories where the students enrolled in various programmes are accommodated. The dormitory places are assigned to the students according to the provisions of Student Dormitories in LUHS.

5.4. Evaluation of learning outcomes

The assessment of student learning outcomes is directly related to the learning outcomes and assessment principles, which are set in the LUHS study regulation and in the LUHS student achievement assessment procedures, and are also described in each course syllabus. The requirements for the rating structure are determined in the LUHS Senate documents and detailed in each course syllabus. Students are directly informed about the assessment results on their learning outcomes which are available in an online database for everyone with their ID and password (see The Assessment of Study Results on Page 1).

The assessment of the students’ achievements is directly related with the study outcomes. The principles of assessment, the requirements for the assessment grade are regulated by the LUHS Study Regulations and presented in the descriptions of every subject. Some subjects and modules are assessed using cumulative grade system. A 10-point scale is used for the evaluation. The pass grade is five. There are different forms of assessment. Each department has created its own system. The students are informed about it at the beginning of studies. The final assessment is done in the form of exam or project. Exams are usually taken in written form, sometimes in both forms: written and oral. During the examination students’ practical skills are also checked. After each semester the assessment results are discussed at the Departments and at the meetings of Board of Faculty of Nursing and Rectorate.

The feedback among students and teachers is ensured by regular meetings with the Programme teachers, the Programme Committee and the Administration of the Faculty. The students express their wishes, hopes and problems during the meeting. The Study Programme Committee considers all the students’ preferences and the possibility to adjust the degree programme and its organization according to their needs.

All the Study Programme issues are presented by the Dean of the Faculty to the Faculty Council and the Rector twice a year.

The assessment and recognition of non-formal adult education competencies were approved by the LHUS Senate on September 27th, 2013. Following this regulation there is a possibility to have all the informally and non-formally acquired competencies recognised and validated. The Programme teachers participated in the project “The Formalization and Implementation of Informally and Non-Formally Acquired Competencies in the System in Higher Education Networking” (VP1-2.1-MES-04-K-03-0050). The teachers learned to assess the competences which were acquired informally and non-formally and received international qualification certificate.

Amendment in the study programme since the last accreditation procedure in 2014

In 2014 and 2015, new Regulations of First-Cycle, Second-Cycle and Integrated Studies at the Lithuanian University of Health Sciences were approved.

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46 LUHS Students resolutions of hostels. Approved by Rectorate on June 4, 2012.
47 LUHS Regulation on student’s achievements assessment. Approved by Senate on December 14, 2012, No. 25-07
Summary

The popularity of the Nursing programme is high and continues to rise; students are admitted with increasing competitive score. Students' academic and social support system is well-functioning. The graduates of the programme have an excellent opportunity to continue professional education and residency to pursue a professional career. Unfortunately, although we have many agreements with foreign universities (ERASMUS) students were not active enough.

6. PROGRAMME MANAGEMENT

6.1. Programme administration

The composition of the Administration of the Programme is described in detail in section 3.2. Personnel Competencies.

The Study Programme Committee, which is responsible for the contents of the programme and educational quality assurance as well as continuous improvement, is proposed by the Dean and approved by the Order of the Rector Order (see Section 3.2. Personnel Competence). Every five years the Council of the Faculty is formed of the permanent faculty teachers who have not less than 0.5 of workload, the other teachers involved in teaching and students as it is allowed by the Regulation of the University. Its main purpose is education and research organization. Currently, the Faculty Council consists of 13 members, the Council works under the Council Regulation. The Nursing Faculty Council has a continuous Study and Education Committee which considers and develops study related regulations and proposals, considers the resolutions and works out the conclusions to be submitted to the Council for further development of plans, programmes and curriculum with regard to quality.

Collegiality and personal responsibility for decision making. The University has Collegial Administrative Bodies: the University Council, the University Senate, and the university Rector as a sole executive body. The administration of the university is based on the principles of democracy, competence, and self-efficacy. The full-time, integrated and postgraduate studies are organized and coordinated by the University Study Centre. The study related issues (the assessment of study plans, the assessment of learning outcomes, the assessment of study quality, and other academic and strategic faculty issues) are discussed with the Rector. The meetings are held twice a month and consist of university administration, key department managers and student representatives. Senate meetings take place once a month in various issues of academic matters and also include the approval of study plans for students, the establishment of rules and regulations, and other study related issues. There is an Internal Audit Service in the University. In order of appearance of various different questions temporary working groups with responsible persons are created for solving the issues.

Programme information base. The quality and administration of the Study Programme is regulated by the documents approved in LUHS. These documents can be found in Dean’s of the Faculty office and on the University Web site at http://www.lsmuni.lt. All the activities which are related to incoming and outgoing documents, the Rector and Senate resolutions and other material, the final Bachelors and Master degree thesis, contact information of applicants are stored in the Faculty Dean’s office. The sequence of decision-making, review of quality assurance and approval of selected is regulated comprehensively and clearly. LUHS is implementing the project on "Lithuanian University of Health Sciences for the Enhancement of Performance" (project No. VP1-3.1-MES-07-K-02-062) which is designed for the improvement of document management and administration.

48 LUHS Regulation of the Faculty Council. Approved by Senate, October 28, 2011, No. 14-07
6.2. Study quality assurance

As stated in the Berlin Communiqué (2003), even the idea of Higher Education Institution autonomy itself means greater responsibility and accountability for all concerned as regards study quality: students, their parents, graduates, employers, and government institutions.

The Relevance of Programme Quality Assessment. LUHS has an internal system of quality assurance based on the European Higher Education Quality Assurance provisions and the quality assurance strategy approved by the Higher education Institution that includes operating procedures and measures to guarantee the study quality in Higher Education.

LUHS has an internal quality assurance system, which is determined by the University Statute, by the Regulation of studies as well as by other RL legislation. The quality system is ensured in the following levels: 1) on a unit (teaching staff) level; 2) on the subject and module level; 3) on the faculty level; 4) on the university level; 5) on the national level, 6) on the international level. This quality assurance system corresponds to the international quality management system.

The quality of the departments (teaching staff, subjects and modules) is assured by undergoing attestation procedures every five years (see Section 3.1. Staff recruitment).

The Study Programme Committee helps to manage the quality of the studies. The Nursing Programme Committee developed the plan of activities. This plan involves the objectives and implementations of methods. This Committee periodically carries out students’ interviews about study quality, as well as meets students’ representatives and discusses the issues of the organization of the study programme. The study plan and the achieved outcomes of the programme as well as the necessary changes are reviewed after these meetings. Also, the Programme Committee systematically monitors the First Class uploaded lectures, compositions, the schedules of subjects studied.

The Study Programme Committee analyses information on the adequacy of learning outcomes to current achievements, evaluates the shortcomings of outcomes and recommends ways to eliminate them. Social partners are invited to present their opinion about the graduates’ knowledge and practical abilities. The same questions are addressed to the graduates, aiming at indication of the possible ways for improvement of the programme and its outcomes. Activities are divided by the period of implementation: carried out on a month, regular, semester, or annual basis.

The Council of the Nursing Faculty manages study quality at the Faculty level (see section 6.1. Programme Administration). The Dean’s report is presented and approved each year at the Council. The report includes the analysis on the department activities in the period of one year as well as the implementation of the study programmes. The recommendations related to work and study process, and research development are provided. The Dean meets the students regularly to give students an opportunity to discuss various study-related issues. In case of important issues relevant departments are informed.

Regular assessment of the quality of studies is conducted by the Senate as approved by the Study Quality Assurance provisions at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences50 and Lithuanian University of Health Sciences curriculum development, improvement and management51 is administered at the university level. Each year, a commission is composed regularly and delivered subjects in units are assessed (content, complexity, reporting and evaluation forms), the results are analysed and presented at Rector Meetings that ensure the elimination of shortcomings.

The precise quantitative and qualitative information (for example, the annual reports of the Rector) is announced publicly and constantly in LUHS Website and in the local newspaper “Ave Vita” which deals with the programmes of study, with a higher education qualification, students’ views on the quality of higher education, students’ views

50 Senate resolution “The Study Quality Assurance provisions at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences”. 2012 02 20 no.17-01
51 Senate resolution “Curriculum development, improvement and management at Lithuanian University of Health Sciences”. 2012 05 30 No21-12
on the quality of higher education that are considered by the authorities of the University related to operational assessments graduates for career performance. Other data needed to inform the society about ongoing studies can be published.

The Rector, the Vice-Rector and the Dean of the Faculty have the right to participate in the exams as external evaluators as it is determined by the LUHS study regulation.

The quality of education on the national level is ensured regularly as well as making programme accreditation, which aims to assess the programme's compliance with the requirements of the quality of studies.

Regular rising of teachers' professional and educational competence is ensured in quality of education on the international level as well as the participation in the international trainings and student exchange programmes.

The Use of the Evaluation Results. All the assessment results are used to improve the quality of the programme: the students' oral remarks and formal evaluations are taken into account.

The Dissemination of the Quality Improvement Results. Quality improvement in Study assessment of programme is performed on periodic student surveys and meetings with students. The Study Quality Commission annually presents the outcomes and assesses the changes in academic society. The curriculum Committees of Study Plans and Programmes, depending on the outcomes, correct study plans.

Student Participation in Quality Assessment and Improvement. University students participate in the programme administration and quality improvement: students’ representatives can be found in the Senate, in the Rectorate, in the Faculty Council, in the Council of the Commission, in the Commission on Appeal as well as in other working groups where various issues are analysed. The students may refer to the departments, which are responsible for the curriculum management implementation, and to the Dean. Students can express themselves independently by expressing their points of view in the Students Union Website, by organizing discussion forums, going directly to the departments and to the Dean's office, as well as participating in joint working groups or committees (the Faculty Council) together with the academic staff.

Stakeholder Participation in Assessment. The social partners are actively involved in improvement of the study programme (they are involved in the Curriculum Committee), in assessment of final works, and in participation of Career Days.

Practice teachers (mentors) and students are actively involved in clinical practice, as well as in the process of clinical skills training and evaluation. The social partners supervise students’ final works and prepare current clinical database topics. The LUHS Senate approved “The Procedure of Student, Teacher and Stakeholder Opinion Research”52,53 which regulates the internal degree of quality assurance testing procedures, techniques and tools for Lithuanian University of Health Sciences in connection with the study participants (teachers and students) and the social partners (employers, graduates and others) survey.

Summary

The management system of Nursing study program is clear and effective. University identifies processes and key structures and persons responsible for program implementation and management. The LUHS operates monitoring system of study quality, the work of Programme Committees has justified expectations improving the quality of the programme; questionnaires registered a minimum number of complaints about the violations of pedagogical ethics. It is believed that effective functioning of Study Programme Committee enables to foster collaboration of whole academic community, students and social partners in program management.

52 LUHS. Students, teachers and social partners (employers) opinion research order. Approved by Senate on October 11, 2013, resolution No. 37-11
## 6.3. Summary of the previous assessment conclusions

The external evaluation of the programme has been carried out for the second time.  

**Table 9. Summary of the previous assessment (17 June 2014) conclusions and changes in the Curriculum (amendment)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summary of the previous assessment conclusions</th>
<th>Changes in Curriculum</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The study plan for the BN articulates clearly where actual clinical practice hours are included for all nursing programmes currently running and proposed and identifies that sufficient practice opportunity is offered to all nursing students in accordance with the EU/36/2005. This identifies that the number of practical and theoretical hours completed should be 4600 hours, of which at least half must be direct patient care and no less than a third taught theoretical hours. Nurses qualifying from the BN programme of study have a transcript/diploma supplement which clearly articulates the hours completed.</td>
<td>The changed curriculum was implemented at the beginning of 2014/2015 teaching year. Hours designated for clinical training are clearly identified (Nursing Study Plan for 2014/2015 and 2015 /2016 academic years). This is also clearly seen in the transcripts of diploma supplement. Clinical training is organized entirely in the health care institutions (genuine clinical setting) under a supervision of clinical practice teachers (mentors) (classroom hours are not included in clinical practice hours). Clinical training diaries were revised and renewed according to the planned outcomes and learning outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. In order to comply fully with the requirements of EU/55/2013 due for ratification by all countries by January 2016, practice hours must be articulated in actual hours of practice and then converted to ECTS.</td>
<td>The program designed for clinical training is 2403 hours (89 credits). According EU/55/2013 directive the number of practical and theoretical hours completed should be 4600 hours, of which at least half must be direct patient care and no less than a third taught theoretical hours (Nursing Study Plan for 2014/2015 and 2015 /2016 academic years).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. The ERT recommends that LUHS make the education for community nursing care more specifically evident within the curriculum document.</td>
<td>Since 2015, the subject Community and Family Nursing is given 5 ECTS, and clinical training in the community - 6 ECTS (Nursing Study Plan for 2015 /2016 academic years).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The ERT recommends a clearer development of the course unit content to relate this more clearly to module outcomes, and to offer a clear progression throughout the curriculum.</td>
<td>The structure of the programme has been reorganised. Adjustments were made in the following modules: Module 3. <em>Fundamental of Nursing</em>; Module 5. <em>Environmental and Health Sciences</em>; Module 6. <em>Nursing model</em>; Module 7. <em>Basics of Clinical Subjects</em>; Module 9. <em>Pedagogic</em> and Module 11. <em>Special Nursing</em>. The module outcomes will better ensure the realisation of the outcomes of the study programme (Annex 1).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The ERT recommends that LUHS reconsiders the balance of the content of the curriculum to reflect a greater nursing input.</td>
<td>All speciality subjects in the programme are taught by nurses (Annex 2). The content of the subjects is oriented towards nursing and ensures the achievement of the programme outcomes (Annex 1) and the development of competencies pointed out in the Directive EU/55/2013.</td>
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<td>6. The ERT recommends that LUHS forward plan strategically in order to sustain staff student ratio’s and grow the speciality of nursing in light of increasing admission numbers.</td>
<td>The University puts much effort in order to strengthen the Nursing study programme and to increase the number of students in this programme. Over the period of 5 years, the number of students willing to study in this programme has increased from 437 to 982 (Table 1). Also, a plan for the construction of a new building for the Faculty of Nursing has been approved.</td>
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<td>7. The ERT recommends that LUHS continues to increase the ratio of nurses to medical clinicians involved in all aspects of nursing education and professional academy</td>
<td>The speciality subjects in the Nursing programme are taught exclusively by nurses. Nurses also supervise the graduation theses in the majority of cases (Annex 2 and Annex 4).</td>
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<tr>
<td>The ERT suggests that LUHS review the balance of methods of teaching to reduce the number of lectures</td>
<td>The teaching methods have been adjusted with more focus being placed on independent work (over 20% of contact hours)</td>
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in all subjects of the programme are allocated to independent work), seminars, and case analysis. The number of lectures has been reduced (Annex 1). Professor Anne R. Bavie from Connecticut University (USA) visited the Department from 14th May to 14th June in 2014. Her visit was financed by the Fulbright Scholar Programme (USA). Professor Bavier worked assisting our teachers to increase dialogue in the classroom, by using various teaching techniques, explaining theoretical basis, sharing experience with the teachers in transition theoretical knowledge to clinical practice and, finally, working with small groups of hospital employees who must provide clinical instructions (mentorship) for students. Her special focus was on enabling teachers to reduce number of lectures and offering other teaching methods.

The ERT recommends that more nursing-specific hard copy literature should be added to the present collection of required and recommended readings in order to integrate the subjects of other disciplines (e.g. law, sociology, economics, management, pedagogics, etc.) with health care and nursing. Consideration should be given also to updating texts to the most recent editions where knowledge has advanced and perspectives regarding nursing standards, education and practice have changed. Particularly in clinical subjects: the role of nursing should be more studied when replacing medical literature with the contemporary literature of health care and clinical nursing.

The ERT recommends that opportunities for student participation in research, artistic and applied research activity is made more evident within the study plan.

The ERT suggests that LUHS consider expansion of their practice facilities including increased preparation of mentors.

The ERT suggests that consideration of the views of patient and service users may enhance the curriculum going forward.

| The ERT recommends that more nursing-specific hard copy literature should be added to the present collection of required and recommended readings in order to integrate the subjects of other disciplines (e.g. law, sociology, economics, management, pedagogics, etc.) with health care and nursing. Consideration should be given also to updating texts to the most recent editions where knowledge has advanced and perspectives regarding nursing standards, education and practice have changed. Particularly in clinical subjects: the role of nursing should be more studied when replacing medical literature with the contemporary literature of health care and clinical nursing. | Nursing-specific hard copy literature is updated each year. In 2014, a number of new (published in 2011-14) textbooks of over 40 titles were purchased. The decision to purchase those textbooks was based on experts’ remarks and teachers’ needs. The new literature has been included into the list of compulsory and recommended literature. |
| The ERT recommends that opportunities for student participation in research, artistic and applied research activity is made more evident within the study plan. | Developing of critical thinking of the students starts at the first year of the studies (1 Module. Humanities and Social Sciences; 3 Module. Fundamentals of Nursing; 11 Module. Administration of nursing and research work; Module 9. Pedagogic). (Nursing Study Plan for 2015 /2016 academic years; Annex 1). The students choose the title of the thesis at the end of the third year. The qualification committee (involves 2 nurses, 1 psychologist, 1 physioterapist and 1 statistician) is formed and monitors the training process of the students’ research. The topics selected for the graduation theses are the most relevant issues of modern midwifery. A list of tentative thesis topics are uploaded in FC, where students can get introduced to them and select them. Nurses usually supervise these theses mostly and they are thesis advisors too. |
| The ERT suggests that LUHS consider expansion of their practice facilities including increased preparation of mentors. | Students may choose to undergo their clinical training in any hospital of Lithuania that meets the requirements set for clinical practice. In 2014, 22 out of 75 students underwent their clinical training in various hospitals of Lithuania outside Kaunas city. Over 100 nurses have completed mentors’ training courses. |
| The ERT suggests that consideration of the views of patient and service users may enhance the curriculum going forward. | The social partners are actively involved in improvement of the study programme and in the Programme Committee, in assessment of final works, and in participation of Career Days. The social partners supervise students’ final works and prepare current clinical database topics. |
In summary of the self-evaluation of the Nursing Programme, we believe all the changes were implemented and will be continued to be implemented with regard to all expert conclusions and recommendations.

The strengths of the Nursing programme include the following:

- Good clinical, scientific and information base in LHSU;
- Close cooperation between the Department of Nursing and Care and clinical basis;
- Installation of the First Class Intranet system equipment and an simulation training class;
- The big modern Health Sciences Library;
- High teacher qualification, low staff turnover;
- Students participation in higher education quality improvement process;
- Approval of all the necessary documents in learning process regulation;
- Promotion of targeted government funding.

The weaknesses include the following:

- Renovations of infrastructure are currently undergoing which results in a high decomposition of the training base.