

The decision of the Higher Education Assessment Council of the Estonian Quality Agency for Education

Tallinn Health Care College

Decision of fulfilment of the secondary condition of institutional accreditation

24.08.2023

The Higher Education Assessment Council of the Estonian Quality Agency for Education decided to consider the secondary condition imposed on the institutional accreditation decision of Tallinn Health Care College fulfilled.

Pursuant to subsection 53(3) of the Administrative Procedure Act and clauses 43.2 and 43¹ of the document *Guide to Institutional Accreditation*, established on the basis of the authorisation contained in subsection 38(3) of the Higher Education Act and subsection 24(5) of the Statutes of the Education and Youth Board, the Higher Education Assessment Council of the Estonian Quality Agency for Education (hereinafter referred to as the Council) states the following:

1. Pursuant to subsection 53(1)2) of the Administrative Procedure Act, *the secondary condition of an administrative act is an additional duty related to the principal regulation of the administrative act, and clauses (2)2) and 3) prescribe that a secondary condition may be imposed on an administrative act if the administrative act cannot be issued without the secondary condition or if issue of the administrative act must be resolved on the basis of the administrative right of discretion.* On 27.04.2020, the Higher Education Assessment Council of the Estonian Quality Agency for Education adopted the decision to approve the assessment report¹ and to carry out the next institutional accreditation of Tallinn Health Care College in seven years with the secondary condition that Tallinn Health Care College would submit to the Council on 27.02.2023 at the latest a report on the elimination of the shortcomings referred to in clause 13.3 of the assessment decision².
2. On 23.02.2023, Tallinn Health Care College sent to the Council the following documents: 1) Report on the fulfilment of ancillary conditions; 2) Research directions across the College; 3) Development plan 2022–2026.

¹ The assessment report is an integral part of the decision and is available on HAKA's website.

² The assessment report is available on HAKA's website.



3. HAKA invited the following members of the Institutional Accreditation Committee to assess the fulfilment of the secondary condition.

Josette Denekens	Professor Emeritus, former Rector, University of Antwerp, Belgium
Marjatta Häsänen	Senior Lecturer, Faculty of Health and Wellbeing, Turku University of Applied Science, Finland
Ruud Heijnen	International Cooperation Coordinator in the Faculty of Health; Programme Director of the Master's programme in Health Care, Zuyd University of Applied Sciences (Netherlands)

4. HAKA sent the initial report to the higher education institution on 15.06.2023, and the higher education institution responded on 28.06.2023. On 30.06.2023, the Assessment Committee submitted a report to HAKA on the elimination of the shortcomings referred to in clause 13.3 of the Council's decision of 27.04.2020. The assessment was as follows:

The shortcoming underpinning the imposition of the secondary condition	Assessment: the shortcoming has been substantially eliminated
Strategic management: the strategic management of the higher education institution is rather characterised by responding to the factors from the internal and external environment. The future vision and strategic goals of the higher education institution are not clearly recognised by the staff and the students. Cross-institutional initiatives are not always in line with the strategic plans, and their efficiency and risks and impact on stakeholders (students, higher education institution, society) are not assessed. Unlike the student-oriented approach, the ambition included in the mission and vision – to be an innovation-oriented organisation that solves the problems faced by the society – is not sufficiently reflected in all spheres of activity of the higher education institution.	<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The higher education institution has a clearly formulated and coherent development plan, mission, vision and values. The teaching staff is focused on achieving the goals set out in the development plan. <p><u>Areas for improvement, and recommendations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The action plan should be better linked with the development plan and performance indicators, to make it more clearly visible what the higher education institution wants to do and how to operate and how it measures and evaluates progress. Persons responsible should also be assigned to each activity.
The shortcoming underpinning the imposition of the secondary condition	Assessment: the shortcoming has been fully eliminated
Internationalisation: the higher education institution is part of several	<u>Strengths</u>

<p>international networks and provides great support for foreign students, but the objectives related to internationalisation are not clearly formulated and the higher education institution has no common understanding of the vision related to internationalisation, and its implementation. Therefore, the initiatives in internationalisation are not always related to the strategic goals of the higher education institution.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The higher education institution has prepared a new development plan-based internationalisation strategy that contains thoroughly planned activities throughout the higher education institution. • The new internationalisation strategy has been developed in an inclusive manner and successfully communicated to all parties (staff, students, partners). <p><u>Suggestions for further development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is recommended that international comparisons with partnering higher education institutions be critically monitored to ensure further improvement of the study programmes.
<p>The shortcoming underpinning the imposition of the secondary condition</p>	<p>Assessment: the shortcoming has been substantially eliminated</p>
<p>Research, development and/or other creative activities: the higher education institution does not have a cross-institutional research strategy that would guide research and development at the study programmes level as well. At the moment, the research topics are formed based on the individual interests and preferences of the academic staff and are not always consistent with the strategic goals of the higher education institution. The management and the support system in research and development need to be strengthened.</p>	<p><u>Strengths</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Research and Development Board’s strategy and its implementation plan have been developed. New positions supporting the activities of the Research and Development Board have been established, and new employees hired. Collaboration has been expanded and in-service trainings have been organised to improve competences in applied research. <p><u>Areas for improvement, and recommendations</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities should be monitored and assessed more systematically to achieve the goals of the Research and Development Board. For example, annual goals could be set. <p><u>Suggestions for further development</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students could be increasingly more involved in the activities of the Research and Development Board, for example, through various projects and publications. • A clear plan on how to cope with the expansion of the possibilities of artificial intelligence in teaching could be useful.

5. Given the fact that the shortcomings underpinning the imposition of the secondary condition have been fully or substantially eliminated, the Council **Decided to consider the secondary condition imposed on the decision adopted on 27.04.2020 on the institutional accreditation of Tallinn Health Care College fulfilled and to maintain in force the decision to accredit Tallinn Health Care College for seven years.**

The decision was adopted with 10 votes in favour. 0 were against.

6. A person who finds that his or her rights are violated or his or her freedoms are restricted by this decision may file a challenge pursuant to the procedure provided for in the Administrative Court Procedure Act. The challenge shall be filed to the HAKA Assessment Council within 30 days after the person became or should have become aware of the decision. The Council shall send the challenge to the HAKA Appeals Committee, which shall, within five days of receipt of the challenge, provide a written unbiased opinion to the Council on the validity of the challenge. The Council shall resolve the challenge within 10 days of its receipt, taking into account the reasoned opinion of the Appeals Committee. If further examination of the challenge is necessary, the Assessment Council may extend the deadline for examining the challenge by up to 30 days.

Hillar Bauman

Secretary of the Council