Report on

Evaluation of Master's Degree Programme

Master in Prehospital Critical Care M-PHCC

120 ECTS Credits

Faculty of Health Sciences

2023

Introduction

The Norwegian authorities require the University of Stavanger to supervise study programmes in accordance with the provisions of the Act relating to Universities and University Colleges, the Regulations concerning Quality Assurance and Quality Development in Higher Education and Tertiary Vocational Education (Ministerial Regulations) and the Regulations concerning Supervision of the Educational Quality in Higher Education (Academic Supervision Regulations)[1].

Section 4-1(3) of the Academic Supervision Regulations states: "Institutions must systematically ensure that all study programmes meet the requirements set out in sections 3-1 to 3-4 of the Regulations concerning Quality Assurance and Quality Development in Higher Education and Tertiary Vocational Education and chapter 2 of the Regulations concerning Supervision of the Educational Quality in Higher Education."

The comments on the paragraph state: "This entails that the institution has satisfactory procedures and practices for the accreditation of programmes and the revision of accreditations. In this context, the term 'revision of accreditation' entails a review of whether the programme meets the requirements for accreditation and whether it produces satisfactory results."

The Ministerial Regulations include a requirement for periodic evaluations. Section 2-1(2) states: "The institutions shall carry out periodic evaluations of their study programmes. Representatives of employers or society at large, students and external experts, who are relevant to the study programme, shall contribute to the evaluations."

At the University of Stavanger, revision of a study programme's accreditation pursuant to section 4-3(3) of the Academic Supervision Regulations must be based on periodic evaluations of the study programme in line with section 2-1(2) of the Ministerial Regulations.

The Dean must appoint an Evaluation Committee: The Committee must produce a report describing how the study programme satisfies the regulations' accreditation criteria and any additional requirements stipulated by the university. The report must also highlight areas where further development is desirable. Reference is made to the following documents:
[Accreditation of Study Programmes at the University of Stavanger](#) and
[Guidelines and Procedures for Periodic Evaluations and Reaccreditation of Study Programmes](#).

This template was produced by the Director of Academic Affairs to aid the work of the Committee and Faculty. Contents of the document:
1. Composition and mandate of the Evaluation Committee
2. Overview of the documentation that must be procured for the committee's work
3. General overview of the study programme
4. The Committee's evaluations in relation to the accreditation criteria
5. The Committee's overall evaluation
6. The Dean's evaluation, recommendations, and action plan

The report containing the Dean's recommendations and action plan must be submitted to the Director of Academic Affairs for further consideration.

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[1] In Norwegian: Studiekvalitetsforskriften and Studietilsynsforskriften.

1 Composition and mandate of the Evaluation Committee

The Committee's composition:
- 1-2 academic staff members from the study programme's academic environment
- 1-2 external academic representatives from equivalent or related subject areas
- 1 external labour representative
- 1-2 students
- 1 representative from the administrative staff

The Committee's mandate:
- To evaluate whether the accreditation criteria of the Academic Supervision Regulations have been satisfactorily met, or in which areas the study programme does not satisfy the accreditation criteria
- To evaluate whether the programme's feasibility and documented results are satisfactory
- To provide evaluations and recommendations of potential use for the further development of the programme

The members of the Committee:

- **Head of the committee and academic staff member from the M-PHCC programme at The Faculty of Health Sciences:** Per Kristian Hyldmo- Associate Professor and Study Program Director for the Master's programme in Prehospital Critical Care

- **Academic staff member from the M-PHCC programme at The Faculty of Health Sciences:** Matthew Hilditch- Assistant Professor at the Master's programme in Prehospital Critical Care

- **External academic representative:** Trine Møgster Jørgensen- Associate Professor and Study Program Director for the Bachelor's programme in Paramedics at Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet)

- **External labor representative:** Morten Bjønnæs Steffensen- Head of Department at Ambulance station Sentrum at the Ambulance Department/Prehospital Clinic at Oslo University Hospital

- **Student representative:** Mona Rafiei- Student representative and teaching assistant at the Master's programme in Prehospital Critical Care at The Faculty of Health Sciences at UiS

- **Administrative staff member**: Marte Knudsen- Study Advisor at the Faculty of Health Sciences at UiS

2 Overview of the documentation that must be procured for the Committee's work

- Programme description
- Matrix illustrating the programme's structure
- Course descriptions for all courses, with reading lists
- Template for Diploma and Diploma Supplement
- Titles of all master's theses submitted by the students who have graduated in the past three years
- Schedules of all three cohorts for the academic year 2022-2023
- Overview of the academic year's scope of 1,500-1,800 hours distributed by self-study, organised learning activities, the examination and preparation for examinations
- The academic environment's publications registered in Cristin 2018-2022
- Any other publications from the academic environment that are relevant to the programme 2018-2022
- Overview of the academic environment 31 December 2022 (table)
- CVs of everyone included in the academic environment
- Student exchange agreements quality assured by the academic environment
- Supervised professional training agreements (if relevant)
- Overview of existing arrangements for cooperating with hosts for the supervised professional training (if relevant)

- The following student data and results data (the faculty can supplement as needed):

Data	Source
No. of admissions places 2023	The board's decision
Applications and admissions 2018-2022	UiS Innsikt/DBH
Admission quality 2018-2022 - Numbers of qualified applicants	UiS Innsikt/DBH

- Average admission points - Admission points limits	
Number of starting students 2018-2022	UiS Innsikt/DBH
Number of students2018-2022	UiS Innsikt/DBH
Throughput cohort 2017-2019	UiS Innsikt/DBH
Drop-out rate cohort 2017-2019	UiS Innsikt/DBH
Qualifications and student exchange 2019-2022	UiS Innsikt/STAR Tableau
Outgoing exchange students 2018-2022	UiS Innsikt/DBH
Passed credits per student 2018-2022	UiS Innsikt/DBH
Internal mobility - Internal recruitment - Change study programme from/to	UiS Innsikt/STAR Tableau
Evaluation data	Studiebarometeret, internal data
Examination data, time series 2019-2022 Grade distribution Fail rate Passed/registered	Database for Statistics on Higher Education (DBH)

3 General overview of the study programme

Name, qualification, and starting date
Norwegian name of the study programme: Master in Prehospital Critical Care (the programme does not have a Norwegian title)
English name of the study programme: Master in Prehospital Critical Care
Qualification (degree and titles) to which the study programme leads: Master's degree in Prehospital Critical Care

Type of study programme (check box)	
	Campus/location-based study programme **X**
	Session-based study programme
	Decentralised study programme at another location (specify the location)
	Online study programme
	Online/Assembly-based study programme
	Experience based
	Joint degree

The study programme is offered as (check box)	
	Full-time study programme **X**
	Part-time study programme **X**

4 The Committee's evaluations in relation to the accreditation criteria

The study programme must be evaluated in relation to the following accreditation criteria specified in NOKUT's Academic Supervision Regulations (ASR) and the Ministerial Regulations (MR)[2] laid down by the ministry:

Requirements for study programme

4.1   Information provided about the programme must be correct and show the programme's content, structure, and progress of study, as well as opportunities for student exchanges. ASR, section 2-1(2)

In this context, the term 'information' refers to what is indicated in the programme description and associated information about the programme.

Committee's evaluation:

The information about the study programme is considered to be updated, correct, informative, and easily accessible. The information clearly illustrates the study programme's content, structure and path of progression, and is considered by the committee to be as clear and informative as possible from both an academic, employer's, and student's point of view. Information about the study programme is available for both internal and external users on the university's websites here: Master in Prehospital Critical Care full-time | University of Stavanger (uis.no) and here: Master in Prehospital Critical Care part-time | University of Stavanger (uis.no). The study programme's path of progression is clearly illustrated on the website, in the study programme description, as well as in the individual course descriptions. The expected learning outcomes and content in each course was also assessed by the committee to be straightforward, clear, and reflective of what is expected from students at a master's level.

The committee discussed the planned new observation practice course as an important positive improvement as students will be able to travel abroad and observe other health professionals in their everyday practice and bring their observations back with them into their PHCC studies.

Some courses on the programme do not have formal reading lists, therefore the committee had a discussion concerning whether this it is a breach of what the students can expect. A consensus was made that even though it is standard practice and helpful for students to have formal reading lists in their courses, it can also be expected for the students themselves to find the relevant literature as part of the independence expected on a master's level. The committee also agreed that it would be beneficial to have a mini course on study techniques as part of the introduction day for new students at the beginning of each fall semester.

Committee's recommendations:

The committee recommends that the plans to implement both a new observation practice course and the implementation of a mini course on study techniques as part of the introduction day for new students are followed through. The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

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[2] In this section, the text from the regulations is highlighted in bold font and the comments are in ordinary font (generally taken from the comments on the regulations and NOKUT's guidance). The evaluations and any recommendations must be written in the text boxes.

4.2 **The learning outcomes for the programme must be in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning, and the programme must have an appropriate title.** ASR, section 2-2(1)

Learning outcomes must be described as what a candidate shall have achieved upon completion of the programme. The learning outcomes for programmes subject to professional requirements, for example programmes subject to national curriculum regulations must meet both the professional requirements and the requirements of the [National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning](#) (NQF).

Committee's evaluation:
Based on a thorough discussion by the committee's members a consensus was reached that the name of the M-PHCC study programme is considered to be both appropriate and informative. The learning outcomes are also considered to be well described and clearly outlined, making it clear to students what they are supposed to have achieved upon completion of the programme. The learning outcomes for both the programme as well as the individual courses are also considered to meet the requirements of the National Qualifications Framework for Lifelong Learning (NQF).
Committee's recommendations:
The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.3 **The programme must be academically up-to-date and have clear academic relevance for further studies and/or employment.** ASR, section 2-2(2)

The requirement that the programme must be academically up to date entails that it must be up to date in relation to knowledge development in both academic and professional arenas, society, and the labour market. Relevance and updated knowledge in academic and professional arenas, society, and the labour market, are ensured through schemes for interaction with the labour market and/or society adapted to the programme's content and level. The institution is expected to have assessed the recruitment base based on expected demand/need and overall capacity related to the same or similar programmes at its own and other institutions.

Committee's evaluations:
The master's programme in Prehospital Critical Care is based on an increasing emphasis on and demand for quality in prehospital critical care, and the aim of the programme is to supply prehospital care providers with the academic ability to critically appraise the knowledgebase in their field. The aim is also to ensure that students who complete the programme qualify for different positions within prehospital and emergency medicine/critical care, e.g., system development and dissemination of knowledge, and positions requiring the ability to initiate, develop and evaluate research and quality improvement projects.
The committee discussed and agreed that the M-PHCC programme is in many ways pushing the labour market within the field in the right direction in terms of quality development, but a challenge was also raised by the committee's labour representative of how parts of the staff at various workplaces who go on to do the master's in Prehospital Critical Care do not necessarily always return to their former workplace, and so an unintended consequence is therefore that certain workplaces become understaffed precisely due to the existence of the M-PHCC programme.
A point was also raised that many students from the M-PHCC programme seem to be simply transiting through the labour market system as various employers often do not have sufficient quality development work to offer them as an incitement to stay in their positions. A discussion was also held as to whether there should be more specialized voluntary pathways on the

programme more aligned with the students' professional backgrounds or whether one should keep and/or expand the current elective courses. A point was also raised that the community care perspective on the M-PHCC programme seemed to be missing. In the future, community paramedic topics may be considered included in the M-PHCC programme as the term is included in the Regulation describing the National Guideline on Paramedicine education.

Committee's recommendations:
The committee recommends that the abovementioned points of improvement are incorporated into the study programme where possible. The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.4 The total workload of the programme must be between 1,500 and 1,800 hours per year for full-time students. ASR, section 2-2(3)

Workload is a calculation of how much time the typical student will take to complete the various academic activities required to achieve the learning outcomes. Such a calculation must include self-study, preparation for examinations and organised learning activities. The learning activities a study programme contains will vary but could include lectures, seminar teaching, laboratory work, academic supervision, and supervised professional training. The amount of self-study included in a programme will vary based on the profile of the study programme. The study programme must achieve a balance between self-study and organised learning activities that enables students to achieve the learning outcomes within the normal length of study.

Committee's evaluation:
The total workload of the programme was thoroughly discussed by the committee. There was an overall agreement amongst the committee's members that the study programme does achieve a balance between self-study and organised learning activities that enables students to achieve the learning outcomes within the normal length of study. Perspectives were raised that the students' experiences of this can vary depending on their individual situations, as many students must work in addition to going about their studies and might also have families and caring responsibilities which makes time management more difficult. Both the full-time and part-time programme does however try to accommodate these students as much as possible and reasonable within the parameters set for the programme.

Committee's recommendations:
The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.5 The programme's content, structure and infrastructure must be adapted to the programme's learning outcomes. ASR, section 2-2(4)

The study programme's learning outcomes are achieved through the courses. A course is the smallest credit providing unit. The content and structure of the study programme must show how the courses in the study programme, as well as the progression from semester to semester, leads to the learning outcomes.

The study programme must have adequate access to suitable premises, equipment, library services, administrative and technical services, adequate and suitable ICT services, network support, suitable learning platforms, etc., that support the student's learning and learning environment, as well as the academic staff's teaching, research and/or artistic development work and academic development work.

Committee's evaluation:
The study programme's content and structure were thoroughly discussed by the committee, and there was an overall agreement amongst the committee's members that the programme's content

and structure is satisfactory and does indeed clearly illustrate how progression from semester to semester leads to the achievement of the learning outcomes set out for the programme.

Thorough discussions were held about the courses on the programme, where the student representative specified that they felt they were personally able to clearly notice from semester to semester how they were accumulating knowledge and individually reaching the specified learning outcomes. A point was also made that both the courses and learning outcomes are experienced as closely connected to the overarching idea of the programme, with the exception of the course MPH130 Philosophy of Science, Health Care Ethics and Human Rights. Changes have however been made in this course based on feedback from students, and the new version of the course will be run for the first time in the fall semester of 2023.

A point was also made that some students feel as though the teaching in certain courses can become too academic and not practical or relevant, and that the teaching can sometimes become biased towards the course teachers' own professional background, making the teaching at times feel less relevant for students coming from other professional backgrounds. A point was also made that it would be beneficial if course teachers incorporated the learning outcomes, both for the course and for the programme as a whole, more into the specific teaching on their courses. A challenge raised in terms of this is that course teachers on the M-PHCC programme are primarily staff with small part-time positions who do not have UiS as their primary workplace, making it challenging to get them to see the M-PHCC programme as a whole when designing and teaching their respective courses. A suggestion from the committee was to arrange digital short meetings between course coordinators in order to discuss and align the content of the teaching between – and within courses.

The digital infrastructure provided by the university, as well as library services, administrative and technical services and access to teaching facilities are experienced as largely good and satisfactory by both students and staff on the M-PHCC programme, but some concerns were raised by the student representative that there is a very small section for books directly related to the M-PHCC programme at the library, making it difficult to access certain books without having to make special orders. This also poses a challenge for part-time students who are usually only in Stavanger when there is teaching taking place.

A concern was also raised from the academic staff perspective that it is problematic that the university no longer offers the litterature database EMBASE, as it served as a vital resource for both staff and students on the programme.

Committee's recommendations:
The committee recommends a continued and increased focus on the learning descriptions for all staff and students, as well as an emphasis being made to the course teachers to incorporate the programme's overall learning outcomes more into the teaching on their respective courses. This will ensure a common awareness of the learning outcomes for the programme and how they are to be reached. The diversity of the students' backgrounds also suggests that content and examples should be more diverse, and not simply restricted to HEMS. The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.6 **The teaching, learning, and assessment methods must be adapted to the programme's learning outcomes. The programme must facilitate students taking an active role in the learning process.** ASR, section 2-2(5)

The different teaching and learning methods must be adapted to the programme's content and structure. This means that teaching, learning, and assessment methods must be adapted to a digital society.

Teaching and learning methods must be structured such that students achieve the study programme's described learning outcomes. Assessment methods must be suitable for measuring whether the student has achieved the learning outcomes.

How the academic environment facilitates students taking an active role will depend on the study programme's profile and also relates to ensuring and safeguarding a good learning environment.

Committee's evaluation:

The different teaching and learning methods on the M-PHCC programme are considered by the committee to be largely adapted to the programme's content and structure, and the teaching and learning methods are considered as structured in a way that facilitates the students to achieve the study programme's described learning outcomes.

A concern was however raised by the student representative that the exam questions across the different courses are very similar, and that this probably has to do with the fact that most courses focus on students reflecting on their own professional experience in their exams, as well as the programme primarily consisting of courses with home exams.

A recommendation was made by the external academic representative to consider using a wider range of assessment methods to ensure that the learning outcomes for the programme are met. Examples of this could be oral exams, simulation sessions, and pro- et con- discussions. A plan is already in place to implement an oral exam on one of the courses on the M-PHCC programme, but a wider range of assessment methods both could and should also be considered for other courses. A suggestion was also made to consider the use of group exams, as well as to facilitate more student-led group discussions. Both the teaching and assessments in the courses on the programme are conducted using digital platforms, and it is thus considered that the different teaching and assessment methods on the programme are well adapted to a digital society.

Committee's recommendations:

The committee recommends taking into use a wider range of assessment methods on the programme to ensure that the students both reach the required learning outcomes, and to facilitate for a more varied active learning environment. The committee recommends making one of the mandatory assignments in one of the courses into a group-based assessment as a way of testing the feasibility of possibly implementing a group exam in one of the courses later on. The committee also recommends that students on the programme are encouraged to create more student-led discussion groups. Apart from these comments the committee considered the item to meet the criteria.

4.7 The programme must have relevant links to research and academic development (R&D) work and/or artistic research. ASR, section 2-2(6)

The academic environment must be able to point to an adequately relevant mutual connection between R&D/artistic development activities and the programmes and how the students are introduced to R&D/artistic development during the programme.

The academic environment can ensure this connection through the use of its own research results, but also by using other research results in the education.

Committee's evaluation:

The committee considers there to be an adequate relevant mutual connection between R&D/artistic development activities and the M-PHCC programme. The students are tightly connected to the faculty's ongoing research activity through the courses, curriculum, as well as through the encouragement to join existing research groups. Research results from the programme's own researchers is heavily used in the curriculum, and the curriculum is considered to be both updated and international in scope. Elective courses where students can further specialize is also available.

A point was however raised that it could also be beneficial for the programme to hire a professor with a background in emergency medicine to further widen its scope, as well as to expand the curriculum even further to incorporate the ever-expanding range of patients and needs the students will encounter in their practice. A recommendation was also made to expand the existing, as well as develop new, research groups, and to connect the students' master's thesis projects even more tightly to the research groups.

Committee's recommendations:

The committee recommends that existing research groups attached to the programme are expanded, and that new research groups are developed in order to ensure an even stronger mutual connection between R&D/artistic development activities and the M-PHCC programme. The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.8 The programme must have internationalisation schemes adapted to the programme's level, scope, and other characteristics. ASR, section 2-2(7)

This requirement entails that the study programme must be placed in an international context and students thusly exposed to a variety of perspectives. Students at different levels in the study programme will experience the international dimension differently and it will also vary from subject area to subject area.

In this case, the programme is the central point for the internationalisation and the arrangements can include activities such as the use of international literature, international guest lecturers, incoming international students on exchanges, or the students' participation in international conferences or workshops, etc.

Committee's evaluation:

The committee agrees that the M-PHCC is a very international programme with both educators, research activities, and students coming from a broad range of both educational/professional backgrounds and nations. International literature is used extensively across all the courses on the programme and most of the academic staff are also active participants in international research networks, highly beneficial for both students and staff as it exposes them to a wide range of different perspectives throughout the programme. The majority of the courses also engage international guest lecturers, in addition to the programme mainly consisting of international staff.

The M-PHCC programme unfortunately does not have any formal international exchange agreements yet, but an extensive amount of work is being done by the Study Program Director and the International Coordinator at the faculty to secure such agreements. One of the biggest challenges with securing formal exchange agreements has been that while there are quite a few postgraduate courses abroad in the field of prehospital critical care, most of them are

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unfortunately primarily aimed at educating clinical experts and not academics. As the M-PHCC programme's stated aim is to academize the field by helping build the evidence base for, and critical thinking within, prehospital critical care, it thus mostly falls outside the scope of prehospital critical care courses abroad.

The Study Program Director and the International Coordinator at the faculty have made numerous attempts to establish formal exchange agreements with programmes and universities abroad (a detailed list of all the universities contacted will be provided in report item 4.9), but the most promising dialogues are currently taking place with The University of Cape Town, The University of Hertfordshire in the UK, The University of Western Australia, and The University of Cork and the National Ambulance Service in Ireland.

The creation of a new course involving students spending a set amount of time with a critical care service abroad has also been considered implemented on the M-PHCC programme as a way of further enhancing its international dimension. Such a course would entail that upon return to UiS the students would write a paper on a specific aspect of the service they have observed and worked with abroad, discussing its utilization worldwide, as well as any benefits and challenges were it to be introduced into their own service.

Committee's recommendations:
The committee recommends and underscores that the ongoing work with establishing formal international exchange agreements must be both continued and intensified to ensure that the M-PHCC programme meets the formal requirement of having internationalisation schemes adapted to the programme's level, scope, and other characteristics.

4.9 Programmes that lead to a degree must have schemes for international student exchanges. The content of the exchange programme must be academically relevant. ASR, section 2-2(8)

This provision entails that the institution must ensure that students in all programmes that lead to a degree are offered an opportunity for academic student exchange through updated and binding agreements, and that the relevance of the student exchange is guaranteed by the programme's academic environment. The scheme must be visible and predictable for the students such that they improve the students' opportunities and motivation to take part in student exchanges. The agreements must describe the timing of the exchanges in the study programme (exchange semester) and, insofar as it is possible, describe preapproved courses (student exchange packages).

Committee's evaluation:
The timing of the internationalisation scheme on the M-PHCC programme is clearly outlined in the study programme description, being both visible and predictable to students through the outlining of specific exchange semesters. However, as outlined in the previous report item, the M-PHCC programme unfortunately does not have any formal exchange agreements yet. The Study Program Director and International Coordinator have however made numerous attempts to achieve formal agreements with a wide range of programmes and universities abroad, including Borås University College, University of Hertfordshire in the UK, University of Warwick in the UK, University of Cardiff in the UK, University of New Haven in USA, Boston University School of Medicine (USA), University of Western Australia in Australia, University of Western Sydney in Australia, University of Canberra in Australia, James Cook University in Australia, University of Flinders in Australia, Metropolia University of Applied Sciences in Finland, University of Copenhagen in Denmark, University of Limerick in Ireland, UCD School of Medicine in Ireland, University of Cape Town in South Africa, Mahidol University in Thailand, University of Sumatra in Indonesia, University of

Airlangga in Indonesia, St. John University York in the UK and Edith Cowan University in Australia. In addition to this, programmes of ECIU members and partners in the SAFETY project have also been vetted, unfortunately without success. Most of the listed universities have been ruled out based on programme content and/or lack of on-campus teaching but a few may still prove viable, such as the universities mentioned in the previous report item.

Committee's recommendations:
The committee recommends and underscores that the ongoing work with establishing formal international exchange agreements must be both continued and intensified to ensure that the M-PHCC programme meets the formal requirement of providing students with the opportunity for academic student exchange through updated and binding agreements.

4.10   Programmes that include supervised professional training must have formal agreements between the institution and the host for the supervised professional training. ASR, section 2-2(9)

Agreements with hosts of supervised professional training must be in place to ensure and regulate the academic implementation of the supervised professional training and makes it possible for the supervised professional training to be quality assured in the same way as that implemented at the institution.

Committee's evaluation: **NOT APPLICABLE FOR THE M-PHCC PROGRAMME**

Committee's recommendations:

4.11   The second-cycle degree programme must be defined, delineated, and have adequate academic breadth. ASR, section 3-2(1)

The delineation of the second-cycle degree programme must be clear from the description of the subjects, disciplines, and areas of knowledge covered by the study programme. The study programme's profile and possible specialisations must be described in a way that ensures that the breadth of the study programme is clear.

Committee's evaluation:
After a thorough discussion of the programme's courses, course descriptions, information about the programme on the university websites, as well a thorough assessment of the professional backgrounds and publications of the academic faculty, the committee assesses the M-PHCC programme to be both clearly delineated and wide enough in scope. The simultaneous delineation and scope are ensured through the study programme's profile.

A discussion was however held as to whether the name of the programme should be changed as the current name can indicate that the programme is more practically oriented than it is. Changing the programme name to something along the lines of Master's in Prehospital Critical Care Sciences or similar was considered by the committee to be more in alignment with the programme's stated aim and academic profile.

Committee's recommendations:
The committee recommends that an assessment is made to consider changing the name of the study programme to more clearly underline its academic profile and to better capture the stated intent of the M-PHCC. The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

Requirements for the academic environment

4.12   **The second-cycle degree programme must have a broad and stable academic environment that consists of an adequate number of staff with a high level of academic competence within education, research, or artistic development work, and academic development work within the programme. The academic environment must cover subjects and courses that make up the programme. The staff in the academic environment must have relevant competence.** ASR, section 3-2(2)

The academic environment associated with the programme includes persons who directly and regularly contribute to the development, organisation, and implementation of the programme.

The academic environment must be broad and composed of staff with relevant competence within education, research or artistic development work, and academic development work in all parts of the programme. It is not sufficient for the competence to be relevant to the programme. Overall, the academic environment must have a high level of competence that covers the subject area. The academic environment must include persons with Associate Professor qualifications and senior qualifications, including Docent and Professor. This regulation introduces stronger and stricter rules, while it also it allows for flexibility in the composition of the academic environment.

Committee's evaluation:
The academic environment on the M-PHCC programme is considered by the committee to be largely broad enough in terms of being composed of staff with relevant competence within education, research or artistic development work, and academic development work in the different parts of the programme. The academic faculty is considered to have a high level of competence that covers the subject areas and includes staff members with Associate Professor qualifications and senior qualifications, including Docent and Professor.

Although the programme does have a broad and stable professional environment, the committee also assesses that the programme could benefit from having more faculty members with a stronger background in education as the faculty on the M-PHCC programme's primary strength currently lies in clinical experience and research.

The programme also relies heavily on small part-time positions, which can in turn affect the stability of the programme. A recommendation was also made to consider hiring someone with a more community-oriented professional background on the programme, such as for example a community nurse or similar, in alignment with the possibility of expanding the programme to a more community-based branch as discussed in earlier report items in this report.

Committee's recommendations:
The committee recommends that the possibility of expanding the faculty to include more staff with professional experience in education is explored, as well as adding someone with a more community-oriented professional background to the M-PHCC programme. The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.13   **The academic environment must have relevant educational competence.** ASR, section 2-3(2)

Educational competence includes University and University College Pedagogy and Didactics, as well as the competence necessary to use digital technology to promote learning. Universities Norway's guidelines for basic pedagogic competence specify minimum requirements for academic staff. In accordance with the guidelines, UiS assumes that it requires 150-200 hours of work to develop the desired basic competence and thus satisfy the requirement for educational competence.

Committee's evaluation:

The report item was thoroughly discussed by the committee. Based on the educational information provided in the academic staff's CV's as well as extended information provided by Study Program Director Per Kristian Hyldmo, the committee considers that the academic staff covers the pedagogical and didactical field for the study programme well. Study Program Director Per Kristian Hyldmo already possesses University Pedagogy and Didactics education, and the remaining members of the core of the M-PHCC academic team Associate Professor Daniel Adrian Lungu and Assistant Professor Matthew Hilditch are currently in the process of achieving it.

The committee agreed that assessing this report item was challenging as the M-PHCC programme primarily consists of international staff who have completed their degrees, and by extension their pedagogical and didactical education, abroad. However, as the international staff on the programme have been hired by a Norwegian university the committee considers it safe to assume that the necessary quality assurances have been made to ensure that also the international staff meet the minimum requirements for basic pedagogic competence.

The committee also agrees that the academic staff on the programme seem to have the necessary competence to use digital technology to promote learning, something which is also ensured through using various digital platforms as part of their teaching at UiS.

Committee's recommendations:

The committee recommends that small items of didactic theory are implemented in M-PHCC staff meetings or other joint arenas as a way of further strengthening and increasing the academic staff's pedagogical and didactical competence. This can also be done through actively using didactic theory in the mentoring of new (as well as more established) course organizers. The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.14 The programme must have a clear academic leadership with defined responsibilities for quality assurance and the development of the study programme. ASR, section 2-3(3)

The requirement all institutions must satisfy is that the academic leadership must consist of staff in teaching and research positions and bear formal responsibility for ensuring that the study programme is completed in accordance with the programme description and that the programme description is developed. Those who hold academic responsibility must have the competence necessary to carry out quality assurance and develop the study programme.

Committee's evaluation:

All study programmes at The Faculty of Health Sciences have a Study Program Director directly responsible for ensuring the overall academic quality of the given programme. Per Kristian Hyldmo has been the Study Program Director for the M-PHCC programme since 2018 until today. In addition to his work and research experience, Per Kristian Hyldmo also has the required pedagogical education required for the position. The Study Program Director role is clearly delineated with outlined directions, and the committee's assessment is that the M-PHCC programme has a strong academic leadership represented by Per Kristian Hyldmo.

Together with Study Program Director and Associate Professor Per Kristian Hyldmo, Associate Professor Daniel Adrian Lungu and Assistant Professor Matthew Hilditch also make out the academic core of the M-PHCC programme, and all three work together as a team to ensure the overall continuity, quality, and development of the M-PHCC programme. High levels of academic competence on the programme are also achieved through the variety of academic staff, through

the continuous hiring of more permanent staff, as well as through course organizer responsibilities allocated to each course organizer. There is close co-operation between the staff on the programme as well as a heterogeneous employee group in terms of educational and employment background, which the committee assesses to be very beneficial for both students and staff. The new quality system for education introduced at UiS in 2020 also ensures the overall quality of both the individual courses and the study programme, giving both students and course organizers the opportunity to provide important feedback and working points for the continuous future development of the programme.
Committee's recommendations: The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.15   **At least 50 % of the academic full-time equivalents affiliated to the programme must be staff with their primary employment at the institution. Of these, academic staff with at least Associate Professor qualifications must be represented among those who teach the core elements of the programme. In addition, the following requirements apply to the academic environment's level of competence:**

For second-cycle programmes, at least 50 p% of the members of the academic environment must hold at least Associate Professor qualifications. Within this 50 %, at least 10 % must hold Professor or Docent qualifications. ASR, section 2-3(4)

Academic environment includes the persons who directly and regularly contribute to developing, organising, and implementing the programme. Staff in primary employment are staff in at least 50 % full-time equivalent positions at UiS.

In other words, only the academic environment linked to the study programme in the form of man-year is evaluated under this point. Positions from and including 0.1 man-years are included in the calculation.

Committee's evaluation: The report item was thoroughly discussed by the committee. Out of the core of the M-PHCC academic staff, Study Program Director Per Kristian Hyldmo is employed in a permanent 50% position, and Associate Professor Daniel Adrian Lungu and Assistant Professor Matthew Hilditch in permanent 100% positions. The rest of the academic staff affiliated with the programme are mostly employed in temporary 20% positions. Per Kristian Hyldmo's, Daniel Adrian Lungu's and Matthew Hilditch's positions are all dedicated primarily to teaching responsibilities, development work, organization, and implementation on the M-PHCC programme. The rest of the academic staff attached to the programme all have their 20% positions exclusively dedicated to teaching responsibilities and course organizing on the programme. Based on the employment information provided, the committee considers that the programme meets the requirement of academic staff with at least Associate Professor qualifications being represented among those who teach the core elements of the programme. The M-PHCC programme also meets the requirement that at least 50% of the members of the academic staff must hold at least Associate Professor qualifications. The programme does however not meet the requirement that within this 50% at least 10% must hold Professor or Docent qualifications. This was thoroughly discussed in the committee, and there was an agreement amongst the committee's members that this is a common problem in second-cycle programmes, especially within the field of health.

In addition to this, prehospital critical care is also a relatively new and young academic field, especially in Norway. This is also part of the reason why there are not many academics within the field with Professor or Docent qualifications as it takes time to achieve this level of competency. Countries such as Australia and the UK have a higher density of academics within the field in possession of this level of competency, but recruitment of this category of staff from abroad has proved to be challenging.

Committee's recommendations:
The committee recommends that the work with ensuring that the programme meets the Professor and Docent requirement is both continued and intensified, both through increasing the current staff's level of competency as well as looking further into recruitment opportunities from abroad.

4.16 The academic environment must be able to document results of a high standard and results from partnerships with other national and international academic environments. The institution's assessments must be documented so it can be used in NOKUT's work. ASR, section 3-2(3)

The academic environment must be able to point to documented results of a high standard. What is considered a high standard must be assessed based on what is regarded as a high standard in the field of study, nationally and internationally.

In other words, what must be documented is not just the academic environment's results from its own institution, but also results from R&D/artistic development partnerships with other academic environments, both nationally and internationally. More research activity is required for a second-cycle degree programme than a first-cycle degree programme. As part of its supervision, NOKUT will also require all activities in academic environments that run study programmes within a third-cycle degree platform to maintain a 'high international quality' at all levels of study.

Committee's evaluation:
The report item was thoroughly discussed by the committee, and there was an agreement amongst the committee's members that the academic environment on the M-PHCC programme can point to strong research related activities of a high standard both nationally and internationally and in collaboration with other national and international environments. A steady flow of publications is continuously produced amongst the majority of the M-PHCC academic staff, and collaboration between individual staff members is also on the increase, such as for example a plan to establish a Nordic research group in the field of prehospital critical care.

More initiatives to increase the research activity among staff are also currently in process, such as for example establishing both a local research group anchored at UiS with international ties, as well as a trilateral collaboration between the Norwegian Air Ambulance Foundation, the global prehospital EMS division, and M-PHCC academic staff. The aim of these initiatives is to further develop both the M-PHCC programme and the field of prehospital critical care through increasing levels of competency in a way that enables the field to realize its full potential and help shape its future.

Committee's recommendations:
The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.17 The academic environment for programmes that lead to a degree must actively participate in national and international partnerships and networks that are relevant for the programme. ASR, section 2-3(6)

Partnerships and networks must be relevant for the study programme and provide the academic environment with experience that can be used in the study programme, and that can contribute to the development of quality. This could be research cooperation, participation in international conferences, partnerships on educational quality, etc. The networks that the academic environment actively takes part in must be evaluated. How the partnerships contribute to the quality of the environment's R&D activities must also be evaluated.

Committee's evaluation:
The academic environment on the M-PHCC programme can point to a high degree of active participation in national and international partnerships and networks that are relevant for the programme. The given research partnerships and networks that M-PHCC academic staff document participating in are considered as both relevant for the M-PHCC study programme, as well as providing the academic staff with experiences that directly contributes to increased educational quality on the programme.
The academic staff can also point to a high degree of participation in international conferences, even though this is mainly done on an individual basis by specific academic staff members. There are however plans to arrange a larger EMS conference for all academic staff on the programme. A student-alumni conference has also been established as a yearly event on the M-PHCC programme where alumni, current students, and academic staff meet for a two day-event containing academic presentations, discussions of future collaboration, as well as networking. This event is being further developed and expanded for the spring of 2023 and will take place in the month of June.
Committee's recommendations:
The report item is considered to meet the criteria.

4.18   **For programmes involving mandatory supervised professional training, the members of the academic environment must have relevant and updated knowledge from the field of the professional training. The institution must ensure that professional training supervisors have relevant competence and experience in the field of the professional training.** ASR, section 2-3(7)

The term 'professional training supervisors' refers to persons who facilitate and supervise students during the professional training period.

The term 'relevant competence' in the second sentence refers to relevant academic knowledge of and competence in supervision and support.

For programmes that include supervised professional training, institutions and academic environments are expected to ensure systematic contact with the professional field so that the programmes' and academic environments' own professional experience is up to date and in line with developments in the professional field. It is important for the quality of the programme that there is continuous interaction between competent individuals in the professional field and key individuals who have their principal position at the institutions. The academic environment at the institution must itself possess knowledge about supervised professional training so they can partner well with the supervised professional training field and integrate/build bridges between theory and supervised professional training in the education.

NOT APPLICABLE FOR THE M-PHCC PROGRAMME

5 The Committee's overall evaluation

The Master's in Prehospital Critical Care is considered to meet the overall accreditation criteria of study programmes at The University of Stavanger, as well as the requirements set out in sections 3-1 to 3-4 of the Regulations concerning Quality Assurance and Quality Development in Higher Education and Tertiary Vocational Education and chapter 2 of the Regulations concerning Supervision of the Educational Quality in Higher Education, except for the requirement that all programmes that lead to a degree must have schemes for international student exchanges in the form of binding student exchange agreements (ASR, section 2-2(8). The study programme is clearly described and outlined for both academics, students, and employers, and the expected learning outcomes are straightforward, clear, and reflective of what can be expected from students at a master's level programme. The study programme consists of academically strong and competent international staff with extensive research and teaching experience, and the programme overall is considered to be producing satisfactory results. The programme has clear routines and structures for the academic organization of the programme as well as for ensuring continuous quality assurance and development, and also encourages active student participation. Being a holder of a master's degree in Prehospital Critical Care provides several further employment opportunities, especially within the prehospital and emergency medicine/critical care field, as well as within system development and in positions that require the dissemination of knowledge. The master's programme also trains students for positions that requires the ability to initiate, develop and evaluate research and quality improvement projects within different health care systems, highly beneficial and important for the further development of future health care systems and practices. The study programme also has a clear academic progression and qualifies for further admissions to PhD studies.

6 The Dean's evaluation, recommendations, and action plan

Here, the Dean will provide their evaluation and recommendation before the report is submitted to the Director of Academic Affairs for further consideration. Specify the committee's consideration

If all accreditation criteria are deemed to have been met:
- o It is recommended that the study programme's accreditation is continued.

If all the evaluated criteria are *not* met, but restructuring necessary to satisfy the criteria can be carried out within a reasonable period of time:
- o It is recommended that the study programme's accreditation is continued with an action plan for satisfying the criteria.

If all the evaluated criteria are *not* met, and restructuring necessary to satisfy the criteria cannot be carried out within a reasonable period of time:
- o It is recommended that admissions be temporarily postponed while development work necessary for the study programme to satisfy the criteria is carried out, or
- o Recommendation and plan for phase-out and discontinuation

The report was considered by the following committees: <committees> <date>

The Dean's evaluation and recommendations:

Prioritised measures for further development:

UiS, <date>

<Dean's name>

Dean

<Faculty's name>

The document has been personally approved by the Dean in Public 360[3]

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[3] Please do not submit signed and scanned documents