

# Ergebnisbericht zum Verfahren zur Akkreditierung des gemeinsamen Masterprogramms (joint programme) „JEU-DITH – Joint European Master in Citizen-Centered Digital Health and Social Care“, Stgkz 0946, durchgeführt in St. Pölten (Österreich), Enschede (Niederlande) und Jyväskylä (Finnland)

## 1 Antragsgegenstand

Die Agentur für Qualitätssicherung und Akkreditierung Austria (AQ Austria) führte ein Verfahren zu oben genannter Akkreditierung gemäß § 23 Abs. 4b Hochschul-Qualitätssicherungsgesetz (HS-QSG), BGBl I Nr. 74/2011 idgF, in Verbindung mit § 4 Abs. 5 Z 2 FH-Akkreditierungsverordnung 2021 (FH-AkkVO 2021) durch. Zur Anwendung kam demnach der *European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes*. Gemäß § 21 HS-QSG veröffentlicht die AQ Austria folgenden Ergebnisbericht:

## 2 Verfahrensablauf

Das Akkreditierungsverfahren umfasste folgende Verfahrensschritte:

Verfahrensschritt	Zeitpunkt
Antrag	vom 13.01.2025, eingelangt am 13.01.2025
Mitteilung an Antragstellerin: Abschluss der Antragsprüfung	04.04.2025
Bestellung der Gutachter*innen und Beschluss über Vorgangsweise des Verfahrens	09.04.2025, 14.04.2025
Information an Antragstellerin über die Gutachter*innen	15.04.2025
Virtuelle Vorbereitungsgespräche mit den Gutachter*innen	28.04.2025, 20.05.2025
Nachreichungen vor dem Vor-Ort-Besuch eingelangt am	15.04.2025 22.05.2025
Vorbereitungstreffen mit den Gutachter*innen	26.05.2025
Vor-Ort-Besuch	27.05.2025
Nachreichungen nach dem Vor-Ort-Besuch eingelangt am	13.06.2025
Antragskorrektur	vom 18.08.2025, eingelangt am 19.08.2025
Vorlage des Gutachtens	21.08.2025
Übermittlung des Gutachtens an Antragstellerin zur Stellungnahme	05.09.2025
Stellungnahme der Antragstellerin zu dem Gutachten eingelangt am	vom 15.09.2025, eingelangt am 17.09.2025
Übermittlung der Kostenaufstellung an Antragstellerin zur Stellungnahme	08.09.2025
Stellungnahme der Antragstellerin zu dem Gutachten an Gutachter*innen	06.10.2025

## 3 Akkreditierungsentscheidung

Das Board der AQ Austria hat mit Beschluss vom 12.11.2025 entschieden, dem Antrag der FH St. Pölten GmbH auf Akkreditierung des Masterstudiengangs (joint programme) „JEUDITH – Joint European Master in Citizen-Centered Digital Health and Social Care“, Stgkz 0946, stattzugeben, da die Akkreditierungsvoraussetzungen im Sinne der Standards des European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes gemäß § 23 Abs. 4b HS-QSG iVm § 4 Abs. 5 Z 2 FH-AkkVO 2021 erfüllt sind.

Die Entscheidung wurde am 17.11.2025 von der zuständigen Bundesministerin genehmigt. Der Bescheid wurde mit Datum vom 20.11.2025 zugestellt.

## 4 Anlagen

- Gutachten vom 21.08.2025
- Stellungnahme vom 06.10.2025

# Expert Report on the Accreditation Procedure of the Joint Programme “Joint European Master in Citizen-Centered Digital Health and Social Care” by the St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, conducted in St. Pölten (AT), Enschede (NL), Jyväskylä (FIN)

pursuant to the European Approach for Quality  
Assurance of Joint Programmes

Vienna, 21/08/2025

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## Overview of the Accreditation Procedure

Information on the Applying Institution	
Applying Institution	St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences
Sites of the Applying Institution	St. Pölten, Mauer (Austria)
Legal Status	Company with limited liability ( <i>Gesellschaft mit beschränkter Haftung</i> )
Accredited since	1996/97
Number of Students	3250
Number of Accredited Study Programmes	26

Information on the Partner Institution	
Name	JAMK University of Applied Sciences
Sites	Jyväskylä and Saarijärvi (Finland)
Type	University of Applied Sciences
Number of Students	ca. 9500

Information on the Partner Institution	
Name	Saxion University of Applied Sciences
Sites	Enschede, Deventer, Apeldoorn (Netherlands)
Type	University of Applied Sciences
Number of Students	ca. 27 000

Information on the Accreditation Application	
Programme Title	JEUDITH - Joint European Master in Citizen-Centered Digital Health and Social Care
Type of Study Programme	Joint Master's Programme
ECTS Credit Points	120
Duration of Studies	4 Semesters
Planned Number of Students per Academic Year	24
Degrees Awarded	Double Degree, consisting of a "Master of Science" (MSc or M.Sc.) and a "Master of Health Care" or "Master of Social Care" or "Master of Health and Social Care" or "Master of Engineering"
Mode of Study	Full Time
Language	English
Locations of the Study Programme	St. Pölten (AT), Enschede (NL), Jyväskylä (FIN)
Tuition Fees	EUR 363.36 (for students from third countries: EUR 1,500) + Student Union fee

The applying institution submitted the accreditation application on 13/01/2025. On 25/04/2025, the board of AQ Austria nominated the following experts for the accreditation procedure:

Name	Function and Institution	Qualifications
DI Dominik Hofer, MSc, BSc	PhD Candidate, Ludwig-Maximilians-University of Munich;  Junior Researcher, Ludwig Boltzmann Institute for Digital Health and Prevention, Austria	Student and Scientific Expertise in Digital Health, Human-Computer Interaction, Information Technology and System Management

Tineke de Groot-de Greef, MPH, RN	<p>Senior Lecturer of Nursing and Global Health, PhD Candidate, Christian University of Applied Sciences; the Netherlands</p> <p>Health Systems Advisor (self-employed), Primary Care International</p>	<p>Professional Experience in Primary Health Care;</p> <p>Student and Scientific Expertise in the field of Nursing and Global Health;</p>
Prof. Sanna Salanterä	Professor and Vice Dean, Faculty of Medicine, University of Turku, Finland	Scientific Expertise in the field of Clinical Nursing Science and Digital Health
Prof. Siegfried Walch	<p>Professor, Head of Department and Studies, Department of Non-profit-, Social &amp; Health Management,</p> <p>Head of Ulysses European University Alliance, MCI Innsbruck, Austria</p>	Expertise in the Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes and University Alliances, Scientific Expertise in Health Management

The review panel conducted an on-site visit at the campus of St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences on 27/05/2025.



# Assessment and Evaluation Pursuant to the Standards for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes in the EHEA

## 1. Eligibility

### 1.1 Status

The institutions that offer a joint programme should be recognised as higher education institutions by the relevant authorities of their countries. Their respective national legal frameworks should enable them to participate in the joint programme and, if applicable, to award a joint degree. The institutions awarding the degree(s) should ensure that the degree(s) belong to the higher education degree systems of the countries in which they are based.

In the Self-Evaluation Report (SER), the JEUDITH Consortium — composed of St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences (STPUAS) (Austria), Saxion University of Applied Sciences (SAXION) (the Netherlands), and JAMK University of Applied Sciences (JAMK) (Finland) — affirms its compliance with the Eligibility Standard of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes.

All three institutions

- are officially recognised higher education institutions in their respective countries;
- are members of the European Universities Alliance E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup>;
- possess degree-awarding powers under national legislation;
- operate within member states of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA);
- are accredited or subject to quality assurance by national bodies (e.g. AQ Austria, NVAO, FINEEC).

The joint programme awards a master's degree at EQF Level 7, totalling 120 ECTS credits. Student mobility is embedded through mandatory semesters in Austria (STPUAS), the Netherlands (SAXION), and Finland (JAMK).

Regarding the degree awarded, the SER states that:

- STPUAS and SAXION award a joint Master of Science (M.Sc.);
- additionally, JAMK awards either a Master of Health Care, Master of Social Care, Master of Health and Social Care, or a Master of Engineering, depending on the subject areas of the prior bachelor degrees of the students.
- the degree from JAMK must be issued both in Finnish and English, in line with Finnish higher education legislation.

The review panel thus understands that while the programme is delivered jointly, it results in a double degree rather than a joint degree for all graduates. As representatives of the Consortium asserted during the on-site visit, in Finland, universities of applied sciences are not authorized to award the degree "Master of Science". Furthermore, they told the review panel that Finnish regulations require a diploma to be issued in Finnish and allow for a second diploma in English. This is why the JEUDITH Consortium proposes that graduates of JEUDITH will receive three graduation certificates: one diploma that documents the joint M.Sc. awarded by STPUAS and SAXION, and two diplomas - one in English, one in Finnish - issued by JAMK, documenting the Master of Health Care/ Master of Social Care/ Master of Health and Social Care/ Master of Engineering. Each certificate evidences that the programme has been jointly conducted at all three partner universities. In addition, graduates will receive a diploma supplement, which will include the denomination of the overall degree as a "double degree". The panel acknowledges that Finnish legal constraints prevent the full formal issuance of a single joint diploma that includes JAMK. The European Approach accepts this model when justified by national regulations.

Hence, from an academic and administrative perspective, the programme is effectively functioning as a joint programme. However, from a legal standpoint, regarding the issuance of diplomas, the Consortium operates under a double degree model, primarily due to Finnish legal requirements.

The panel would like to note that STPUAS and SAXION, together with Vidzeme University of Applied Sciences from Latvia, already offer a joint master's programme ("Gamified Reality Applications for Real-world Challenges and Experiences" (GRACE)). Therefore, the review panel is confident that the newly created Consortium is very well placed to successfully implement the new JEUDITH programme.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

#### **Recommendations:**

Despite existing national variations in the issuance and documentation of the degree awarded, the Consortium fulfils the eligibility criteria of the European Approach. The review panel would like to encourage the Consortium to clearly communicate the degree and diploma structure to students and explore the possibility of enhancing the joint character of the diplomas by including JAMK's logo and signature on the joint degree diploma, if legally possible.

To strengthen the joint character of the study programme, the panel thus would like to recommend to the Consortium

- that JAMK confirms with the relevant authorities whether its logo and responsible signature can be added to the joint degree diploma issued by STPUAS and SAXION.
- to clearly communicate to applicants that graduates will receive a joint diploma from STPUAS and SAXION, plus two separate national degree diplomas (one in English, one in Finnish) from JAMK, effectively rendering the degree a "double degree" rather than a formally joint one.

## 1.2 Joint Design and Delivery

The joint programme should be offered jointly, involving all cooperating institutions in the design and delivery of the programme.

The Self-Evaluation Report and the findings gathered during the on-site visit demonstrate a strong and systematic commitment to joint design and delivery across the JEUDITH Consortium, which comprises STPUAS (Austria), SAXION (the Netherlands), and JAMK (Finland). The programme's development, delivery, and evaluation are embedded in the Consortium's collaborative frameworks and based on shared operational principles.

From a structural perspective, the Consortium has developed a comprehensive joint governance model, which includes an Academic Directors Board, a Board of Module Coordinators, a Quality Assurance Board, and a Board of Students. All boards have clearly distributed responsibilities across institutions and semesters. Each semester is hosted at a different institution and led by a designated academic lead from that site.

Notably, quality assurance mechanisms operate jointly: as representatives of the partner institutions confirmed during the on-site visit, the Consortium investigated and mapped the local quality assurance frameworks of all partners and developed a joint Quality Assurance Handbook that serves as an overarching framework that aligns the local systems. Notable differences between approaches still exist, for instance, regarding ethical review processes for (student) research, which follow national rules rather than a unified course. However, the Consortium is proactively developing a joint 12-step process for theses supervision, including structured guidance on proposal design, ethical considerations, and external collaboration with industry partners.

Joint teaching is a strong feature of the Consortium. Each semester is organised and delivered collaboratively. According to testimonies during the on-site visit, interdisciplinary and inter-institutional faculty teams teach joint courses, often involving hybrid settings that allow students and staff to interact in real-time across different countries. The development of transnational co-teaching structures is reinforced and encouraged, not least through the Consortium's systematic extension of the concept of student mobility to staff mobility.

A single virtual learning platform, hosted by STPUAS but accessible to all students and teaching staff, supports the joint student experience. According to the SER, the Consortium intentionally limits student numbers to maintain platform usability and a manageable support structure.

Despite these strengths, the review panel also identifies operational challenges to full harmonisation across the partner institutions. This concerns, in particular, the issue of data management: students are registered at all three institutions and all student related data will be stored by the coordinating institution STPUAS. It remains unclear, however, whether the Consortium will establish a joint student data storage to which all partners have access or whether local administrative platforms will operate simultaneously. The review panel would like to point out that if student data is not held in a joint database, the Consortium will run the risk of creating redundancies or gaps in data management or monitoring.

From the perspective of the review panel, a further challenge emerges regarding academic language proficiency: The Consortium requires no formal language tests for academic staff but evidences the English proficiency of teaching staff by considering and documenting participation in international research activities, publication records, and grant acquisitions. Given the interdisciplinary and international nature of the programme, the Consortium also acknowledges the need to navigate terminological and cultural diversity in team teaching. The review panel recognises the Consortium's approach to ensuring English language proficiency among academic staff by evidencing international research engagement, publication activity, and participation in grant-funded projects. This strategy reflects a commitment to academic excellence and international collaboration. However, the absence of a formalised language policy or assessment mechanism may pose challenges in maintaining consistent teaching quality across the partner institutions.

From the experts' point of view, JEUDITH presents a strong and well-executed model of joint design and delivery. The programme not only meets the formal criteria for jointness but also demonstrates a deep integration of pedagogical approaches, mutual recognition of teaching responsibilities, and a shared commitment to a European learning experience. The development of a joint thesis process and shared assessment rubrics further exemplifies this integration.

However, from the perspective of the reviewer panel, some gaps regarding technical and procedural harmonisation remain, particularly in areas such as ethical clearance procedures and digital data management. Yet, in their view, these do not undermine the joint character of the programme but represent opportunities for further improvement.

#### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

##### **Recommendations:**

- The review panel would like to recommend to the Consortium the clear communication and streamlining of data management and registration protocols to ensure that administrative and academic student records are fully integrated and accessible across all institutions involved.
- The panel further recommends that the Consortium consider developing a more structured approach to assuring and documenting academic language proficiency among academic staff in the joint programme. This could include establishing minimum expectations, providing targeted support or training for staff as needed.

## **1.3 Cooperation Agreement**

The terms and conditions of the joint programme should be laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement should in particular cover the following issues:

- Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme
- Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation (including funding, sharing of costs and income etc.)

- Admission and selection procedures for students
- Mobility of students and teachers
- Exam regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures in the consortium.

The Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between STPUAS, SAXION, and JAMK outlines the terms and conditions governing the joint management, academic coordination, funding, and quality assurance of the JEUDITH programme. According to the assessment of the review panel, this is a comprehensive document that demonstrates a high level of formal and operational jointness across the partner institutions.

#### 1. Coordination and Responsibilities for Management and Finances:

The Programme Coordination Team (PCT), chaired by the Academic Director at STPUAS and supported by deputies from SAXION and JAMK, oversees strategic alignment, innovation, financial administration, risk management, and quality assurance. The Agreement clearly outlines financial responsibilities: STPUAS serves as the financial coordinator and disburses funds based on a weighted lump-sum model. The weights (1.1 for STPUAS, 1.0 for SAXION, 1.0 for JAMK) reflect the differing efforts in coordination and teaching. Financial planning is detailed in Annex 2 of the agreement and specifies national funding from the Austrian Ministry of Education, E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup> contributions, and strategic institutional funding. Tuition fees are harmonised - all EU students pay €363 per semester, regardless of their country of origin (the tuition fees for international students are €1500 per semester) - and mobility grants are centrally administered by STPUAS. The Agreement explicitly allows for adjustments and joint applications for future funding, ensuring sustainability and long-term cooperation.

#### 2. Admission and Selection Procedures:

Admission regulations are jointly established and elaborated on in Section 9 of the Agreement. The Selection Board, composed of one representative per partner university, carries out the selection process based on shared criteria and a multi-stage transparent evaluation system.

#### 3. Mobility of Students and Teachers:

Mobility is a core structural feature of JEUDITH, given that each of the first three semesters take place at a different partner institution, thus inscribing mobility into the student pathway. The fourth semester allows for remote or hybrid options, which enables thesis supervision at any of the three institutions. The programme also systematically embeds staff mobility. Guest lecturers, staff exchanges, etc. contribute to the fostering of a joint learning environment and enhance intercultural competencies. The Cooperation Agreement also guarantees that the international offices at the partner institutions offer administrative support. It further describes the funding mechanisms that are in place to support the participation of students in mobility schemes.

#### 4. Exam Regulations, Student Assessment, Recognition of Credits, Degree Awarding Procedures:

The Agreement outlines harmonised exam principles, including a joint grade conversion table and grading standards aligned with national regulations, the mutual recognition of credits across semesters and institution, and a jointly managed final exam process, ensuring *inter alia* a standardised composition of the exam board, which includes internal and external evaluators from all partners.

The Agreement further specifies the joint process leading up to the master's thesis, which regulates the assignment of supervisors by the Consortium, adherence to local ethical clearance procedures, the application of common criteria for academic misconduct and plagiarism, and the final evaluation through a joint panel of examiners consisting of at least four academic and industry-affiliated experts.

From the perspective of the experts, the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement is detailed, comprehensive, and functionally robust. It reflects a high degree of jointness in key structural and operational domains, particularly in the areas of:

- shared financial responsibilities and multi-source funding strategies;
- governance and coordination through shared bodies (PCT, ADB, BMC, QAB);
- seamless integration of mobility and teaching duties;
- the alignment of student admission, assessment, and recognition practices.

The Agreement also demonstrates strategic foresight by allowing for future funding adaptations and emphasising the long-term commitment among the partners involved.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

#### **Recommendation:**

- The review panel would like to recommend that the Consortium explore a more balanced financial contribution model across partner countries, especially considering the current situation in which exclusively Austrian public funding covers tuition and mobility costs for all students. While the current model ensures the smooth operation of the programme for all students, a longer-term strategy involving shared national or alliance-based co-financing would strengthen the sustainability and equitable responsibility of the joint degree structure across the Consortium and, ultimately, the European University Alliance.

## 2. Learning Outcomes

### 2.1 Level [ESG 1.2]

The intended learning outcomes should align with the corresponding level in the Framework for Qualifications in the European Higher Education Area (FQ-EHEA), as well as the applicable national qualifications' framework(s).

The reviewers determined that the JEUDITH joint master's programme delivers a cutting-edge education in digital health and prevention, aligned with the second cycle of the European Higher Education Area (EHEA), EQF Level 7, and national qualification frameworks.

The review panel found that the programme equips students with *advanced knowledge and interdisciplinary skills*. According to the SER, students must hold a bachelor's degree in one of the core or related disciplines (e.g. social sciences, healthcare, or engineering). Due to its interdisciplinary character, the programme connects these fields, encouraging collaboration and innovation through hands-on team and project-based learning. Courses like 'Digital Health & Social Care Mission' and 'Design Thinking & Making' foster creative, user-centred approaches.

Moreover, JEUDITH supports the development of students' *problem-solving skills in new contexts*: as can be gathered from the SER, learners are actively encouraged to apply their knowledge in diverse, unfamiliar, and multidisciplinary settings. The 'Social Innovation and Sustainable Living Hackathon' exemplifies this, challenging students to create real-world solutions in a 24-hours sprint.

The programme, furthermore, prepares students to engage in *complex thinking* and exercise their *ethical judgement*: Courses like "Digital Health and Social Care Thinking", "Citizen-Centered Design and Agile Methods", and "Qualitative and Quantitative Research Methods" teach students to tackle complex problems, gather and analyse data, and reflect on social and ethical implications.

JEUDITH's emphasis on *effective communication skills* is structurally embedded in the curriculum. This focus is built into coursework, such as "Presentation and Communication Techniques", the hackathon presentations, and the master's thesis poster session. These features enable students to present their ideas clearly to both expert and general audiences.

Lastly, from the perspective of the review panel, the cultivation of autonomous and self-directed learning – which is, according to the SER, an essential part of the JEUDITH programme – furthers *independent learning and research readiness*. Modules like "Digital Health & Social Care Mission" support the continuous development of research and prototyping skills across the semesters.

The reviewers determined that these key aspects of JEUDITH align with the following areas of EQF level 7:

- **Knowledge:** Students will acquire state-of-the-art knowledge regarding digital health research. They will be encouraged to recognise that problems in digital health are diverse, and therefore, require the collaboration of a multidisciplinary team that utilises the expertise of its members.
- **Skills:** Students will learn various skills, ranging from social skills over programming skills to research skills, providing a broad foundation for future personal development.
- **Responsibility & Autonomy:** Due to the collaborative setting of the study programme, students will quickly learn to work together in a team as well as take responsibility for specific parts of a research project.

In summary, JEUDITH is an ambitious, forward-looking programme that empowers students by enabling them to attain deep knowledge, practical experience, and lifelong learning abilities. It will prepare them well for careers in academia, industry, or wherever innovation in digital health is needed.

**Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

## 2.2 Disciplinary Field

The intended learning outcomes should comprise knowledge, skills, and competencies in the respective disciplinary field(s).

The JEUDITH programme focuses on digital health and social care. The goal of the study programme is defined in the SER as “address[ing] today’s healthcare challenges by developing new digital tools, methods, and processes to build innovative health and social care ecosystems that enhance people’s quality of life.” To achieve this, JEUDITH uses the “6P Model for Digital Health and Social Care”, which organizes competences into three meta-levels—professional, methodological, social, and personal—and ties them to Bloom’s taxonomy (L1–L6).

According to the SER, JEUDITH ensures that students gain and apply knowledge across the fields of digital health and social care. The core learning outcomes can be divided into the following skills and competencies:

Professional Competencies:

- **Identify & Analyse User Needs (L4 – Analyse):** Learn to uncover and assess what users require in health and social care to guide innovative solutions.
- **Design Requirements (L5 – Evaluate):** Use user-centred design and value-based care principles to define functional and technical specs for healthier communities.
- **Prototype Development (L6 – Create):** Build working models using modern digital stacks, human-computer interfaces, sensors, and feedback systems for digital biomarkers.
- **Ethical Assessment (L5 – Evaluate):** Evaluate and embed ethical safeguards when designing health and social care technologies.



- Solution Creation (L6 – Create): Craft digital solutions that improve citizen-centred health and social care outcomes at personal, community, and cross-professional levels.

Methodological Competencies. Students acquire technical and scientific skills to design, develop, and evaluate digital health and social care solutions. Examples include:

- Research Methods (L3 – Apply): Conduct both qualitative and quantitative studies.
- Feasibility & Usability Evaluation (L4 – Analyse): Assess user experience, technology readiness, and outcomes of digital healthcare tools.
- CI/CD Pipeline Design (L6 – Create): Demonstrate advanced know-how in continuous integration and deployment.
- Ethical & Policy Considerations (L5 – Evaluate): Incorporate ethical and regulatory factors throughout the design process.

Social Competencies. These skills enable effective communication, collaboration, and networking:

- Interdisciplinary Collaboration (L5 – Evaluate): Work seamlessly across health, social care, and technology teams.
- Interprofessional Communication (L6 – Create): Facilitate multi-centred care approaches and bolster social prescribing practices.
- Conflict Resolution (L5 – Evaluate): Navigate differing perspectives in teams to reach shared goals for digital health solutions.
- Networking (L6 – Create): Build and maintain connections with peers, industry experts, research institutions, and entrepreneurial networks.

Personal Competencies. JEUDITH seeks to encourage an open mindset, entrepreneurial thinking, and a focus on sustainability:

- Project Leadership (L6 – Create): Lead initiatives that implement cutting-edge digital healthcare technologies.
- Interdisciplinary Teamwork (L3 – Apply): Collaborate effectively with professionals from various fields, blending tech expertise and social care insight.
- Critical Analysis & Innovation (L5 – Evaluate): Examine complex health and social care systems, identify challenges, and design impactful solutions for diverse communities.
- Ethical & Societal Reflection (L5 – Evaluate): Continually reflect on how digital health innovations align with citizen-centred care and broader societal values.

The reviewers support the introduction of the “6P Model for Digital Health and Social Care”, a coherent framework that clusters competencies and aligns them with Bloom’s taxonomy. They acknowledge the model’s ambition to cover a broad spectrum of skills—from user needs analysis

through prototype development to feasibility and usability evaluation—and value its inclusion of methodological, professional, social, and personal dimensions. Nevertheless, they would like to highlight the risk this model poses in sacrificing depth for the sake of breadth. They would like to caution the JEUDITH-team to expose students to such a wide range of tools, as this might instil a merely superficial methodological understanding in the students. From the perspective of the reviewers, students would benefit from learning to master in depth a handful of core methods—such as Mayring’s thematic analysis for user-need interviews, which is a key technique to the field of digital health and social care. A carefully sequenced curriculum could enable students to subsequently apply these techniques in downstream courses, such as design requirements, prototype development, and combined qualitative/quantitative usability testing. The review panel believes that this scaffolded approach will help learners understand how each competency builds on the previous stage of the scientific product development cycle, ensuring them to grasp not just individual tools but also the underlying logic that connects them.

Yet, the reviewers unanimously welcome the programme’s strong emphasis on social competencies—communication, collaboration, conflict resolution, and networking—which are essential for real-world digital health projects. They consider this focus to be entirely appropriate: modern healthcare and social care initiatives demand not only technical expertise, but also the soft skills to navigate interdisciplinary teams and ethical complexities. Overall, the reviewers believe that, with a sharper curricular focus on the deep learning of key methods and continued attention to social and ethical competencies, students will graduate well-equipped to innovate responsibly within the digital health ecosystem.

JEUDITH’s learning outcomes cover essential knowledge, skills, and competencies in digital health, technology, and social care. By addressing three broad domains—technology, social care, and health—the programme exposes students to a wide range of topics. The review panel is in agreement that this breadth offers rich learning opportunities. However, this wide range of subjects also means that students must balance absorbing new information with integrating it with their existing knowledge base.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

#### **Recommendation:**

While the review panel commends JEUDITH for its well-designed 6P Model underpinning the programme, it recommends that the Consortium narrow the range of methods to those most essential to digital health and social care, and ensure that these methods are applied in subsequent modules.

## **2.3 Achievement**

The programme should be able to demonstrate that the intended learning outcomes are achieved.

According to the SER, the JEUDITH programme has three strategic goals: to tackle today’s healthcare challenges by driving innovative digital solutions; to develop graduates’ professional, methodological, social, and personal competencies in equal measure; and to equip graduates

for roles across Europe's digital-health and social-care landscape, which are in high demand. In the SER, the Consortium developed 'Personas' to guide through the curriculum design. Each of these personas combines a unique blend of digital skills, healthcare experience, methodological expertise and entrepreneurial drive. The SER traces each persona's journey through the core courses, assignments, and projects, mirroring real-world scenarios. It thereby ensures both the relevance of these curricular features to their respective professional and social fields and the in-depth engagement of its target audience.

The learning outcomes of JEUDITH are verified through a coordinated combination of assessment types, such as extended group projects (formative and summative): One capstone assignment lasts three semesters, following the Design Thinking Double Diamond: Students progress from user needs analysis and ideation through prototyping and testing, receiving structured feedback at each phase to reinforce the mastering of methods. The assessment methods employed by JEUDITH also include peer and industry reviews: At key milestones—and notably during a third-semester hackathon—student teams present their work to academic peers and external partners. The feedback on their presentations will expose students to diverse perspectives on interprofessional communication, conflict resolution, and practical feasibility. The achievement of learning outcomes is ensured further by the setting of traditional exams and quizzes: select courses include closed-book exams or timed quizzes to validate individual knowledge of core concepts.

During the on-site visit, Consortium representatives informed the review panel that they plan to apply each partner university's local grading scale to assessments administered at that institution. In turn, the review panel recommended that the Consortium adopt a unified grading scheme that will apply consistently across all institutions. This unified standard will ensure fairness, transparency and comparability of student performance throughout the Joint Programme.

From the perspective of the review panel, taken together, these measures create a well-supported and scaffolded learning environment: iterative project feedback builds methodological confidence, peer and industry input hones social competencies, and formal testing secures foundational knowledge. Publishing the personas on the JEUDITH website will enable prospective students to see precisely which possible scenarios they might encounter and which assessments they will navigate. This will help prospective students determine whether the programme is a good fit for them.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

#### **Recommendation:**

The reviewers would like to recommend that the JEUDITH Consortium adopt a unified grading scheme across all partner universities. They further recommend that the Consortium publish the 'Personas' on the JEUDITH website to help prospective students decide whether to apply.

## 2.4 Regulated Professions

If relevant for the specific joint programme, the minimum agreed training conditions specified in the European Union Directive 2005/36/EC, or relevant common trainings frameworks established under the Directive, should be considered.

*NOT RELEVANT*

## 3. Study Programme [ESG 1.2]

### 3.1 Curriculum

The structure and content of the curriculum should be fit to enable the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, the curriculum of the programme covers the study of health, social work and technology. The guiding thread across all four semesters is the "Digital Health and Social Care Mission Curriculum", which includes a design-thinking project that culminates in a master's thesis. Additionally, the curriculum includes four other themes: design thinking and making, development and framework, health and social care transformation, and sociotechnical research methods.

The first semester is hosted at STPUAS and focuses on Digital Social and Health Care, Citizen-Centred Design and Agile Methods, Digital Health Development 1 and 2 (User Interfaces), Scalable and Secure Platforms, Data-Driven Management and Research Methodology.

The second semester, hosted at SAXION, focuses on Project Work and Design Thinking, Presentation and Communication Skills, European Health Policy and Data Space, Applied and Generative AI in Health Care, Definition and Classification of Health and Social Care, Health Promotion and Value-Based Health Care, as well as Measurement and Visual Analytics of Digital Biomarkers and Signals.

The topics of the third semester, hosted at JAMK, include Project Evaluation, Social Innovation and Sustainable Lifestyle Hackathon, Personalised Digital Prevention and Rehabilitation, Shared Decision-Making and Networked Interprofessional Teams, Health Technology Assessment and Ethics, and Commercial Public Health and Social Responsibility.

The fourth semester is mainly devoted to the writing of the master's thesis and Entrepreneurship in Digital Health and Social Innovation. For this semester, students are free to choose their location among the partner institutions. However, the Consortium aims to achieve an even distribution of students across the three institutions in the final semester.

Onboarding processes will be in place to support students at the start of each new semester at a new location. During this period, a number of lecturers from all three institutions will be physically present to facilitate the onboarding process.

Overall, the reviewers would like to note that the structure of the curriculum, as presented in the annex to the SER, is clear and thematically well-developed. Studies progress coherently from one semester to the next. However, from the perspective of the review panel, the following areas of the curriculum would benefit from further reflection:

First, courses focus mainly on technology and healthcare, while social care receives less attention. The reviewers suggest a more balanced distribution of social and health care themes to ensure that learning outcomes are achieved consistently across the programme's core subjects. The current curriculum overview shows that some course titles cover both themes whereas some do not.

Second, the technology-focused sections of the curriculum cover several programming languages. In the opinion of the review panel, this runs the risk of creating difficulties for students who have no programming background. The reviewers would like to add, however, that it is not possible to judge from the curriculum alone how deeply each programming language is covered. Therefore, they recommend that the Consortium re-evaluate this point once the programme is realised.

Third, as already developed with reference to Standard 2.2 (Disciplinary Field), the research methodology studies of JEUDITH cover an expansive range of methods. In addition to traditional qualitative and quantitative research methods, students will also learn about, for example, usability and feasibility testing and gamification. In the view of the experts, this range can be overwhelming for students. Hence, it might be worth narrowing down the focus to some of the most common research methods in the fields and, if necessary, direct students to more in-depth courses in chosen methods.

Fourth, the programme does not offer any electives; rather, it aims to create cohesion among the student body by bringing together the whole cohort in all courses. The reviewers consider this a constructive approach to community building, especially given the annual student intake of only 24. Yet, it is likely that students have different interests and that the HE institution involved offer other courses that might appeal to the interests of these students. Therefore, the reviewers recommend that the partner institutions ensure that students can participate in extracurricular modules and communicate this option to them.

Overall, however, the review panel commends the JEUDITH-team on a well-designed learning programme that enables the students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. This is supported also by the wide variety of teaching and learning methods that are used across the programme. Students will attend traditional lectures, conduct independent work (for which they will receive reading material) and laboratory work, as well as participate in group work and hackathons. The teaching methods are conscientiously designed to fit the content of the studies.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

### **Recommendations:**

- The review panel would like to recommend the balancing of social and health care themes within the curriculum to ensure the consistent achievement of learning outcomes across the core subjects.
- Furthermore, the review panel recommends, once more, that the Consortium reduce the wide range of research methods to enable the in-depth study of key approaches.

## **3.2 Credits**

The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) should be applied properly and the distribution of credits should be clear.

According to the curriculum overview appended to the SER, the European Credit Transfer System is applied consistently across all modules. The overview transparently lists the ECTS value of each module next to the amount of student contact hours for that module. The detailed matrix that follows the curriculum overview presents a clear and reasonable breakdown of the programme's 120 ECTS-credits.

In its distribution of ECTS-credits, the JEUDITH Consortium retains for each semester the workload factor of the HE institution that hosts it. However, the value of ECTS-credits varies from institution to institution and differs between 25 and 28 hours of student work per credit (25 hours in Austria, 27 hours in Finland, 28 hours in the Netherlands). From the perspective of the review panel, the programme would benefit from standardising their workload model and applying the same workload factor to all semesters for the sake of transparency and consistency. For a module of 5 ECTS-credits, for instance, the nominal difference in the workload between STPUAS and SAXON is 15 hours, which may result in inconsistencies in the perceived intensity of workload across modules. Consortium representatives told the review panel during the on-site visit that they did not use a specific workload calculator to assess student workload; rather, the assessment of the workload is based on the experience and estimations of staff. In the opinion of the reviewers, however, especially in an international programme, it is important to use a uniform method to assess the workload—in areas such as English reading, mathematical tasks, and written work—to ensure consistency and an equal distribution of student workload across semesters and institutions.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

#### **Recommendation:**

The panel recommends that the Consortium harmonise ECTS workload values across all three institutions, for example, by providing a transparent workload calculator that shows the estimated time required for readings, group work, and assignments, to better align institutional practices with student expectations.

### 3.3 Workload

A joint bachelor programme will typically amount to a total student workload of 180-240 ECTS-credits; a joint master programme will typically amount to 90-120 ECTS-credits and should not be less than 60 ECTS-credits at second cycle level (credit ranges according to the FQ-EHEA); for joint doctorates there is no credit range specified.

The workload and the average time to complete the programme should be monitored.

As already stated with reference to Standard 3.2, the Joint Master's Programme amounts to a student workload of 120 ECTS-credits. Although the workload of individual courses and modules has not been systematically assessed using a workload calculator, the SER specifies the professional, methodological, social, and personal competencies to be achieved in each course. The review panel considers this an effective solution that allows students to see what they will learn - or have learned - from multiple perspectives.

During the on-site visit, the Consortium's representatives stressed that the time needed to study and complete individual tasks can vary greatly from student to student. The reviewers also acknowledge the diverse needs and abilities of students and commend the Consortium's sensitivity to these issues.

At the time of writing this report, the reviewers find it difficult to determine whether the courses are suitably demanding from the students' perspective. However, during the on-site visit, interviews with international students enrolled in related courses at STPUAS, JAMK, and SAXION revealed that across all three institutions, the students considered the courses generally appropriately demanding. Students also have various opportunities to provide feedback on the workload and, usually, this feedback is responded to quickly. Overall, the students described the learning and teaching culture at the partner institutions as student-friendly, and claimed that they felt listened to. Therefore, the review panel is confident that the JEUDITH Consortium has considered sufficiently the issue of student workload and is capable of implementing necessary changes and adaptations.

From the reviewers' perspective, it would be helpful if, during the first years that JEUDITH will run, the Consortium assessed the workload for each course immediately after its completion. It should be borne in mind that students from very different backgrounds will enrol in the programme, and that some courses may be more difficult for students from certain backgrounds, depending on the field of study.

#### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

#### **Recommendation**

The panel would like to recommend that the Consortium assess student workload carefully, particularly in light of the diversity of students likely to enrol in JEUDITH.

## 4. Admission and Recognition [ESG 1.4]

### 4.1 Admission

The admission requirements and selection procedures should be appropriate in light of the programme's level and discipline.

As the Consortium's representatives explained to the review panel during the on-site visit, prospective students will submit their applications to the coordinating institution, STPUAS, who will conduct the formal checks on the candidates' eligibility. Applications will be submitted through the application portal on the JEUDITH website on which applicants will have to register. Once eligibility has been established, the application materials will be passed on to the JEUDITH Selection Committee, comprised of representatives of all three institutions. The Selection Committee will come to a joint decision regarding the admission of students.

The Consortium submitted a detailed overview of the admission requirements in the SER and the Cooperation Agreement:

Applications will be graded according to "Academic Quality", "Motivation and Justification", and "Personal Skills". To the reviewers, these steps seem logical and appropriate.

The academic requirements stipulate that students must hold Bachelor degrees in specified fields of engineering, nursing or social work. They must also have two years of full-time work experience or part-time work experience equivalent to a total of two years of full-time work. Prior learning will be assessed on an individual basis. Students must also have sufficient knowledge of English if their previous education was not conducted in English. According to the SER, a TOEFL iBT 80 or an IELTS score of 6.0, or equivalent counts as sufficient language proficiency. The students and lecturers that the reviewers interviewed during the on-site visit confirmed that this level has proven to be adequate for comparable study programmes.

According to the SER, the required application documents include a Curriculum Vitae, a letter of motivation, a Bachelor certificate, two letters of recommendation, a transcript of records, proof of proficiency in English, a project portfolio, a personal introduction video and proof of work experience. From the perspective of the review panel, the materials to be submitted are sufficient and adequate to the programme's profile and level.

The Consortium will inform selected candidates by a letter of acceptance. Those not selected will also receive a letter and instructions on how to lodge an appeal.

To the reviewers, the selection process seems coherent and adequate to the JEUDITH programme. While the precise composition of the Selection Committee has not yet been confirmed - except that it will comprise one representative of each partner institution (see Standard 1.3) - the review panel is confident that the selection process will be properly managed, given that the HE institutions involved have jointly and successfully conducted international selection processes in the past.



## **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

### 4.2 Recognition

Recognition of qualifications and of periods of studies (including recognition of prior learning) should be applied in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention and subsidiary documents.

The SER states that all three institutions, as members of the EHEA, are committed to the application of the recognition of qualifications and prior learning in line with the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The SER further stipulates that recognition of prior learning is evaluated on an individual basis.

From the perspective of the reviewers, this description of the recognition of qualifications and prior learning is rather short. Therefore, they would like to recommend to the Consortium to make available to students and the public a more detailed description of the criteria and concrete steps involved in the recognition of prior learning and how these differ across the partner universities (if applicable). If the recognition criteria were made available and explained in detail, students could inform themselves in a timely manner about the possibilities of having aspects of their prior learning recognised.

## **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

### **Recommendation**

The panel would like to recommend that the Consortium offer students specific guidance on which merits they can have recognised, and the steps involved in the process of recognition.

## 5. Learning, Teaching and Assessment [ESG 1.3]

### 5.1 Learning and Teaching

The programme should be designed to correspond with the intended learning outcomes, and the learning and teaching approaches applied should be adequate to achieve those. The diversity of students and their needs should be respected and attended to, especially considering potential different cultural backgrounds of the students.

According to the SER, the JEUDITH study programme builds its didactic foundation on recognized European standards, specifically the ESG 2015 and the ECTS User's Guide. Learning outcomes are formulated using Bloom's taxonomy, as revised by Krathwohl and Anderson, to ensure structured progression in student competencies.

From the study of the SER, the review panel gained the well-founded impression that the programme promotes self-directed, tailored, and proactive learning. This was substantiated by statements made by representatives of the Consortium during the on-site visit, who described students as active agents in shaping their educational path.

Didactically, JEUDITH is designed as a multi-modal blended approach that meets the demands of an international cohort. Since students are expected to study abroad for at least two out of the four semesters, digital accessibility and flexible learning environments are essential to maintain continuity and collaboration across the different locations. During the on-site visit, the Consortium acknowledged the complexity of coordinating three institutions in three different countries, as well as mediating between different disciplines. Therefore, they embrace an iterative didactic model that evolves through continuous feedback and adaptation, based on student feedback as well as feedback by lecturers and stakeholders e.g. from the industry. To the reviewers, this approach is well-suited for a new and cross-disciplinary programme.

A key element of the curriculum is the 'Digital Health & Social Care Mission' module, which offers a central learning experience by connecting academic knowledge with practical application. Over three semesters, students work in teams to navigate the full lifecycle of a digital health and social care project, applying the competencies gained in their coursework. The Consortium regards this long-term collaborative endeavour as an innovative approach to ensure the development of early practical skills.

Artificial Intelligence will also play a role in supporting learning and teaching processes. Although no specific AI tools have been confirmed, yet— and this understandable, given the rapid pace of development in this field—the Consortium has identified important areas that require attention. However, from the perspective of the review panel, unified AI usage guidelines ought to be established across all partner institutions to avoid inconsistencies and prevent loopholes. Furthermore, the reviewers would like to emphasise the importance of introducing students early on in their studies to the process of applying for ethics approval, particularly when they intend to publish research. Delays or retrospective approvals can jeopardize the validity of their work, making early training in research ethics a necessary component of the curriculum. The reviewers would like to point out that an early engagement with ethics approval processes is vital because AI systems inevitably process user data, often including sensitive health and social care information. By encountering ethics approval procedures at the outset, students gain insight into the principles of data protection, consent requirements, and privacy safeguards. This foundation not only ensures compliance but also deepens their appreciation of why these processes are necessary in upholding the integrity and validity of AI-driven research.

While JEUDITH is not focused on AI development itself, it is the contention of the reviewers that students still need a foundational understanding of AI as a support tool. Courses should equip them to assess when and how to apply AI effectively, without over-relying on or misusing it. Another key area identified by the review panel during the on-site visit is the vital role empathy plays in design thinking. Since user-centred design depends on the ability to understand users' experiences and emotions, students must learn how to gather and analyse empathy-driven insights through systematic scientific methods. However, this critical dimension is currently underrepresented in the curriculum.

Due to the international character of the programme and its diverse international staff and students, the language of instruction, teaching, and exam is English. Therefore, the name of the programme is also in English.

In conclusion, from the perspective of the review panel, the didactic strategy behind JEUDITH is well-conceived, future-oriented, and appropriate for a highly interdisciplinary international programme. Still, the panel would like to recommend addressing several open challenges—namely, clear AI usage policies, structured ethics education, foundational AI literacy, and the integration of empathy as a core element of user-centred and design-thinking approaches into the curriculum.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

#### **Recommendations:**

- The review panel would like to recommend that the JEUDITH Consortium establish clear and unified AI usage guidelines across all partner institutions to ensure consistency and prevent misuse in the area of AI.
- Furthermore, the reviewers recommend introducing students to ethics training early in their studies and consistently reminding them to seek ethics approval for research purposes in a timely manner.
- Moreover, the reviewers recommend integrating foundational AI literacy into the study programme. This will enable students to use AI tools appropriately and critically support their studies, research and development. The panel would like to stress the importance to teach students how to recognize when AI approaches are appropriate, promoting informed and effective usage rather than overreliance.
- The review panel recommends that the Consortium embed empathy into the curriculum by teaching students how to gather and apply empathy-driven insights through scientific methods.
- Lastly, the panel advises the Consortium to maintain and further enhance their excellent digital infrastructure and flexible learning formats, ensuring they continue to support the international and mobile student cohort. In addition, the panel recommends iteratively refining the didactic model through continuous feedback, acknowledging the complexity of a cross-institutional and interdisciplinary structure.

## **5.2 Assessment of Students**

The exam regulations and the assessment of the achieved learning outcomes should correspond with the intended learning outcomes. They should be applied consistently among partner institutions.

Students on the JEUDITH joint master's programme are subject to the study and exam regulations of the partner university hosting their current semester, including those governing the master's thesis. These rules, accessible via hyperlinks in 'Annex 8: Exam and Student

Assessment Regulations' to the SER, define the range of assessment methods—written, oral, project-based, practical, and continuous/ in-course evaluations—and their respective weightings and resit opportunities.

To ensure exam formats align with the stated learning outcomes and competence goals, JEUDITH implements the Constructive Alignment model: outcomes are phrased as competencies, teaching activities foster those competencies, and assessments are selected to verify them.

Four primary assessment formats are used across partner institutions:

- Oral exams (presentations, discussions) designed to assess depth of understanding and the ability to construct and defend arguments.
- Written assignments (tests, seminar papers, analytical reports) evaluating factual knowledge and research skills.
- Practical tasks (lab work, skill demonstrations) verifying methodological competence, and
- Project deliverables (portfolios, project theses, group presentations) assessing integrative problem-solving and collaboration.

The review panel values the programme's hands-on ethos and its varied grading approaches. This blend fosters an engaging curriculum centred on the very skills each course aims to develop. This multi-faceted strategy maintains student motivation and ensures a thorough, practice-oriented learning experience.

Each master's thesis is co-supervised by two advisers from different partner universities. Consortium representatives explained during the on-site visit that this is to ensure balanced guidance, reinforce the link between workload and credits, and prevent unilateral deviations from jointly agreed-upon regulations. The final defence comprises a presentation of the thesis, a detailed discussion tying the thesis to core curriculum topics, and an in-depth exam covering the broader study portfolio.

According to the SER, adherence to the rules of the Consortium and national regulation is reviewed regularly. Amendments to study and exam regulations require a proposal by the Board of Academic Directors and approval by the governing bodies of all three universities. Changes typically take effect the following academic year. Updates are published on the JEUDITH website and communicated in writing to the students.

#### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met**

## **6. Student Support [ESG 1.6]**

The student support services should contribute to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes. They should take into account specific challenges of mobile students.

The representatives of the JEUDITH Consortium told the review panel during the on-site-visit that they would like to offer a study programme that is inclusive of everybody. Their claim is supported by the Self-Evaluation Report, which states that all three institutions have designated contact points for gender, diversity, and inclusion, as well as psycho-social emergency services for students who require special support - be it in academic matters, to cope with personal circumstances, or to manage stress. The Consortium representatives emphasised, further, that they will actively encourage students with special needs to participate in the programme and that Erasmus+ offers additional financial support for these students and for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. This is to ensure the inclusion of students whose individual physical, mental, or health-related situation is such that their participation in student mobility would not be possible without extra financial support. National funding will also be available for students with special needs, and additional funding will be available for students from third countries. The representatives confirmed that the three institutions intend to discuss with students on an individual basis what kind of support they might require and how the institutions can best attend to their individual requirements. Moreover, they assured the review panel that students with reduced mobility who are unable to travel will have the option of participating in the programme online.

Moreover, financial support for mobility will be available to all students enrolled in JEUDITH through the Erasmus+ programme. This funding is limited to a period of 12 months. However, when students have previously been allocated Erasmus+ funding, the funded period will be deducted from the overall 12-month period. Representatives of the international office at STPUAS told the review panel that they prioritise applications from long-term students to ensure that MA students will receive optimal funding.

According to the Self-Evaluation Report, prospective students will be informed already before admission about the programme, tuition and fees, scholarships, financing, living expenses, and academic and personal support. Throughout their studies, the international offices and the student support services of the three institutions will offer practical support, including information on housing, insurances, visas, and other relevant matters, considering the specific challenges of mobile students. Furthermore, each partner institution has a buddy system in place, which matches incoming students with local student buddies. Furthermore, the Self-Evaluation Report claims that lecturers "extend their roles to mentorship, supporting students' career and personal growth".

As has already been mentioned with reference to Standard 3.1, all partner institutions offer an onboarding process at the start of each semester, during which lecturers from all institution will be physically present at the new location to support the students as they settle in. During the on-site visit, the Consortium representatives told the review panel that the three institutions are well aware of the challenging transitions that students must make each semester and strive to make the onboarding process as smooth as possible. A draft of the onboarding guide for students was made available to the reviewers.

During their stay at all three partner institutions, students can make use of the local student support services. According to the self-evaluation report, these services include:

- Academic support: Moodle (LMS), libraries, labs, student associations, board of students, language/research/ writing support

- Campus-life support: well-being and physical support, housing, canteen, diversity and inclusion, sports and cultural activities
- Career preparation support: Research, Development, and Innovation (RDI) journey, mentorship, network building, personal branding, hackathons, job fairs, and career counselling.

During the on-site visit, students from all three institutions, including international students, expressed high satisfaction with the student support services offered. The students provided examples of the services they have used, such as information provision, language courses, buddy systems, and leisure activities.

From the perspective of the review panel, JEUDITH offers an inclusive programme that aims to be open to everybody qualified. The comprehensive support of students begins before admission and continues throughout the Student Life Cycle, encompassing academic life, campus life, and career preparation support. The student support services help students achieve the intended learning outcomes in specifically addressing the challenges faced by mobile students. Student experiences show high satisfaction with the student support services in place.

**Assessment of the review panel: the Standard is Met.**

### **Recommendation**

The review panel would like to recommend that information regarding inclusion and funding possibilities, as well as their limitations, are clearly stated on the JEUDITH website. Moreover, the reviewers would like to emphasise the importance of providing a comprehensive onboarding guide at each institution, containing all necessary information for students.

### **Commendation**

The review panel would like to commend JEUDITH for its well-organised and highly satisfactory student support services at the three institutions, and their combined efforts to support students on the study programme to achieve the learning outcomes.

## **7. Resources [ESG 1.5 & 1.6]**

### **7.1 Staff**

The staff should be sufficient and adequate (qualifications, professional and international experience) to implement the study programme.

The JEUDITH Consortium engages highly qualified and diverse academic staff members, who demonstrate substantial expertise in digital health, social care, technology, and international programme development. The staff profiles presented in the Self-Evaluation Report and Annex

9 substantiate the sufficiency and adequacy of the teaching and development team regarding the level of their qualifications as well as professional and international experience.

The academic staff involved in the development and future implementation of JEUDITH hold advanced degrees (PhD, MSc, MA) in fields relevant to the programme, such as: health sciences, digital health, physiotherapy, rehabilitation, biomechanics, cognitive neuroscience, psychology, applied physics, media technology, and social sciences.

Many staff members are already academic directors or senior lecturers in other master's programmes at their respective institutions (STPUAS, JAMK, SAXION) and possess pedagogical qualifications, including teacher training, didactic expertise, and experience in curriculum development aligned with European standards. The Consortium includes, for instance, an academic director, who is also the head of an innovation centre with a strong track record in interdisciplinary project development and European cooperation initiatives; a senior researcher with extensive international research experience in their field; and staff members with strong academic backgrounds in digital rehabilitation, pedagogical development, and EU project leadership.

The CVs, presented in the appendix to the SER, reveal a broad spectrum of international and applied experience: The staff members of JEUDITH have studied and/or worked in Austria, Germany, Finland, the Netherlands, the UK, New Zealand, the US, Norway, and Spain, evidencing international mobility and transnational collaboration. Furthermore, several staff members are involved in European research projects (e.g., Erasmus+, Horizon Europe, E<sup>3</sup>UDRES<sup>2</sup>, EU4Health), and maintain active clinical and industry partnerships (e.g., DNV GL, Philips, Nokia, Caritas). A number of lecturers are also multidisciplinary researchers and innovators, linking real-world health and digital care innovation with teaching.

Moreover, the academic staff of JEUDITH reflects interdisciplinary depth: they include engineers, physiotherapists, psychologists, occupational therapists, social workers, health economists, software developers, and specialists in human-computer interaction and AI/ML applications in health contexts.

English proficiency among the staff is ensured by their international education backgrounds and publication records. Many CVs confirm C1-C2 levels of competence in English, with additional proficiency in German, Finnish, Dutch, French, Spanish, and other languages. The JEUDITH staff's strong language proficiencies promote intercultural learning and student inclusion within the programme

From the perspective of the review panel, the qualifications, diversity, and international background of the JEUDITH faculty exceed the minimum requirements for implementing a high-quality joint master's programme. The team includes senior scholars and applied practitioners, many of whom are internationally recognised experts in their fields.

Overall, it is evident that the academic and administrative staff:

- is deeply familiar with international education standards and quality frameworks;
- has documented experience in joint and digital education development;

- is capable of supporting both research-led teaching and innovative pedagogical practices in interdisciplinary and multicultural environments.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

## 7.2 Facilities

The facilities provided should be sufficient and adequate in view of the intended learning outcomes

According to the Self-Evaluation Report and the impressions the review panel gathered during the on-site (at STPUAS) and remotely (at SAXION and JAMK), the physical and digital infrastructure of all three partner institutions is well-aligned with the intended learning outcomes of the JEUDITH programme, which emphasises interdisciplinary, practice-oriented, and digitally supported learning in health and social care.

### STPUAS (Austria):

During the on-site visit, the review panel had the opportunity to participate in a guided tour of the facilities at St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences. The infrastructure is modern, spacious, and technologically advanced, offering

- multiple specialised labs (e.g., Digital Health Lab, iLab, Innovation Lab),
- group work spaces and seminar rooms with interactive digital boards,
- as well as high-speed connectivity and shared servers for student and research use.

These facilities are designed to support hybrid teaching, digital simulation, user-centred design, and innovation-oriented learning, which are core pillars of the JEUDITH programme. The STPUAS campus also provides accessible services and flexible learning zones for students.

### SAXION (Netherlands):

The infrastructure at Saxion University of Applied Sciences was presented via a short video during the on-site visit, which provided a comprehensive overview of the learning environments, including

- high-tech simulation rooms and practice labs for health and social care training,
- digital classrooms equipped for hybrid teaching and international collaboration,
- as well as co-working spaces that support project-based and interdisciplinary learning.

The video demonstrated a clear institutional focus on integrating digitalisation and practice opportunities into the learning environment, in line with the programme's focus on digital health innovation.



JAMK (Finland):

JAMK University of Applied Sciences also provided a video presentation of its campus and the relevant facilities. Highlights included

- smart learning environments and health technology labs,
- spaces designed for collaborative, student-centred learning,
- and the integration of digital health tools in simulation and applied research.

JAMK's investment in pedagogical development and digital teaching platforms was also clearly visible. From the perspective of the review panel, this supports the programme's intended learning outcomes in areas such as human-technology interaction, rehabilitation technology, and international teamwork.

From the experts' perspective, the infrastructure across the three partner institutions is well-aligned with the academic profile and ambitions of JEUDITH. The facilities are not only adequate and sufficient in terms of space and technology, but also cohere pedagogically with the interdisciplinary, digitally supported, and internationally collaborative nature of the programme.

All partners demonstrate a high level of digital readiness, which is essential for the hybrid delivery modes and cross-border teaching planned for the programme. Furthermore, the presence of labs, innovation hubs, and simulation spaces ensures that students can engage in experiential, applied, and problem-based learning, which is critical for meeting the intended learning outcomes in digital health and social care.

**Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met.**

## 8. Transparency and Documentation [ESG 1.8]

Relevant information about the programme like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, exam and assessment procedures etc. should be well documented and published by taking into account specific needs of mobile students.

The review panel would like to note that all relevant information about the programme like admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, exam and assessment procedures are in order, taking into account that the JEUDITH programme is yet to start. (Prospective) students will find information about the programme, its rules and regulations and the education and exam regulations on the (yet to be developed) consortium website.

Since the three universities already offer active exchange programmes and are part of the E<sup>2</sup>UDRES<sup>3</sup> alliance, they are well-prepared to provide students with all necessary information, such as admission requirements, course catalogues, exam procedures, and assessment procedures. This information is easily accessible through their websites and initial contact points, like the Study Service Centre. The universities' websites also offer downloadable forms for students to access. The review panel is confident, therefore, that the Consortium will also make easily accessible essential information for the JEUDITH programme.

The partner institutions will establish a comprehensive JEUDITH website, which will serve as the central hub for the dissemination of information. The website will provide detailed information about the Consortium and the ambitions of the joint master programme and will be regularly updated to reflect the progress of the activities of the Consortium. Subscribers will have the option to sign up for a newsletter to stay informed.

During the on-site visit, the Consortium representatives were transparent about the processes they followed, the budgeting of JEUDITH, as well as the documents and website that are still work in progress.

The panel has reviewed the following documents: structure of the curriculum, course syllabi and exam regulations. At the time of the accreditation procedure, the study guide for students was not available yet. Based on the accessible and transparent documents provided, as well as the planned website and study guide, the review panel concludes that the Consortium has established a clear and well-developed approach to documenting and publishing essential information, which is particularly appropriate given JEUDITH's prospective cohort of mobile students.

### **Assessment of the Review Panel: The Standard is Met**

#### **Commendation**

The review panel would like to commend the Consortium on their excellent and transparent documentation at this stage of the development of the new study programme.

#### **Recommendation**

The review panel wishes to emphasise the importance of the Consortium's plan to develop a comprehensive website and encourages continued attention to ensuring that it meets the specific needs of mobile students.

## **9. Quality Assurance [ESG 1.1 & part 1]**

The cooperating institutions should apply joint internal quality assurance processes in accordance with part one of the ESG.

The JEUDITH Consortium has established a joint quality assurance (QA) framework that is explicitly aligned with the *Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the EHEA (ESG, Part I)*. The Self-Evaluation Report and the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement both describe a multi-tiered structure including a Quality Assurance Board (QAB), a Board of Module Coordinators (BMC), the Academic Directors Board (ADB), and a Board of Students (BoS).

The SER references the dedicated JEUDITH Quality Handbook (not fully attached). Its stated aim is to consolidate QA procedures across the three institutions, extending beyond national systems, to ensure a coherent and robust quality culture.

In the following, the review panel has matched the JEUDITH QA framework with the ESG Part I Standards:

1. Policy for Quality Assurance (ESG 1.1):

The Consortium has jointly adopted a common quality assurance policy, as stated in the Self-Evaluation Report and enshrined in the Cooperation Agreement. The policy is built on shared values of transparency, comparability, and student involvement, and defines structures for joint decision-making, risk management, and continuous improvement. The Quality Assurance Board is responsible for monitoring and updating QA policy regularly.

2. Design and Approval of Programmes (ESG 1.2):

The programme was designed collaboratively with joint input from all institutions. Its description includes a clear definition of learning outcomes, interdisciplinary modules, and mobility-integrated learning formats. Stakeholders from academia and practice helped develop this joint MA programme. Updates to the programme will be subject to shared internal approval mechanisms and informed by student and faculty feedback.

3. Student-Centred Learning, Teaching and Assessment (ESG 1.3):

The teaching model of the programme prioritises project-based and interdisciplinary learning, hybrid delivery, and joint supervision. Student feedback is systematically collected via surveys, and mechanisms are in place to adapt courses based on this input. Lecturers are encouraged to apply inclusive and participatory methods, and joint grading rubrics and transparent criteria are available to aid the harmonisation of assessments across the institutions, as outlined in the agreement.

4. Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification (ESG 1.4):

The Consortium has developed a joint admission process, which details consistent criteria and coordinated decision-making by the Selection Board. Progress is tracked jointly, and credit recognition occurs automatically across the partners. Students receive one diploma that documents the joint MSc awarded by STPUAS and SAXION, and two diplomas - one in English, one in Finnish - issued by JAMK, documenting the Master of Health Care/ Master of Social Care/ Master of Health and Social Care/ Master of Engineering. Each certificate evidences that the programme has been jointly conducted at all three partner universities. In addition, graduates will receive a diploma supplement, which includes the denomination of the overall degree as a "double degree". The entire degree awarding process is described in the Agreement and QA documentation.

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5):

The Consortium ensures that staff members are qualified, internationally experienced, and have the capacity to teach in English (these assessments are based on academic output as well as records of participation in funded research projects and at international conferences). Institutional policies are in place to encourage staff development. Lecturers partake in cross-institutional teaching teams, and staff mobility is structurally embedded.

#### 6. Learning Resources and Student Support (ESG 1.6):

All three institutions provide high-quality facilities, learning resources, and student services. A common learning platform, hosted by STPUAS, constitutes the main digital environment for all students. Students have access to library services, IT support, mobility advice, and local counselling at each partner institution. Each site ensures support for students with special needs.

#### 7. Information Management (ESG 1.7):

The programme team collects and analyses information on student progression and satisfaction, staff involvement, and course effectiveness. The QAB jointly evaluates data and uses them as a basis for decision-making. However, the review panel sees room for improvement when it comes to clarifying the joint storage and/or access to student data (as pointed out with regard to Standard 1.2).

#### 8. Public Information (ESG 1.8):

Information about the programme, including admission criteria, curriculum structure, mobility paths, and contact persons, is published on the joint JEUDITH website and the partners' individual web portals. The communication is in English and contents will be regularly updated. Prospective students can easily find transparent information on these websites.

#### 9. Ongoing Monitoring and Periodic Review of Programmes (ESG 1.9):

A structured process is in place for regular programme reviews, involving students, faculty, and external stakeholders. The programme is committed to using feedback loops to implement improvements, including in the areas of module revisions and pedagogical innovation.

#### 10 Cyclical External Quality Assurance (ESG 1.10):

The programme is subject to national QA procedures at each institution (AQ Austria, FINEEC, NVAO) and is currently undergoing joint external review under the European Approach, which is fully aligned with ESG. However, at this stage, the future pathway for cyclical re-evaluation has not been clarified. Therefore, it remains unclear whether upcoming re-accreditation or review procedures will again be jointly conducted under the European Approach, or whether each institution will be required to undergo separate national evaluations, the findings of which would later be integrated through JEUDITH's internal joint quality assurance mechanisms. While the Consortium demonstrates a clear commitment to coordinated quality development, the review panel is concerned about the lack of a clearly defined joint external QA cycle. The involvement of separate national reviews would create inefficiencies and dilute the principle of jointness.

From the perspective of the review panel, the JEUDITH Consortium has established a comprehensive, well-structured internal QA system that aligns closely with all ten standards of ESG Part I. The QA processes are jointly developed, transparently documented, and rooted in a culture of continuous improvement. They go beyond the simple alignment of local QA mechanisms and reflect a deliberate effort to embed European-level quality principles into the operational life of the joint programme.

## Assessment of the Review panel: The Standard is Met.

### Recommendations

- The review panel would like to recommend that the Consortium further harmonise its student data systems and information management tools across the partner institutions to ensure full and seamless application of ESG 1.7.
- The review panel advises the Consortium to proactively initiate a dialogue with their respective national QA agencies to explore the possibility of establishing a shared cyclical external quality assurance process under the European Approach. A single joint review, recognised by all three national bodies, would reduce duplication and strengthen coherence.

## Summary and Final Evaluation

The experts recommend to the board of AQ Austria the accreditation of the Joint European Master in Citizen-Centered Digital Health and Social Care, conducted in St. Pölten (AT), Enschede (NL), Jyväskylä (FIN). This recommendation is based on the assessment of the Standards of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, which are all met.

### 1. Eligibility

The three partner institutions comply with the Eligibility Standard of the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes. The SER and the findings gathered during the on-site visit demonstrate a strong and systematic commitment to joint design and delivery across the JEUDITH Consortium. The programme's development, delivery, and evaluation are embedded in collaborative frameworks and shared operational principles. Notably, the quality assurance mechanisms are also designed and operated jointly. The Programme Coordination Team, chaired by the Academic Director at STPUAS and supported by deputies from SAXION and JAMK, oversees strategic alignment, innovation, financial administration, risk management, and quality assurance. The Consortium has established a clear and transparent allocation of financial responsibilities.

The standard is **met**.

### 2. Learning Outcomes

The review panel considers the overall learning outcomes to be appropriate for EQF level 7. JEUDITH is an ambitious, forward-looking programme that empowers students by enabling them to attain in-depth knowledge, practical experience, and lifelong learning abilities. From the perspective of the panel, this prepares them well for careers in academia, industry, or wherever innovation in digital health is needed.

JEUDITH's learning outcomes cover essential knowledge, skills, and competencies in digital health, technology, and social care. By addressing three broad domains—technology, social care, and health—the programme exposes students to a wide range of interrelated topics. This

breadth offers rich learning opportunities; however, the review panel would like to highlight that this approach runs the risk of sacrificing the attainment of in-depth knowledge and skills for the sake of a broad but potentially superficial understanding of a range of topics.

The achievement of learning outcomes is verified with the help of a coordinated combination of assessment types, such as extended group projects, peer and industry review, traditional exams, and quizzes. Iterative project feedback builds methodological confidence, peer and industry input hones social competencies, and formal testing secures foundational knowledge. From the perspective of the review panel, these measures create a well-supported learning environment.

The standard is **met**.

### **3. Study Programme [ESG 1.2]**

The curriculum of JEUDITH covers the study of health, social work and technology. The guiding thread for all four semesters is the "Digital Health and Social Care Mission" curriculum, which includes a design thinking project, which culminates in a master's thesis. Furthermore, the curriculum is structured around four other themes: design thinking and making, development and framework, health and social care transformation and sociotechnical research methods. The structure of the curriculum is clear and thematically well-developed. Studies progress coherently from one semester to the next. A wide variety of teaching and learning methods are used, which the reviewers regard to be adequate to the curriculum.

During the four-semester period, students alternate between the three partner institutions: the first semester is offered at STPUAS, the second at SAXION, the third at JAMK, and, for the fourth semester, students can choose at which of the partner institutions they would like to study. An onboarding process is in place to aid students with the transition between the different institutions at the start of each semester.

Student workload is measured by ECTS-credits; however, the value attributed to ECTS-credits differs from country to country and, thus, from semester to semester. Due to the international character of JEUDITH, student workload differs nominally between 25 and 28 hours per ECTS. Therefore, the panel would like to recommend harmonising the workload of ECTS-credits across the partner institutions and monitoring the actual workload.

The standard is **met**.

### **4. Admission and Recognition [ESG 1.4]**

JEUDITH has a well-developed admission and selection process in place. Admission requirements stipulate *inter alia* proof of a bachelor degree in a relevant field, two years of work experience (or equivalent), and proficiency in English. The assessment procedure is clearly defined and operationalised in three stages (academic quality, motivation and personal skills). Essential deadlines are communicated transparently to the students on the JEUDITH website.

According to the SER, recognition of prior learning is evaluated on an individual basis. The review panel would like to recommend the adaption of clear guidelines on the rules and regulations pertaining to the recognition of prior learning.

The standard is **met**.

### **5. Learning, Teaching and Assessment [ESG 1.3]**

The didactic strategy of JEUDITH is well-conceived, future-oriented, and appropriate for a highly interdisciplinary international program. Its multi-modal blended learning approach promotes self-directed, tailored, and proactive learning and evolves through continuous feedback and adaptation based on student evaluations as well as feedback by lecturers and other stakeholders (e.g. the industry). However, the reviewers would like to recommend that the Consortium addresses several open challenges and issues unified AI usage policies, harmonises the different ethical review processes, as well as promotes foundational AI literacy.

Students on the JEUDITH joint master's programme are subject to the study and exam regulations of the partner university that hosts their current semester, including those governing the master's thesis. To ensure exam formats align with the stated learning outcomes and competence goals, JEUDITH implements the Constructive Alignment model and employs various assessments methods, such as oral and written assignments, practical tasks and project deliverables. From the perspective of the review panel, this multi-faceted strategy not only maintains student motivation but also ensures a thorough, practice-oriented learning experience.

The standard is **met**.

### **6. Student Support [ESG 1.6]**

JEUDITH is designed to be an inclusive study programme that is open to everyone qualified. The Consortium makes available information on all aspects of student life already before admission and offers comprehensive student support consistently throughout the Student Life Cycle, helping students to handle their academic and campus life as well as their career preparations. By ensuring that students feel supported in most aspects of their student life, these services help them achieve the intended learning outcomes. Furthermore, the student services at all partner institutions specifically address the challenges faced by mobile students and the Consortium offers comprehensive support for students with special needs. The student representatives present during the on-site visit expressed high levels of satisfaction with the student support services at their institutions.

The standard is **met**.

### **7. Resources [ESG 1.5 & 1.6]**

Throughout the accreditation process, it has been evident that the academic and administrative staff of the JEUDITH consortium are deeply familiar with international education standards and quality frameworks. The staff has documented experience in joint and digital education development and are capable of supporting and implementing research-oriented teaching and innovative pedagogical practices in interdisciplinary and multicultural environments.

From the perspective of the review panel, the infrastructure across the three partner institutions is well aligned with the academic profile and ambitions of JEUDITH. The facilities are of an adequate size and technologically well-equipped. Furthermore, they support the

interdisciplinary, digitally supported, and collaborative nature of the programme in an international context.

All partners demonstrate a high level of digital readiness, which is essential for the hybrid delivery modes and cross-border teaching the programme will offer. Furthermore, the presence of labs, innovation hubs, and simulation spaces ensures that students can engage in experiential, applied, and problem-based learning, which is critical for meeting the intended learning outcomes in digital health and social care.

The standard is **met**.

### **8. Transparency and Documentation [ESG 1.8]**

The review panel determined that all key information about the programme, such as admission requirements and procedures, the course catalogue, as well as exam and assessment procedures are in order and will be easily accessible to (prospective) students via the yet to be developed Consortium website.

During the on-site visit, the Consortium openly presented and explained the internal processes they followed and the budgeting of JEUDITH. They also informed the reviewers about work-in-progress documents and the development of the website.

Based on the accessible and transparent documents provided, as well as the planned website and study guide, the review panel concludes that the Consortium has established a clear and well-developed approach to documenting and publishing essential information, which is particularly appropriate given JEUDITH's prospective cohort of mobile students.

The standard is **met**.

### **9. Quality Assurance [ESG 1.1 & part 1]**

The JEUDITH Consortium has established a comprehensive, well-structured internal QA system that aligns closely with all ten standards of ESG Part I. The QA processes are jointly developed, transparently documented, and rooted in a culture of continuous improvement. They go beyond simple alignment of local QA mechanisms and reflect a deliberate effort to embed European-level quality principles into the operational life of the joint programme.

The standard is **met**.

**The Review Panel Recommends to the Board of AQ Austria the Accreditation of the Joint European Master in Citizen-Centered Digital Health and Social Care, Conducted in St. Pölten (AT), Enschede (NL), Jyväskylä (FIN) by Fachhochschule St. Pölten GmbH/ St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences.**




## Documents Assessed:

- Application for the accreditation of the Joint European Master in Citizen-Centered Digital Health and Social Care, conducted in St. Pölten (AT), Enschede (NL), Jyväskylä (FIN), by the St. Pölten University of Applied Sciences, received on 13/01/2025
- Revised cooperation and partnership agreement, received on 15/04/2025
- Subsequent documents submitted prior to the on-site visit, received on 22/05/2025
- Revised self-evaluation report, received on 22/05/2025
- Revised cooperation and partnership agreement, received on 13/06/2025
- Revision of accreditation application, received on 19/08/2025

AQ Austria  
Franz-Klein-Gasse 5  
1190 Vienna

St. Pölten, September 15, 2025

**Statement on the expert report on the accreditation procedure of the Joint Programme “Joint European Master in Citizen-Centered Digital Health and Social Care”**

Dear Madam President,   
Dear Board Members,  
Dear Madam or Sir,

we would like to express our gratitude for the process thus far and for the comprehensive expert report. We are very pleased to accept the recommendations outlined in the expert report and will duly consider and reflect upon them within the JEUDITH Consortium.

As correctly noted in the report, although the programme is conducted jointly, the prevailing framework conditions result in the awarding of a double degree. We would, however, like to request a correction regarding the degrees conferred by JAMK. The report currently states that JAMK awards a Master of Health Care, a Master of Social Care, a Master of Health and Social Care, or a Master of Engineering. Please note that **JAMK does not award a Master of Health and Social Care, but rather a Master of Social Services and Health Care**. We kindly ask you to take this into consideration in the final documentation.

With kind regards,



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of Applied Sciences

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