

Presentation of the HES-SO

HES-SO University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland

Founded in 1997, HES-SO is the largest of its kind in Switzerland. Its 6 faculties and 28 schools are spread over the whole of Western Switzerland, and are strongly anchored in the regional economy. With over 19'400 students, it shares the most beautiful cities and areas in the French-speaking region of Switzerland. HES-SO schools are all endowed with cutting-edge technology and outstanding equipment. They constitute an exceptional network to promote innovation, to offer practical training and to favour transfer of knowledge.

HES-SO ambitions to play an important role on the international scene. Numerous collaborative partnerships have been established with universities in Europe and around the world. HES-SO guarantees top-level teaching quality within a sophisticated applied research environ-

ment that nurtures close links with Swiss professional associations. HES-SO awards university degrees that are practice-oriented and euro-compatible: 46 Bachelor degree programmes, 21 Master degree programmes and more than 250 recognised continuing education courses.

Its professors are accomplished scholars, dynamic and high-qualified experts in their field who are passionate about teaching and applied research. HES-SO is an applied research-based institution, thus offering practical, hands-on experience. Its aim is to prepare its students for the realities of the professional world. Applied research and development projects are carried out within institutes in conjunction with professional and industrial partners and we have a noteworthy participation in European projects.





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Health faculty

The Health faculty at the HES-SO University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland

The Faculty of health is one of the six faculties offered by the HES-SO University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland. Its programmes are deployed in a range of sites providing education in the field of health professions and are present in all regions of Western Switzerland. The health faculty includes 8 Bachelor-level educational programmes; it also offers a Masters of Science in nursing science programme, which is run jointly by the HES-SO and the University of Lausanne (UNIL).

With its 9 educational programmes and its 3200 students, the health field of HES-SO is larger than all other health programmes found in Universities of Applied Sciences and Arts in Switzerland; HES-SO is also the only institution to offer the entire range of programmes covering all health professions recognized at Bachelor-level in Switzerland.

Initial curricula

Bachelor programmes

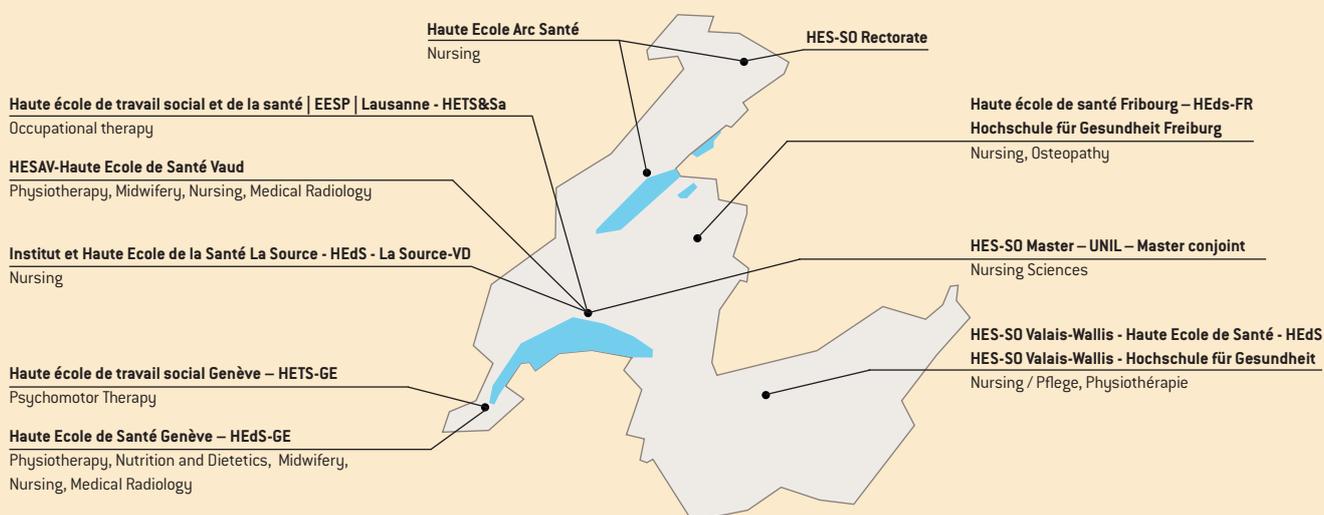
- Occupational Therapy
- Nutrition and dietetics
- Osteopathy ¹
- Physiotherapy
- Psychomotor Therapy
- Midwifery
- Nursing
- Medical Radiology

Masters programme

- Masters degree in Nursing Science, offered in partnership with University of Lausanne (UNIL)

1. Osteopathy curriculum is not structured as a professionalising Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.) degree as described in the present document.

HES-SO schools of health





Continuing education

The continuing education programmes in the health faculty at the HES-SO University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland lead to MAS, DAS or CAS-level qualifications. They are tailored to meet the needs of the different health professions and to promote the dissemination of state-of-the-art professional knowledge stemming from research activities.

Applied Research and Development (aR&D)

Research and Development activities in the various sites are promoted and supported by funding from the HES-SO. 7 research departments or research units are deployed in the HES-SO sites.

The goals of aR&D are:

- Developing a specific scientific knowledge base for the faculty of health professions whilst enhancing the transfer of research results into educational curricula;
- Developing innovative projects to be deployed in professional practice.

HES-SO aR&D priorities:

- Demographic change;
- Institutional arrangements in the social/health fields;
- Development of clinical and technical competencies and design of new assessment tools;
- Prevention, and health promotion;
- Rehabilitation, social integration.

Field interventions

Field interventions aim at providing public or private institutions active in the realm of health with high-level competencies available in the educational institutions of HES-SO. These interventions mainly include:

- Research projects and studies;
- Expert reports and audits;
- Supervision;
- Support for project development;
- Teaching and advising;
- Collaborations in the field of scientific and professional literature and publishing.

Mobility, international exchanges

At the national level, each programme actively collaborates with its counterparts in the German-speaking and Italian-speaking regions of Switzerland on issues of curriculum, programme content and educational development.

At the international level, many courses highlight differences between countries in terms of health, health care systems and conditions of practice for the range of health professions for which education is offered by the HES-SO. International collaboration takes the form of bilateral exchanges with other educational institutions that enable:

- Students to follow part of their education in a foreign country;
- Foreign students from partner educational institutions to come and follow part of the USASW health programmes;
- Educators from the field contribute to programmes in partner educational institutions abroad;
- Students and educators in the HES-SO to benefit from contributions given by teaching staff from partner schools.

Fundamental principles underpinning the educational programmes in the Health faculty at the HES-SO

The education dispensed in the health faculty programmes of the HES-SO is designed to meet the current and future health needs of the population and to fit into the structure of the Swiss health care system. The health faculty's curricula promote, in the students who follow them, the development of professional abilities characterized by reflexive practice and expertise in their chosen field.

Human services professions

The education offered takes into account the singular and unpredictable character of situations typical of all human services professions; health professions require a high degree of ability to adapt to a broad range of situations, as well as an orientation towards the furthering of human potential and a capacity to master one's personal engagement in a professional context.

Adult education

Health faculty programmes grant students an active role in their own training and enhance their autonomy and sense of responsibility.

Alternating school and field placement curriculum

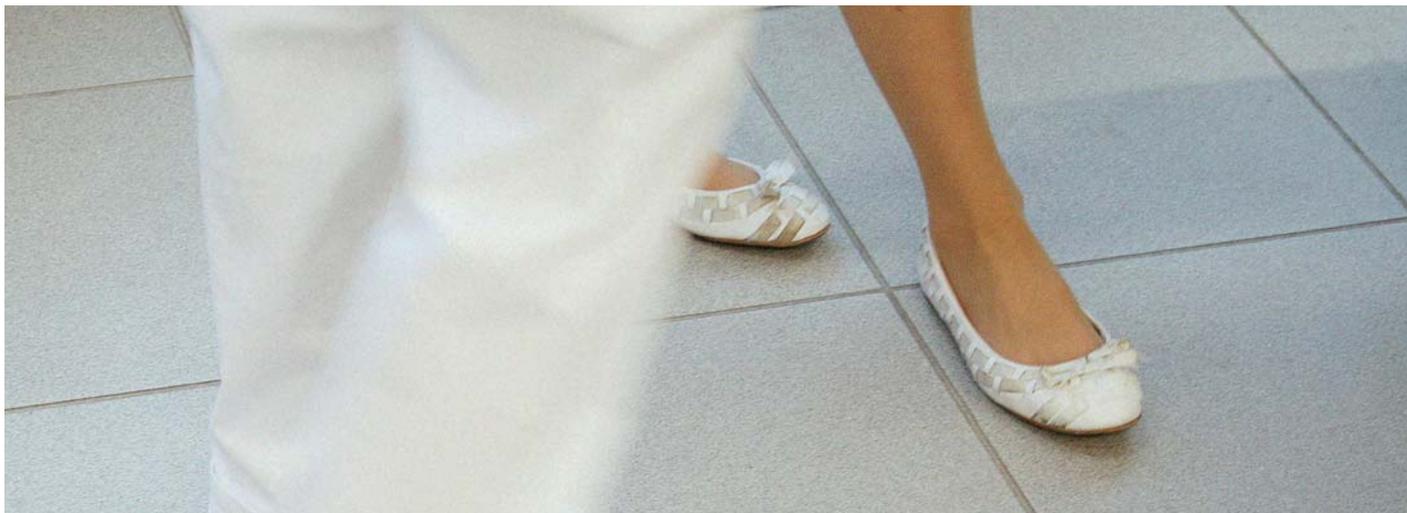
Educational programmes are structured by alternating periods of coursework at school and field placement, enabling students to be quickly put in touch with the complexity of professional situations. The curriculum is designed to ensure that tensions stemming from the confrontation between theoretical knowledge and practical skills can be handled and articulated satisfactorily.

Field placement arrangements

Contractual terms and financial partnership agreements between institutions of the social/health fields that offer field placements and the HES-SO guarantee that fieldwork educators are experts in their area of professional practice; they are designated and recognized by their institution and have followed a specific postgraduate training course.

Competency approach

Health faculty educational programmes are based upon a competency approach; this educational orientation has been chosen in order to enhance the students' ability to understand approach and analyse evolving situations, to perceive their specificities and to adapt their professional interventions to unique and unpredictable occurrences and singular contexts.



Curricula are based upon **competency and professional role reference guides, common to all health professions** and defined at the national level. Students, who have completed their studies, have acquired a set of generic competencies deemed necessary for all health professions requiring University of Applied Sciences and Arts - level education:

- Appropriate knowledge base for a context of evolving health policy challenges.
- Professional expertise and methodological competencies
- Professionally appropriate and responsible conduct
- Ability to communicate, interact and document.

Students also must have acquired a specific set of competencies for their chosen profession; these are articulated around seven professional roles defined as common to all health professions:

- Expert
- Communicator
- Collaborator
- Manager
- Health promoter
- Learner and educator
- Professional

Bachelor Thesis

All programs entail the production of a Bachelor thesis; this requirement is an opportunity for students to concretely become initiated to a methodological research and development approach through:

- Defining professionally relevant research questions;
- identifying relevant documentary sources;
- Designing an appropriate method of data collection and analysis;
- Carrying out a small-scale implementation of a rigorous methodological approach;
- Drawing conclusions from this endeavour for one's chosen health profession;
- Producing a publicly accessible document.

Inter-professional collaboration

HES-SO health programmes enhance students' ability, on the basis of the communication and collaboration competencies mentioned above, to carry out interprofessional interventions in response to changes taking place in the social/health fields.

Bachelor of Science HES-SO in Occupational Therapy

- 150 students
- Haute école de travail social et de la santé | EESP | Lausanne - HETS&Sa member of HES-SO University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland.
- Full-time educational programme
- 180 ECTS, including 36 ECTS of fieldwork practice
- Bachelor thesis (15 ECTS)
- Modular curriculum
- Reference guide of competencies for Occupational Therapy (OT)
- Curriculum recognised by the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT)
- International exchanges



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Concept

The Occupational Therapy curriculum of HES-SO University of Applied Sciences Western Switzerland educates professionals capable of working in any field of Occupational Therapy. It fulfills the requirements of academic programmes at both national and international levels of the OT profession.

National requirements include specific fields of practice of OT in Switzerland, legal bases for client access to services in the health care, social and education fields, conditions of entry into the labour market as well as the regulatory framework of qualification for higher education in Switzerland (nqf-ch.HES).

Occupational therapists:

- Have knowledge and skills that enable them to understand the broad range of situations they encounter in practice ;
- Use their knowledge and skills to assess, propose, carry out and adapt interventions in the fields of physical and mental health for clients and populations of all ages, in all contexts in which human occupation takes place ;
- Are capable of forming appropriate professional judgments, in particular on the basis of structured clinical reasoning, pertinent scientific evidence and reflective analysis of their professional practice ;
- Know how to communicate effectively and adapt their goals to the target audience (clients within a treatment setting, other health professionals within the context of interdisciplinary practice) ;
- Have the ability to increase their autonomy in evaluating their own practice, formulating appropriate questions about new problems encountered and finding resources to solve them.

International contextual elements include the training standards of the World Federation of Occupational Therapists (WFOT, 2002) as well as the competencies defined for OT within the framework of the tuning process (ENOTHE & COTEC, 2008). In line with the WFOT, the curriculum

is founded upon a conception of human occupation and shared by the international community of occupational therapists. It is grounded in specific scientific knowledge, includes fieldwork practice, and takes into account the WHO charters. The curriculum is articulated with reference points elaborated by the ENOTHE tuning process and offers courses in :

- Theoretical, conceptual and methodological foundations of occupational therapy and occupational science ;
- Health, social, legal, cultural, institutional and economic contexts in which clients and OTs live and interact ;
- Human development from early childhood to old age as well as occupational transitions and transactions ;
- Biomedical sciences in the fields of physical, mental and psychological health ;
- Interaction and communication skills enabling OTs to relate to clients, work with other professionals and document interventions ;
- Fields of OT interventions : activities of daily living, work and education, leisure activities and play, persons with disability, health and well-being promotion and prevention ;
- Models, methods and specific OT techniques aimed at specific populations and problems frequently encountered in the field of OT ;
- Scientific methodology enabling OTs to approach and critically appraise scientific data and research projects ;
- Management of professional activity in an OT department as well as in an independent practice, and management of actions aimed at developing the profession, increasing its visibility and promoting it.

Pedagogical and didactic principles and recommendations

The OT curriculum provides scientific knowledge grounded in a culture of contradictory and critical debate. To this end it :

- Requires a critical approach to knowledge and the ability to discuss different perspectives ;
- Necessitates an autonomous and engaged learning stance ;

- Emphasises acquiring scientifically-grounded practices, reflexive abilities and technical skills ;
- Prepares students to face ethical responsibilities ;
- Gives students the means to become experts in their field, i.e. to conduct professional research, to communicate with other specialists and with the public at large on OT issues ;
- Requires that students be emotionally able to engage and work with persons who are severely impaired in their physical, social or mental health or whose potential for development or integration are compromised ;
- Expects that students will become social actors capable of advocating for professional positions within the context of professional practice in the health field.

Modular curriculum

Each module is designed as a separate unit and covers several competencies. The value of each module in ECTS varies between 5 and 10. Integration modules reinforce students' competencies. Student evaluation modalities for each module are aligned with the competencies to be acquired, with the contents of the module as well as with the didactic modalities used. Programme coherence is guaranteed by the articulation between the various modules.

The curriculum is designed to enable students to acquire theoretical and methodological knowledge in OT as well as as in the human and biomedical sciences of reference. Clinical situations requiring OT intervention are introduced in the early stages of the program ; they initially entail a moderate degree of complexity. Later in the curriculum students learn to handle situations characterised by a high degree of uncertainty, rapid change and marked complexity.

Teaching modalities are designed to fit the different types of knowledge, competencies and skills to be acquired in each module :

- Formal lectures ;
- Independent study : reading, documentary research, writing ;
- Skills training and production of materials ;
- Demonstrations, exercises and role-play in simulated settings ;

- Discussions, debates, presentations including the production of communicational support materials ;
- Group and individual work, with or without tutoring ;
- Supervision ;
- Practice analysis articulated with fieldwork practice experiences ;
- Direct experience, especially during fieldwork practice ;
- E-learning.

Bachelor Thesis

A Bachelor Thesis has to be submitted and is worth 15 ECTS. It represents a final step in the professionalising path of knowledge acquisition to be transferred into OT practice ; it also serves as an initiation to the actual use of research methods. It enables students to :

- Learn to use results of published research to reflect upon and analyse professional practices ;
- Develop and integrate professional knowledge ;
- Connect theory with field situations ;
- Reinforce analytical abilities ;
- Design and use rigorous methodological approaches ;
- Enhance collaboration with the professional field ;



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- Develop an ability to communicate results in written form.

Bachelor Thesis are normally submitted as written documents, in French, that correspond to the usual norms of the field of scientific communication. They are produced by groups of two or three students with tutoring by a professor.

Fieldwork practice

Alternating periods of course work in the school context and fieldwork practice are constitutive of the approach used in OT curriculum. The goal of fieldwork practice is to enable students to gradually acquire and consolidate competencies to :

- Assess occupational performance, skills or functions as well as environmental factors ;
- Perceive the human and physical contexts of the lives of OT clients ;
- Comprehend the legal, administrative, insurance, institutional and financial systems within which OT exists and operates ;
- Understand issues related to social representations of disability and social participation ;
- Organise and implement OT intervention in various contexts ;
- Design, implement and evaluate intervention protocols ;
- Use theoretical and practical knowledge acquired in education ;
- Practice technical and methodological skills ;
- Implement scientifically grounded interventions ;
- Develop professional relationships with clients and their families ;
- Act within a client-centered perspective ;
- Collaborate and contribute to team work and interact within an interdisciplinary framework ;
- Communicate in verbal as well as written form ;
- Take on management and administrative tasks required by the institution, insurers or providers ;
- Develop a specific professional identity and contribute to the aura of the profession ;

- Act responsibly in deontological and ethical terms ;
- Analyse professional practice and adopt a reflexive stance about OT practice.

Three fieldwork practice periods of 9 weeks each, adding up to about 1080 hours of practice, are included in the program from the second year onwards.

During fieldwork practice placements, students carry out work required by field practice teachers and by the school. Before, during and after fieldwork practice students take part in reflexive analysis seminars that enable them to anticipate situations they encounter, to better understand their interventions, and finally to evaluate the skills they have acquired.

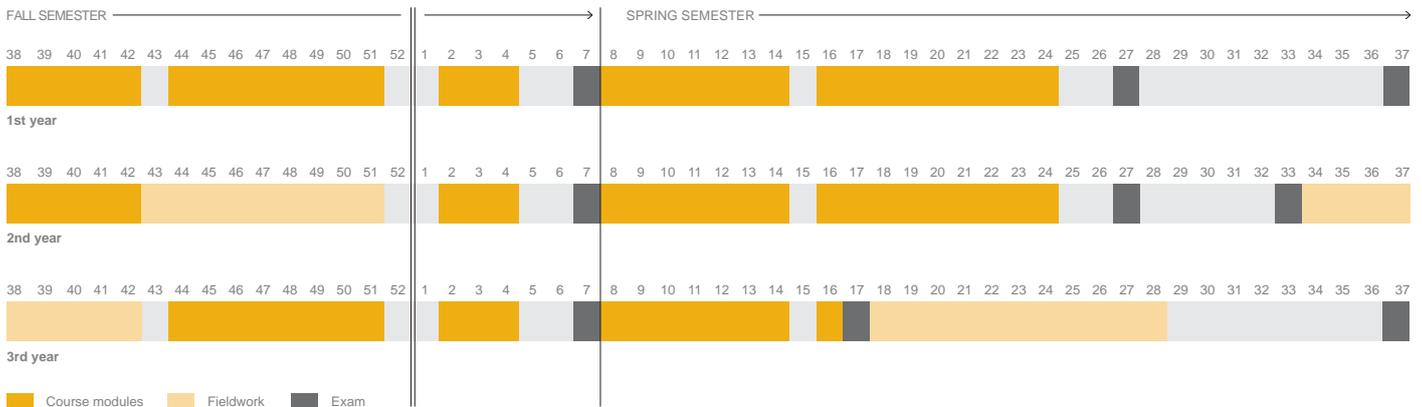
Curriculum structure

The OT curriculum is structured as a three-year full-time course and requires the students to obtain a total of 180 ECTS. Formal courses, fieldwork practice, personal work with the support of tutors and independent study alternate within the program.

The academic year is comprised of two semesters ; the fall semester starts at week 38 and the spring semester starts at week 8 of the civil calendar. The course modules are organised over a period of 16 weeks for each semester – from week 38 to week 4 and from week 8 to week 24. The field practice modules, as well as tutored and independent study, are spread out over the whole academic year. Examination sessions are planned outside course periods.

Course modules are scheduled to take place over one whole semester, on the basis of a weekly schedule. Classes take place five days a week.

Academic calendar



Mobility and international exchanges

Mobility and international exchanges include collaboration between the three Swiss schools of Occupational Therapy (HES-SO University of Applied Sciences and Arts Western Switzerland, Scuola universitaria professionale della Svizzera italiana (SUPSI), and Zürcher Hochschule für Angewandte Wissenschaften (ZHAW), contractualised collaborations through agreements with European schools as well as two bilateral Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) with Canadian universities, collaborations with fieldwork

practice partners abroad, and full membership in the European Network of OT Higher Education (ENOTHE).

Exchange opportunities are promoted both for students and for faculty members. They include IN and OUT opportunities. Exchanges with French-speaking partners are prioritised – though not promoted exclusively - for student mobility, so that exchanges can include course attendance as well as fieldwork practice.