



Doc. 300.2.2

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023

**Institution**

**Response**

(Institutional Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
European University Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Institution Status:** New



**The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].**

## A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.2.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the Institution in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, in the section building facilities, student welfare services, infrastructure, the HEI must respond on the comments and scoring of the EEC.*
- *Under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
  - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.2.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

## **BUILDING FACILITIES - STUDENT WELFARE SERVICES - INFRASTRUCTURE**

### **1. Building facilities**

#### **1.1 Plans and licenses**

<b>1. Building facilities</b>		
<b>1.1 Plans and licenses</b>		<b>Yes / No</b>
	The following should be copies from the original building permit. On the copies, there should be a visible official stamp of approval from the respective authorities.	
1.1.1	1.1.1.1 A topographical plan, which displays in a clear manner the extent of the development.	<b>Yes</b>
	1.1.1.2 A general site plan, which marks the building facilities, allocated parking spaces (for students, academic and teaching personnel, visitors and disabled individuals), sports premises and outdoor areas.	<b>Yes</b>
1.1.2	An operating license issued by the Local Authorities	<b>No</b>
	The following operating license certificates, duly completed:	
	1.1.3.1 Visual Inspection Form E.O.E. 102	<b>Yes</b>
1.1.3	1.1.3.2 Visual Inspection for the Building's Seismic Sufficiency Form E.O.E.Σ.E.K 103	<b>Yes</b>
	1.1.3.3 Inspection Certificate Form 104	<b>Yes</b>
	1.1.3.4 Fire Safety Certificate, issued by the Fire Department	<b>Yes</b>
	1.1.3.5 Certificate for Adequate Electrical and Mechanical Installations, issued by the Electromechanical Department	<b>Yes</b>

Justify the answers provided for the building facilities by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The School representatives have provided most of the required data to the satisfaction of the Evaluation Committee.

Most of the school's operations will be hosted in the newly built extension which is almost completed. More precisely, the school's facilities will be hosted in the following buildings:

1. 1<sup>st</sup> floor of the existing building will host the following functions:
  - a. Wet Labs εργαστήρια βιοχημείας και κυτταρικής βιολογίας και μικροβιολογίας και ερευνητικά εργαστήρια
  - b. Amphitheatres, classrooms and pc labs.
  - c. Administration and management offices
  
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the existing building will host the following functions:
  - a. Wet Labs, biochemistry lab, cell biology lab, microbiology lab and research labs, pharmacology labs, microscopy labs.
  
3. Ground floor of the existing building will host the following functions:
  - a. Student affairs
  - b. Admissions
  - c. Reception
  - d. Bursar's office
  
4. New extension building, 1<sup>st</sup> floor will host the following functions:
  - a. This will be the main building hosting the veterinary school.
  - b. Animal structure and function lab
  - c. Skills training lab
  - d. Farm like simulation lab
  - e. Surgical simulation lab
  - f. Lecture hall
  - g. Virtual imaging and microscopy lab
  - h. Advance simulation scenario room.
  
5. New building 2<sup>nd</sup> floor will host the following functions:
  - a. Biochemistry labs
  - b. Cell biology lab
  - c. Multidisciplinary research lab
  - d. Student's study room.

6. Phileleftheros building (Block B) 2<sup>nd</sup> floor
  - a. Scientific collaborators offices (part time faculty)
  
7. Block 1 - West Block (old building)
  - a. Cafeteria
  
8. Block 2 - North Building
  - a. Ground floor – pc labs and lecture rooms
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> floor – lecture rooms and amphitheatres
  - c. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor – library and study room
  
9. East Block
  - a. Ground floor – Copy centre
  - b. 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> floor – Classrooms and lecture halls.
  
10. Sports centre
  - a. Indoor sports centre
  
11. Student parkings
  - a. Existing building basement
  - b. New building (extension) basement
  - c. Parking spaces around old building

**The following issues are to be noted:**

1.1.2 Major part of the school premises is currently under construction 98% complete pending final approval by the fire dept, and final check of the electrical installations by the Electricity Authority.

1.1.3 The certificates for the new building extension are pending but are due for completion soon.

**EUC Response:**

We would like to thank the EEC for their generous comments with regards to the infrastructure. As noted, the premises are 98% complete, and all efforts are according to schedule. Upon completion, EUC will apply for final approval by the fire department and the Electrical Authority.

The certificates for the new building extension are expected for March 2024.

## 1.2 Other facilities

### 1. Building Facilities

1.2 Other Facilities		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
1.2.1	Number of teaching rooms and their respective areas, capacity and the percentage of daily occupancy for all units	Satisfactory
1.2.2	Number of offices for teaching staff and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.3	Number of laboratories and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.4	Number of rooms/offices for directors/administrators and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.5	Number of rooms/offices for administrative services and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.6	Number of parking spaces designated for students	Satisfactory
1.2.7	Number of parking spaces designated for teaching staff	Satisfactory
1.2.8	Number of parking spaces designated for people with disabilities	Satisfactory

Justify the answers provided for the building facilities by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The school's representatives have submitted the required documentation to the satisfaction of the evaluators.

#### Final Comments:

The school will operate in newly built state of the art facilities. However, these are currently under construction, although almost completed. The school will also be using facilities from other buildings in the campus such as cafeteria, sports facilities, library etc. as explained in Chapter 1.1 here above.

It is therefore suggested that the Agency grants an extension of time to the school, so that the works are completed, and all the checks are made by the relevant authorities and appropriate certificates are issued.

It is noted that the Civil Engineer Evaluator is satisfied with the documentation submitted and with the evidence presented by the school.

### EUC Response:

We are pleased that the Civil Engineer Evaluator was satisfied with documentation and evidence provided by the School. As noted above, construction and relevant certification are scheduled for March 2024.

## 2. Student welfare services

<b>2. Student Welfare Services</b>		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
2.1	Special access for students with disabilities (PWD)	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.2	Recreation areas	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.3	Policy and statutes for academic student support	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.4	Policy and statutes for financial student support	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.5	Counselling services	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.6	Career office	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.7	Service linking the institution with business	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.8	Mobility office	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.9	Student clubs/organisations/associations	<b>Satisfactory</b>
2.10	Other services	<b>Satisfactory</b>



Justify the answers provided for the student welfare services by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The administration staff that supports the Student Welfare Services appears to be adequate for the number of prospective students in the Institution under evaluation.

In addition to the central Student Welfare and Support Services, guidance and support on academic issues are also available from the Programme coordinators and Course Instructors within the Veterinary Medicine School.

**1. Special access for students with disabilities:**

EUC has procedures, mechanisms and high-quality infrastructures to accommodate students with disabilities (PwD) and ensures equal access to academic studies. Moreover, students in need of personal counselling can contact the Office of Student Affairs to arrange a confidential, one-on-one meeting, with a qualified professional. A counsellor is available on campus for consultation by appointment throughout the academic year.

**2. Recreation areas:**

The EUC provides many facilities and activities for on-campus recreation, including indoor athletic centre, health centre multi-venue, indoor pool and a gym. Students can use these facilities for free.

The EUC operates a high-quality restaurant and cafeterias on campus, serving the University Community. There is also a Cultural Center that consists of an indoor amphitheatre and a modern exhibition hall.

**3. Policy and statutes for academic student support:**

The Student Advising Center assigns students to individual Academic Advisors who provide assistance and support services to students on a range of matters including academic and personal issues. In addition to this, a pre-clinical and clinical advisor will be assigned to students of Veterinary Medicine in order to ensure that all requirements are correct and complete, including reviewing evaluation, grades, graduation requirements, and rotation schedules.

**4. Policy and statutes for financial student support:**

The EUC offers a substantial number of scholarships to students based on different criteria including, academic/athletic excellence.

There is a sufficient EUC policy for students who experience financial difficulties.

## 5. Counselling services:

The Center of Applied Psychology and Personal Development is offering psychological and counselling services to the members of EUC free of charge.

## 6. Career office:

The EUC Career Centre offers the necessary information to students and graduates on relevant work vacancies and provides support on personal development plans.

The EUC Career Advisor consults interested students in matters such as employment sectors, CV preparation, Job Search Methods, interview preparation, decision-making matters, and information on labour market trends. Additionally, EUC organises career exhibitions, seminars, and workshops.

## 7. Service linking the institution with business

The EUC has efficient services and strong access to the relevant job-market.

## 8. Mobility office:

All students and full time staff can participate in all schemes of the Erasmus+ program.

Students can also choose to go abroad for internships, which is sufficiently supported by an Erasmus Academic Coordinator.

## 9. Student clubs/organisations/associations:

The EUC offers a variety of clubs and student Associations, interuniversity teams, sports, and student government. Extra-curricular activities ranging from Legal Rhetoric Speech Competition, Seminars, various Informational Days, BBQs, Parties, Excursions and Festivals, complement an active campus life and offer ample opportunity for fun and memories. In addition, the Student Affairs Department develops a Calendar of Activities on a yearly basis and is published online at the beginning of each academic year.

## 10. Other services:

### Visa for international students

The Student Affairs Department guides future international students in relation to the procedure to acquire a student visa.

### Student Identity Card

The Student Identity Card is issued for all EUC students and is linked to student benefits. Veterinary Student Orientation Program

All new students will be introduced to the Veterinary Medicine School curriculum, policy and activities during the Veterinary Student Orientation Program which will take place the week before classes start.

### Housing Office

The European University Cyprus Housing Office collaborates closely with independent contractors to satisfy different student needs. Several housing options are available in very close proximity to the University and offer elegant apartments and studio flats. All of the housing facilities are situated within 300 meters from campus at reasonable cost

### **EUC Response:**

We would like to thank the Representative for Academic Affairs and Student Welfare Service for acknowledging that EUC offers a comprehensive student support system.

### 3. Infrastructure

		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
3.1	Library	<b>Satisfactory</b>
3.2	Computers available for use by the students	<b>Satisfactory</b>
3.3	Technological support	<b>Satisfactory</b>
3.4	Technical support	<b>Satisfactory</b>

**Justify the answers provided for the infrastructure services by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.**

## 1. Institution's Academic Profile and Orientation

### Sub-Areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

## Findings

1. A strategic plan and a two-year growth budget are not provided.

EUC has a well-developed, comprehensive **5-year Strategic Plan (Appendix I)** that is inclusive for the entire University. A School specific strategic plan must include input from all relevant stakeholders, which for the Veterinary School would include in addition to faculty and staff, an Advisory Board, Representatives from relevant Ministries and Veterinary Services, Students, among others. As such, since the School is not functional, an independent strategic plan is not feasible at the time.

However, the School does have a **“Development Plan” (Appendix II)** which outlines the strategic development and milestones of the development and initiation of the program, including recruitment plans, enrollment plans, 5-year business plan, feasibility studies, etc. This was not considered part of the application process, and hence was not included in the original application. It is now submitted for the EEC's review.

2. The provisions in place do not sufficiently document that the Institution under evaluation has sufficiently effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of the society or that the operations of this Department have a positive impact on the latter.

We fully agree with the EEC that it is important to have processes that allow the School to assess the needs and demands of society. One of the primary vectors for providing means to assess the needs and demands of society will be through the **Advisory Board**. Upon its onset, the School will invite senior experts in the field of Veterinary Medicine to participate in the Veterinary Program International Advisory Board. The role of the Advisory Board would be to contribute to the mission and vision of the School, by providing input with regards to the outreach and community impact in areas relevant to veterinary medicine, provide input with regards to veterinary education and training, recommend links with society, industry and other institutions to augment educational and research efforts, among others.

3. The provisions in place to attract and select teaching staff do not convincingly indicate that the relevant internationally applicable requirements have been fully taken into consideration.

As per the EUC Charter, selection of teaching staff is compatible International Standards, namely **“FACULTY SELECTION AND APPOINTMENT:**

A Faculty Selection Committee of the pertinent Department shall select the Faculty members of the Department. All Faculty Selection Committee members should hold a higher or equal rank of the one the candidate is considered for, except for the rank of Professor, for which all faculty

members should hold the rank of Professor. The Selection of all faculty members shall be approved by the Council of the pertinent Department, the Council of the pertinent School, the Senate and the University Council.

## **FACULTY RANKING**

All permanent faculty members shall be appointed on a full-time basis to one of the ranks listed below, according to their academic qualifications and professional work experience (see [framework of minimum suggested/expected requirements in Research and Scholarly Publications and/or recognized creative work for Faculty Ranking](#) in Appendix D). The minimal requirements per faculty rank are as follows:

### **Lecturer**

A Doctorate; positive and substantial evidence of high competency in teaching and research.

### **Assistant Professor**

The requirements for the rank of Lecturer plus three (3) post-doctorate years of university teaching and research experience; positive and substantial record of high competency in teaching and research; evidence of positive contribution to the overall development of the individual's program area and department; and service to the Community.

### **Associate Professor**

The requirements for the rank of Assistant Professor and of eight (8) years of post-doctorate years of university teaching and research experience; positive and substantial record of high competency in teaching; a demonstrated record of research and publications; evidence of positive contribution to the overall development of the individual's program area and department; service to the Community; and membership/participation in professional or learned societies of national or international significance.

### **Professor**

The requirements for the rank of Associate Professor and of twelve (12) post-doctorate years of university teaching and research experience; positive and substantial record of high competency in teaching; evidence of positive contribution to the overall development of the individual's program area and department; service to the Community; membership/participation in professional or learned societies of regional or national significance; a demonstrated record of research and scholarly publications or recognized creative work in the individual's field."

## **Areas of improvement and recommendations**

1. Increase requirements for hiring and promotion of teaching and research personnel in connection with years of teaching experience, coordination/participation in international research projects and number of publications, for Assistant and Associate Professors.

We understand the EEC's concern with regards to requirements for hiring and promotion of teaching and research personnel. As outlined above (and in accordance with the EUC Charter), the standards requested for posts at the level of Assistant and Associate Professors is equivalent to most international standards. With the exception of the four (4) School of Medicine Faculty who were included to indicate that there would be full support

for basic science topics (e.g. cell biology, biochemistry, basic pharmacology and basic microbiology), all of the other members in the teaching staff session were veterinarians who had indicated their intent to apply to the Call for Vacancies for the Veterinary Medicine Program (please see more about the open vacancies in our Programmatic Response Report). As such, all formal and competitive faculty selection procedures were pending for these individuals.

### **Basic Principles and Standards of Evaluation of Faculty Teaching**

Effective teaching is given the greatest weight and other factors cannot compensate for a failure to satisfy it. It involves mastery of the subject matter, the ability to stimulate the intellectual capabilities of students, and effectiveness in communicating the skills, methods and content of one's discipline. It includes a spirit of study necessary to keep courses continually revised and the undertaking of efforts to sustain and improve teaching skills. Effective teaching also includes success in stimulating the intellectual development of one's colleagues through disciplinary and interdisciplinary work, including course development and participation in faculty training schemes/programs organized by the University and/or other Educational Institution(s), seminars and colloquia.

### **Research**

European University Cyprus requires scholarly work that may be made public in various forms. All research, however, must involve the deployment of disciplined learning, closely informed by thorough research, for the sake of edifying and serving audiences that extend beyond the boundaries of the immediate University community.

Research can take many forms, such as published research in various forms, article(s) in a scholarly periodical(s), chapter(s) in scholarly publication(s), book(s), paper(s) presented at a professional conference(s), contribution in research conference/event organization or any other form of artistic activity and research (i.e. composition and arrangement of music works, performance and conducting of music works, workshops, master classes, clinics and seminars) or any other equivalent form.

### **Service to the University, Community, and Profession, and Self- Development**

In addition, to support the University's mission, purpose and objectives, the University also assumes of its faculty a congenial and collegial relationship. This includes civility in discourse and a willingness to carry one's share of the load in teaching, advising, participation in institutional research, and committee work. The quality of contributions, not merely the numbers of committees and assignments, remains a significant consideration.

The University values contributions to planning and governance, leadership in achieving the goals of the University (which include student recruitment and retention), working with students outside the classroom and extending the resources of the University to the wider community

Significant and extended service to professional societies, committees pertaining to higher education formed and appointed by the government, and academic associations; contribution in event organization; training activity; appraisals of manuscripts submitted for publication to university presses or scholarly journals; grant proposals/applications submitted to government agencies or learned and professional societies; review of grant applications submitted to government agencies or learned and professional societies: all of these activities would count



as instances of professional development. As educators, professional development includes activities and efforts to improve teaching/instructional capabilities, qualifications, etc. No amount of these activities, however, should compensate for deficiencies in Teaching or Research.

2. Adopt a formal policy to regularly assess the needs and demands of society as well as that the operations of this Institution have a positive impact on the latter, in line with the applicable provisions of quality assurance, including responsibility, method of monitoring, indicators of monitoring, mechanism of revision, risk assessment analysis, and contingency measures.

As noted above, we fully agree with the EEC that it is important to have processes that allow the School to assess the needs and demands of society. The School intends to achieve this through the invitation of senior experts in the field of Veterinary Medicine to participate in the Veterinary Program International Advisory Board. The role of the Advisory Board would be to contribute to the mission and vision of the School, by providing input with regards to the outreach and community impact in areas relevant to veterinary medicine, provide input with regards to veterinary education and training, recommend links with society, industry and other institutions to augment educational and research efforts, among others. Advisory Board includes representatives of professional bodies, governmental/regulatory bodies, public/private health administrators, and academic bodies.

Additionally, working with local partners will help identify additional competences or more depth in core competencies to the meet the local societal needs. The Veterinary program will work closely with Medicine program, as well as the Public Health program to ensure the protection of public health and advancement of science that benefits both animals and humans. Finally, as per remaining in line with the applicable provisions of quality assurance, we believe that **self-evaluation report (SER)** through the provisions of EAEVE is one of the main processes to achieve this. It will be impossible to complete the SER prospectively, as data of the previous years are needed. As the School matures, this will be applied in a timely manner. According to the 2019 ESEVT SOP as amended in September 2021, as well as that which was adopted in June 2023, *“A full Visitation may not be completed before the graduation of the first cohort of veterinary students”*.



## 2. Quality Assurance

### **Sub-Areas**

#### **2.1 System and quality assurance strategy**

#### **2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study**

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

This is a new school and multiple statements addressing components of the QA/QC system in this report are not applicable or not fully applicable to the existing situation. The EEC finds that available documentation and information collected during the visit support partial compliance with the sub areas listed below.

Several areas require data collection during the running of the program, since the program has not started this information is not available and therefore these are either N/A or making areas only partially compliant.

One area of improvement that needs attention is the formalisation of the QA/QC policies and procedures as part of, or as separate documents attached to the QA Guide that was shared with the EEC. In this document a full description of step-by-step procedures addressing different areas and levels of quality control and quality assurance will need to be described, with applicable diagrams, flow charts of different situations and documentation/information to be collected, examined, and used in the QA/QC procedures.

We would like to thank the EEC for recognizing that the development of policies and procedures necessary for the QA/QC environment can be based on those of the existing schools, providing an excellent opportunity to adapt and apply corrections from previous experiences. As such, the QA manual is a living document that will be augmented, modified and tailored for a range of situations to address the various areas of quality control (from program monitoring, to laboratory practices, to VTH activities, etc.), as the School begins its functions. In addition to the Schools Quality Assurance Committee, the University's Committee of Internal Quality Assurance (C.I.Q.A.) is involved in all internal quality assurance related procedures related to the program.

As per the C.I.Q.A. and the University Quality Assurance please note:

The Quality Assurance Policy Manual is the University's document which defines qualities and standards at the University and how the University creates an academic and administrative environment that further sustains and enhances qualities and standards. The Quality Assurance Policy Manual serves as the policy tool for the University as it aims to actively and systematically ensure the academic quality and standards of its programs, qualifications and awards. The Quality Assurance Policy Manual aims to provide assurance that the University has its own systems for independent assessment of both its quality and standards and effectiveness of its quality assurance systems.

The Quality Assurance Policy Manual is comprehensive in the sense that it combines all aspects of quality and standards required by an academic institution aiming at setting

the basis for growth and excellence. The Quality Assurance Policy of the University adheres to the following sources: a) material published by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education, b) input and guidance from the Evaluation Committees of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CY.Q.A.A.) as well as its guideline procedures and terms of references, c) the Private Universities (Establishment, Operation and Control) Law 109 of 2005 and the Ministerial decision taken by the Council of Ministers on September 12, 2007, and d) the University's regulations as described in the E.U.C. Charter.

The following main principles form the basis for the University's academic quality assurance procedures:

- Quality Assurance is a shared process, owned and carried out by all academic faculty and administrative staff. It is a professional exercise rather than a management function. All academic faculty are involved in the achievement and maintenance of academic standards and the enhancement of quality provision.
- Quality Assurance should be regarded as an integrated process of planning, review, evaluation/assessment and reconsideration and re-approval of goals. It is a dynamic cycle generating continuous enhancement in the design and delivery of the University's provision.
- The University's internal quality assurance mechanisms operate in conjunction with the expectations of external quality and accreditation agencies.

The University has a number of key procedures, processes and mechanics for the institutional standards in all its activities as these are described in the E.U.C. Charter, Annex II, Article VII Committees: Committee on Research, Committee on Academic Programs, Committee on Faculty Affairs, Committee on Students Affairs, Committee on Internal Quality Assurance (C.I.Q.A.) and Special and Ad-Hoc Committees and the Program Evaluation Review Process (P.E.R.) of the University's programs of study (Senate Approval 28.1.2019), which are clearly aligned with the CY.Q.A.A. guidelines. These key procedures, processes and mechanics address all the following aspects of the functioning of the University:

- Policy and Procedures for Quality Assurance
- Introduction, Monitoring and Review of Programs and Awards
- Student Recruitment, Admission, Assessment and Progression
- Quality Assurance of Teaching Staff
- Learning Resources and Student Support
- Public Information

### **Policy and process of risk assessment and sustainability of programmes of study**

Program Evaluation is an internal process associated with the internal evaluation, and re-accreditation of currently offered programs of study. In doing so, the University aims to assure the continuing validity of those aims and outcomes. Consideration is given to: external reference points, participation of all stakeholders; relevant benchmark statements, the requirements of professional and statutory bodies; the continuing compatibility of programs with University goals; strength and weakness of the program; and, the continuous support with regard to human and physical resources.



Each Department and School demonstrates its ability to quickly assess the changing social, academic, and industrial environment and thus constantly revise their programs of study and their content.

The Internal Quality Assurance Committee of the University has established the EUC's Program Evaluation Review (PER) process which is an effective program evaluation framework and review process that encourages excellence in academic programs by aligning teaching and learning, curriculum, and other academic processes and activities with the mission of each program. The PER incorporates the standards of the policies of EUC and aligns these to the accreditation bodies' decisions (e.g. CY.Q.A.A.).

### 3. Administration

#### Findings

The academic and administrative structure of the Institution under evaluation are of very good quality and aligned to the internationally applicable requirements.

#### Strengths

Significant experience exists in academic and administrative structures due to the experience obtained in the running of comparable schools in the EUC in health sciences such as medicine and dentistry.

#### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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We would like to thank the EEC for acknowledging the academic and administrative structures and indicating that they are of good quality.

## 4. Learning and Teaching

### Sub-Areas

#### 4.1 Planning the programmes of study

#### 4.2 Organisation of teaching

### Findings

The programme has yet to run. As such, any metrics relating to ongoing development and assessment of the programme are premature and therefore not applicable. Noting the current status of the programme, the submission is very comprehensive and provides a sound footing for an excellent veterinary Degree. Curricular deficiencies are minor.

### Strengths

A major strength of the programme, at this early stage, is the attention to detail with all aspects of delivery: curriculum design, delivery and support.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

At this stage, there are no major areas of improvement. The proposed curriculum is very big and so may need to be re-visited, in terms of how much can actually be taught in the time when the programme runs. Attention will need to be paid to servicing anatomy and large-animal surgery teaching.

The EEC was informed that no animal materials or cadavers would be allowed on site of the EUC and the program has focussed and invested heavily in animal models. Nevertheless, the EEC feels there is additional benefit to certain ethically sourced healthy animal materials to be used in teaching the veterinary medicine programme (for instance unused slaughter/cadaver material such as equine lower limbs, urogenital tracts, udders, lungs/hearts etc.).

[We agree with the EEC's suggestion with regards of the additional benefit to additional materials. The School of Medicine has similarly used some ethically sourced healthy materials for certain aspects of its anatomical program. A similar principle will be applied for the veterinary program.](#)

In the proposed curriculum it is not clear in which of the surgery modules (farm, equine or small animal surgery) general surgical skills are thought. Since there is considerable overlap between species the introduction of a general surgery module to teach general surgical skills such as gloving and gowning, suture patterns and materials, instruments etc. might enhance the curriculum even further.

[We would like to thank the EEC for this observation, which allowed us to better clarify the training paradigm for general surgical skills in our curriculum. As part of our spiral curriculum, General Principles of Surgery \("surgical skills"\) will be included in the Course VET325 Veterinary Skills II: Small Animals & Equine. This will include a general surgery module to provide general](#)



surgical skills, including gloving, gowning, suturing, etc. Surgical skills will be further developed as the students progress to advanced courses, such as Small Animal Surgery VET450.

## 5. Teaching Staff

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. It is strongly recommended to substantially increase the number of permanent and tenured staff of the School of Veterinary Medicine with scientists with proven experience in research and independent teaching in Veterinary Medicine and the broader subjects of Animal Science. Weight should be given to their competence in the use of modern teaching methods, including online examination platforms and e-learning tools.

We agree with the EEC that it is important to have a solid number of permanent teaching staff. As per the Development Plan in addition to the founding Acting Dean and Acting Chairperson, Senior core instructional faculty members who are key for the primary core course of the pre-clinical years will be hired in Spring 2024 (before the intended Fall 2024 initiation of the program) to support the development of the operations of the new **EUC School of Veterinary Medicine**. Upon the start of the academic program, additional full-time faculty and scientific collaborators will be hired yearly to accommodate course instructional demands. At present, EUC is currently seeking to recruit qualified academics for its Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program in the following disciplines:

- Animal and Comparative Anatomy
- Animal Physiology
- Animal Histology – Pathology (Pathologic Anatomy)
- Animal Genetics and Development
- Animal Nutrition
- Biochemistry
- Cell and Molecular Biology
- Veterinary Microbiology
- Veterinary Immunology
- Veterinary Parasitology
- Animal Reproduction
- Animal Husbandry - Production
- Public – Population Health
- Veterinary Clinical Subspecialties

This call closes in February 2024 (please see Call [here](#)), and selection processes will begin immediately afterwards, ensuring having Core Faculty available by April-May for onboarding and course material preparation. According to the **Development plan**, the School plans to have five (5) Core faculty (7 full-faculty for first year), with continuous openings for new posts to complement the program needs across the semesters.

Additionally, faculty development is a major early priority. During this early, rapid growth period, EUC will provide full support to the newly recruited faculty and staff. While faculty development typically focuses on the veterinary education and teaching mission initially, it will also evolve to include the faculty promotion process, research skills and other aspects of being academic faculty. New Faculty Orientation and Train-the-Trainers sessions will ensure effective faculty development critical to the successful initiation of the program.

2. It is recommended to engage visiting teaching staff based on their recognized teaching and research experience in state-of-the-art subjects in veterinary medicine. The purpose of the recruitment of these personnel should be to provide support to the teaching staff of the Institution, adding to the programme's scientific merit and international approach.

As noted by the EEC, the School of Veterinary Medicine is able to recruit Visiting Faculty, in addition to full time faculty. According to CY.Q.A.A. visiting faculty support the program of study (please see more about these regulations in our Programmatic Response Report). They are invited from leading institutions to augment specific fields and disciplines. According to the EUC Charter, The 'University' may appoint Visiting Faculty.

1. The position may be assigned to the rank of Visiting Professor, Visiting Associate Professor, Visiting Assistant Professor, or Visiting Lecturer.
2. The candidate should hold the equivalent rank in another recognized University or be a distinguished scholar/scientist in his/her discipline/area of expertise. The Visiting Faculty Member is approved by the Senate and is ratified and appointed by the Council of the University.
3. The minimum time of employment is **usually** one academic semester and the maximum is one year, with the possibility of renewal.

In addition to Visiting Faculty, the University also offers the opportunity for Adjunct Faculty, and Adjunct Research Faculty, with similar conditions for employment.

As recommended, the recruitment of Visiting and Adjunct Faculty will serve to support the teaching staff of the program. In this regard, Deborah Thomson, DVM, Chair of the One Health Education Subgroup of the World Veterinary Association who has agreed to join EUC as Visiting Faculty will be involved in the One Health Courses of the EUC Veterinary Curriculum. Additionally, Dr. Thomson and members of the WVA are currently collaborating with EUC in One Health research efforts, particularly with regards to one health educational gaps.



## 6. Research

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

A specific research policy for the School of Veterinary Medicine should be produced, specifically taking into account the specific challenges related to veterinary research, veterinary staff and its integration into the one health concept. In fact, a one health research policy integrating the different schools might be an innovative approach on research for the EUC.

We would like to thank the EEC for acknowledging the EUC research policy. We agree that it will serve as an ideal place for a veterinary specific research policy to be developed. A core strategic initiative of both EUC, as well as the School of Medicine is One Health. Among efforts that have already been initiated in collaboration with the World Veterinary Association (WVA), and the International Network of Healthcare Worker Education (INHWE) is to address planetary Health by taking a one health approach educational programs. As such, we consider the development of an integrative research policy a high priority.

An initial focus away from research towards development of the program and teaching is understandable but might cause issues for new staff with an active high research profile. Career progression, funding competitiveness and retention of staff might be some of these issues.

We understand that establishing the educational program is a high priority. However, as outlined in our Development Plan, the strategy for building the faculty ranks includes the early recruitment (during the planning phase) of five (5) senior core faculty members (total of 7 for first year) who will also serve as senior research leader faculty. These will be professor or associate professor-level faculty who will be expected to ensure the smooth running of the veterinary curriculum and rapidly advance the school's research vision. As such, to support the research mission and objectives of the School, some of the core start-up faculty will be selected based on research, as well as teaching merits. These senior research leaders will serve to quickly establish a visible and robust platform for research development. The collaborative model of veterinary education and research adopted by the new School will have the greatest potential to attract research revenue from the EU, federal agencies, corporations and foundations, especially in light of the prioritization of team-based research.

A specific focus to support research performance for clinicians will be required in the future since it has been internationally notoriously difficult to engage more clinically oriented staff in research.

We agree with the EEC that engaging clinically oriented staff in research is a challenge. The School will explore means with the Office of the Vice Rector for Research to support the research performance of clinicians, and outline measures in the School specific Research Policy.

The EEC was not able to assess the full potential of research amongst staff since recruitment for the new program is far from complete.

The EEC during the onsite visit requested key parameters of research output for the school of veterinary medicine but understandably due to the prospective nature of the new program these parameters are not available. It is important however to start monitoring key



performance indicators of research asap so research strategy and policy can dynamically make use of these data.

We fully agree with the EEC on the importance of monitoring key performance indicators of research from the onset of the Veterinary Program and first faculty recruited.

## 7. Resources

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

A business plan clearly demonstrating the expected financial resources and financial planning should be provided to assess resources and sustainability of the new school.

As correctly noted by the EEC, EUC is financially healthy and is part of a financially healthy and commercial parent organization, namely Galileo Global Education.

As noted above, the School does have a “**Development Plan**” which outlines the strategic development and milestones of the development and initiation of the program, including recruitment plans, enrollment plans, 5-year business plan, feasibility studies, etc. This was not considered part of the application process, and hence was not included in the original application. It has, however, now been submitted for the EEC’s review.

## B. Conclusions and Final Remarks

The School of Veterinary Medicine is a new school in development by the European University of Cyprus (EUC); the EUC has extensive experience in developing new schools in health sciences, is financially healthy and is backed by a large financially healthy international parent organisation (Galileo Global Education). This experience, organisational structure and historical successes make it very likely that the new school will be appropriately managed and resourced.

We would like to thank the EEC for this observation. EUC's experience in establishing similar programs in the past, has served as an important mediator of current efforts with the Veterinary Program.

An excellent curriculum on paper has been developed that should provide veterinary students with all the prerequisites to contribute to society at a high standard of veterinary care. The timeline towards acceptance and enrolment of students is however very short and many obstacles are still on the road towards the successful running of a new programme. Specifically, the new School of Veterinary Medicine lacks (or did not provide) strategic planning and budgeting to guarantee also on paper the sustainability of the programme. Staffing of the programme is currently insufficient and recruitment processes are ongoing pending on the outcome of the accreditation. The EEC notes that recruitment of suitably qualified (clinical) veterinary teaching staff is very difficult in the current employment climate.

We are grateful for the EEC's comment on our curriculum. As noted, the timeline is tight, albeit similar to our previous experiences. Strategic planning including recruitment plans, enrollment plans, 5-year business plan, feasibility studies, etc. are provided in the Development Plan that is now attached. As noted above, this was not considered part of the application process, and hence was not included in the original application. It has now been submitted for the EEC's review.

The school is heavily relying on external collaborators for essential components of teaching of the program and the EEC has visited and met several of these excellent facilities. This approach can be very economical but also exposes the programme to the potential of a mismatch in expectations and unforeseen, sometimes abrupt, endings of collaborations.

As noted above, we agree with the EEC that it is important to have a solid number of permanent teaching staff.- As per the Development Plan in addition to the founding Acting Dean and Acting Chairperson, Senior core instructional faculty members who are key for the primary core course of the pre-clinical years will be hired in Spring 2024 (before the intended Fall 2024 initiation of the program) to support the development of the operations of the new ***EUC School of Veterinary Medicine***. Upon the start of the academic program, additional full-time faculty and scientific collaborators will be hired yearly to accommodate course instructional demands. At present, EUC is currently seeking to recruit qualified academics for its Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program in various disciplines (noted previously). This call closes in February 2024, and selection processes will begin immediately afterwards, ensuring having Core Faculty available by April-May for onboarding and course material preparation. According to the Development plan, the School plans to have five (5) Core faculty (7 total the first year), with continuous openings for new posts to complement the program needs.

Many operational risks have emerged during this external evaluation such as timely completion of building works, timely recruitment of appropriate staff, completion of all teaching materials, solidifying external collaborations etc. The EEC acknowledges that no new veterinary program will come to fruition without risks, however these risks should be acknowledged, appropriately assessed and managed, with an action plan in place to revert or adapt when occurring.

We agree that any new initiative faces operational risks. The time frame for recruitment, etc is outlined in the Development Plan. The construction of Veterinary Floor is complete, while the construction of the remaining facilities of the building are progressing ahead of time. Additionally, we currently have received the vast majority of our educational tools (e.g. simulators, task trainers, etc.). Acquisition of teaching tools is a continuous and ongoing process. As such, the educational spaces are fully functional in their present form.

The EEC is however confident, based on the investments to date in the New Veterinary School, the ambition and enthusiasm of management and staff and the excellent facilities and teaching resources already in place that this new school can become a success; similarly as the EUC has made a success of their medicine and dentistry school.

We are grateful for the EEC's observation and comment.

Structured planning with time-lined deliverables, outputs, milestones, stop-go points, what if's and tight regulatory control mechanisms will however be required when the School of Veterinary Medicine wants to start its programme successfully in September 2024.

We agree with the EEC's observation and refer to the Development Plan which includes Gantt Charts with time-lined deliverables, outputs, milestones, etc.

### ***Final remarks:***

The leadership, as well as the faculty, staff and students found the EEC's candid discussions a constructive learning process. We all believe that this review was a positive experience and feel that we were provided with important input on how to move effectively forward and establish the Veterinary Medicine Program.

The School thoroughly reviewed the findings, strengths and areas of improvement clearly indicated by the EEC following their review. We have attempted to respond to each item specifically and succinctly. By embracing the EEC's comments and suggestions, we are convinced that our School will be able to more effectively advance its program and ensure the learning outcomes of its students. In this regards, we are grateful to the EEC for their candid discussions regarding our program, and the insightful comments and suggestions throughout their report.

#### D. Higher Education Institution Academic Representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Prof. Loizos Symeou</b>	Vice Rector of Academic Affairs	
<b>Prof. Elizabeth Johnson</b>	Dean. School of Medicine	
<b>Prof. Dimitris Raptopoulos</b>	Dean, School of Veterinary Medicine	
<b>Dr. Kypros Protopapas</b>	Chairperson, Dept. of Veterinary Medicine	

**Date:** 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023

