

**Higher Education Institution's Response
E-Learning Programme of Study**

Date: 01/02/2023

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Frederick University
- **Campus:** Nicosia
- **School:** Health Sciences
- **Department / Sector:** Nursing
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme

In Greek:

Διοίκηση Υπηρεσιών και Μονάδων Υγείας (3 ακαδημαϊκά
εξάμηνα, 90 ECTS, Μάστερ (MSc), Εξ αποστάσεως)

In English:

Health Management (3 academic semesters, 90 ECTS,
Master (MSc), E-Learning)

Language(s) of instruction:

- **Specializations (if any):**

In Greek:

-

In English:

-

Programme's Status: Currently Operating



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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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 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].



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.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the department in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, 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. 300.3.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

ALL areas marked as Compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1.a. We would suggest the programme consider some alternative means of quality assurance. One such development would be peer assessment of teaching (these could be informal). Another development might be to remove the student compulsion to review teaching prior to the release of a final mark. The reason for this is that there is some potential that this process might bias student responses to be more positive than perhaps they might have been were the evaluation conducted post-mark release.

Department's Response:

The University has adopted this form for rating of teachers by students in the context of quality assurance and the evaluation by students includes rating of teachers and points on the teaching that need upgrading.

The above-mentioned evaluation by the students is considered during the new start of the program, that is, actions are taken to improve the weak points for both the teachers and the teaching.

Also, in addition to the evaluation by the students, 3 different evaluation forms for both professors and the teaching as well as the program are drawn up annually, namely:

- (a) Instructor's Course Evaluation Report
- (b) Academic Evaluation Report
- (c) Annual Report of Academic Activities.

The internal evaluation forms of academic staff and their teaching (forms IQC101 and 105 and 106) are brought to the attention of the Program Coordinator after the end of each academic semester, who both in individual meetings with the professor and as a whole with the teaching staff takes care of giving improvement-type instructions to all weak points that may arise.



The university acknowledges the fact that student compulsory completion of the teacher review might create bias and provide positive responses. However, more bias is expected if students complete the questionnaires after final marks are known. It is noted that students are gradually convinced that these questionnaires are indeed anonymous and thus provide freely their opinion on the course and the instructor.

Teaching peer assessment is to be informally implemented among the teachers of the program.

Questionnaires and discussions with the students are designed to take place at the beginning and at the end of the semester to get their thoughts, ideas, and reflection on the courses. For example, at the beginning of the semester students will be asked to report and discuss their expectations on the course and the end of the semester to compare what they have learned to what they expected.

Additionally, reflective journals are planned to be given in all courses to students throughout the semester to provide feedback on the course and the teacher.



2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment

(ESG 1.3)

ALL areas marked as Compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

2.a. All modules are compulsory with no module options provided. In the future this may be something worth considering.

Department's Response:

We accept the recommendations by the EEC. The programme structure is revised, and elective courses are added in the second semester. The students have the choice between the courses:

1. Operational Management and Marketing in Health Systems and Services
2. Public Health - Health Prevention and Promotion
3. Leadership and decision making in the health sector
4. Pharmaceutical policy and health technology assessment
5. Communication Skills and Patient Counselling

Please refer to Annex 1 – Revised structure and Annex 2 – Course Descriptions.

2.b. The assessment strategy is generally satisfactory. Given the programme focus on 50% -60% weighting for the final exam on many courses, we would ask the programme to consider using possible alternative modes of assessment (within the context of the regulations) which could facilitate a focus on continuous assessment rather than end of course exams. We also suggest to provide feedback at the end of the final exam in order to become more formative, due to the weighting on the learning process.

Department's Response:

From the next academic semester (spring semester 2023) the assessment of students will be modified, in accordance with the instructions of the competent bodies, as followed:

Continuous evaluation will be carried out with the following stages:

- (a) 2 written mid-term assessment assignments with a score of 20% each of the total grade, total 40%
- (b) 2 intermediate interactive assessments during the lessons with a mark of 5% each of the total mark, total 10%
- (c) 1 final written exam with a score of 50% of the total grade,
- (d) Total score: 100%

In addition to the aforementioned change, some courses have the following changes, specifically:

- (a) in the course Research Methodology I – the percentage of the final exam will be 50% and emphasis will be given to the continuous assessment by having 1 written assignment in statistics and 1 intermediate written exam regarding their research protocol.
- (b) in the Bioethics-Sociology-Health Law course the percentage of the final exam will be 50% and emphasis will be given on the continuous assessment by having 3 written assignments examining the development of knowledge and skills in the 3 thematic sections of the course)

Regarding the issue of providing feedback after the completion of the final exam, in the 1st week after the end of the 1st and 2nd semester exams, there will be an open discussion on the exam essays with feedback provided on the points where incorrect answers were obtained

from the students (referring to the answers to the exam essays) and especially for the courses where there is no final exam, a 2-hour explanation will be held (within the courses) specifically and about the midterm evaluation.

2.c. The learning outcomes were many and often very broad and under-specified. We would like to suggest that the programme consider exploring ways to link specific learning outcomes to specific course content, such that this can be more clearly communicated to students.

Department's Response:

The course descriptions have been revised to better indicate on how the learning outcomes of the programme are achieved. More specifically, the programmes learning outcomes are achieved through specific courses such as:

Learning Outcome	Course
1. Measure and compare health, and healthcare system outcomes	DLMHM521 - Health Systems and Evaluation of Health Systems, Services and Public Health Programs
2. Develop knowledge and skills for the creation, development and management tools for evaluation of health services.	DLMHM521 - Health Systems and Evaluation of Health Systems, Services and Public Health Programs
3. Develop skills to collaborate and consult as a strategic member of the healthcare team.	DLMHM522 - Introduction to Management and Management of Health Services and Human Resources Management in Health Organizations
4. Develop knowledge about the administration in health sector and human resource management	DLMHM522 - Introduction to Management and Management of Health Services and Human Resources Management in Health Organizations



Learning Outcome	Course
5. Apply modern leadership theories and their practical applications	DLMHM531 - Leadership and decision making in the health sector
6. Analyse the conceptual approaches, the meaning, the applications and the basic elements of quality of health services.	DLMHM520 - Health Quality Management
7. Acquire health strategy skills to properly direct Public Health actions	DLMHM530 - Public Health - Health Prevention and Promotion
8. Design and carry out epidemiological studies	DLMHM523 - Epidemiology
9. Elaborate business plans employing specific health service assessment tools	DLMHM524 - Operational Management and Marketing in Health Systems and Services
10. Apply the basic principles of marketing and the importance of marketing for healthcare providers.	DLMHM524 - Operational Management and Marketing in Health Systems and Services
11. Appreciate similarities and differences in different countries' approach to funding and organisation of healthcare.	DLMHM525 - Health Economics and Financial Management of Public and Private Health Services
12. Demonstrate knowledge of financing methods of health services	DLMHM525 - Health Economics and Financial Management of Public and Private Health Services
13. Describe the tools and eHealth services can be taken into account in the design process, funding and provision of health services.	DLMHM527 - Health Information Systems
14. Apply the basic principles of research methodology, plan, design and conduct studies in the field of the health sciences.	DLMHM526 - Research Methodology and Research Proposal Preparation
15. Monitor the changing international developments on social data, scientific approaches to bioethics and related laws	DLMHM528 - Social and Behavioural Aspects of Health Management - Health Law and Ethical Issues

3. Teaching staff

(ESG 1.5)

ALL areas marked as Compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

3.a. The process for ensuring student engagement in teaching appraisals might be developed to remove some potential sources of bias. Evidence suggests that female lecturers are typically rated lower than male lecturers, and that nonnative language speakers are rated lower than others. Moreover, it was not very clear what the relation between teaching and the promotion of teaching staff. Teaching performance is mainly assessed through students' questionnaires. Peer assessment of teaching might be a possible solution to this that the programme might like to explore.

Department's Response:

Student questionnaires are completed by students at the end of each semester. These questionnaires are provided to the Chair of the Department for evaluation and are discussed with each faculty member during the faculty appraisal process at the end of each academic year. Cases of biased student evaluations, such as gender or nationality, for specific faculty members are identified and examined during the faculty appraisal process. It is noted, that, such biased evaluations were observed and examined in some rare cases, which were taken into consideration in the faculty appraisal. However, EEC's observation is not statistically justified.

Peer assessment of teaching and mentoring are among the corrective measures taken in cases where students' questionnaires indicate that specific faculty members have issues concerning their teaching.

Teaching performance is one of the main faculty activities evaluated during the faculty promotion process. In their application for promotion, faculty must submit for two courses they teach, the course outlines, samples of the lecture notes they developed, educational material



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they have developed, and a statement on the teaching methods they are using. This material is evaluated by the promotion special evaluation committee, and the election body.



4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

(ESG 1.4)

ALL areas marked as Compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

4.a. This was all satisfactory. The student representatives had nothing but praise for the processes and systems in place at the university.

Department's Response:

We would like to thank the Committee for the positive remarks.



5. Learning resources and student support

(ESG 1.6)

ALL areas marked as Compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

5.a. All appeared to be highly satisfactory.

Department's Response:

We would like to thank the Committee for the positive remarks.

6. Conclusions and final remarks

The panel noted the ambition of the programme in maintaining a research-led approach to teaching, particularly in the context of a university that was 100% dependent on student tuition fees for its continued development. There was an appropriate system of support in place for staff to develop this activity (to an adequate degree). The panel also noted the quality of the international visiting speaker programme and encouraged the continued support of this aspect of the course.

It was noted that the teaching staff were strongly committed to the students and the programme.

- (a) The Panel also noted the overall university commitment to Sustainable Development Goals, although this commitment was under-represented in the programme documentation and could be better integrated into teaching practice and documentation.
- (b) The student representatives demonstrated there was a supportive learning environment within the programme, providing opportunities both in terms of the ongoing intellectual development and the career development of the students.
- (c) We would like to suggest that the programme consider developing alternative modes of teacher assessment, such as peer assessment of teaching, rather than relying solely on student assessment of teaching, which can be biased.
- (d) We would like the course team to think about how they might make more explicit links from the programme to a wider policy context, either in terms of explicit links to government departments or with appropriate Non-Governmental Organisations.
- (e) The learning outcomes were many and often very broad and under-specified. We would like to suggest that the programme consider exploring ways to link specific learning outcomes to specific course content, such that this can be more clearly communicated to students.
- (f) The operation of the conventional masters and the distance learning masters could potentially mean that staff have to duplicate efforts and workload. We would encourage the course teams to find ways (within the regulations) to increase levels of integration between the two programmes.

(g) Within the regulations, we would encourage the programme to consider alternative ways of weighting final assessment marks. One possibility could be to consider the weighting of 50% on final exams, which could be adjusted downwards to incorporate more continuous modes of assessment

Department's Response:

(a) Frederick University is committed in promoting the UN Sustainable Development Goals. In the 2020 review of the University's Strategic Plan, the University Council approved the inclusion of a new Action in the short-term action plan. Specifically, Action 13 states: "The Council of the University identifies that the SDGs directly match and overlap with the core values and goals of Frederick University and to this end they should be strongly promoted and adopted within the operations. Actions should be undertaken to ensure that there is widespread understanding of these goals among the community, identification at departmental level of specific goals that can be served and rethinking of curriculum development and research directions to better promote and support them. Specific policies and decisions should be taken at governance level to ensure that the University leads by example towards serving the SDGs".

To achieve this, a [standing committee](#) has been set up, headed by the University President and comprising academics, administrative staff, students and external advisors.

The University has set specific targets for each Goal. These are either targets that assess whether specific outcomes have been achieved (e.g. specify a policy for inclusion of transgender people) or performance indicators that are tracked (e.g. reduce the carbon emission levels caused by the University operations). A systematic process has also been established in order to record our performance against all these targets during each evaluation period.

The identification of targets for each Goal is defined across the below dimensions. Specifying the dimension of a target enables a sharper focus on the resources that must assume responsibility for its achievement and simplifies the tracking process.

RESEARCH

Academic research conducted by the University and consulting activities and collaborations with Government, NGOs and other stakeholders.

EDUCATION

The delivery of teaching either in formal education through the programs of study the University offers, or through informal and non-formal activities such as lifelong learning actions.

LEADERSHIP

The local society and the interconnection of the University community with its environment including policy development and advocacy.

GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

Policies of the University with the aim of adopting best practices and leading by example through its governance and operations in the effort to promote the SDGs.

In order to both train the academic community and incorporate the SDGs into the programmes of study, the University's Personal and Professional Development Center has already conducted the following [seminars](#), for the Academic Year 2022 - 2023:

- ESD Competences and Strategic Pedagogies for SDGs Integration in University Curricula
- Integrating SDGs in University Curricula

Previous academic year [seminars](#).

- Sustainable Development Goals: Re-imagining the future
- Unconscious Gender Bias

The effect of the University's actions and policies is evident as Frederick University is the only University in Cyprus and Greece to be ranked among the top 201-300 Universities in the world in this year's Times Higher Education Impact Rankings exploring progress of universities worldwide towards achieving SDGs.

With a total of 1,591 institutions from all over the world joining the [Times Higher Education Impact Rankings](#) this year, Frederick University has been placed among the top 201-300 Universities, for its commitment and progress on delivering the United Nation's [Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). It has scored highly for its positive impact and meaningful work on specific SDGs, having ranked 44th globally for Quality Education and 100th for Affordable and Clean Energy.

The [Times Higher Education Impact Rankings](#) are the only global performance tables that assess Universities against the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#), thus recognizing the Universities' impact on society and the world at large. They use indicators providing comparisons across four broad areas:

- **Research:** Research output in topics related to SDGs, measured by the faculty's academic publications in reputable scientific journals.
- **Stewardship:** Policies, actions, and governance strategies involving the Universities' employees, faculty and students.
- **Outreach:** The work that Universities do with their local, regional, national and international communities.
- **Teaching:** Incorporating the SDGs in programs of study and assisting students to develop the necessary skills to help solve the world's problems.

Frederick University shows significant year-on-year improvement in the Rankings, as it has been once again acknowledged for its unwavering dedication to providing quality education, a student-centric approach, and making a meaningful contribution towards building a sustainable future for all. Frederick University is a member of the [United Nations' Sustainable Development Solutions Network \(SDSN\)](#) and among the founding members of SDSN Cyprus, which works closely with all sectors of society on improving Cyprus' performance in the implementation of the SDGs.

For more detailed descriptions on the SDG activities of the University, please refer to the [Sustainability Report](#).

- (b) We'd like to thank the EEC for their positive remarks.
- (c) Please refer to previous answer 3a.
- (d) The Department has signed Memorandums of Understanding (MOUs) for cooperation with the Ministry of Health in Cyprus and Greece. Furthermore, collaboration with external stakeholders is enhanced by the participation of Hospitals and Healthcare providers (ex. General Health System, Organisation of Public Health Care Services, Organization of Health Assurance etc) as well as MOUs with universities abroad for the interconnection of the program in the research and teaching field as well as student mobility (ex. Linköping University - Sweden, University of Foggia - Italy, University of Western Attica – Greece, Lahti University of Applied Sciences - Finland, Hellenic Mediterranean University – Greece, United Arab Emirates University)
- Additionally, the Department has collaboration with the Scientific Health Management Societies as well as with the Health Quality Assurance Organization - ODIPY - in Greece.
- (e) Please refer to previous answer in section 2a.
- (f) The University has in place mechanisms, rules and regulations that ensure that the staff's teaching load does not exceed the required hours for each semester. Also, the University ensures that there is a balance between teaching in conventional and distance learning programs. In any case the staff will not duplicate efforts, since Collaborative Teaching staff is appropriately trained to teach in the Distance learning courses under the supervision of the Course Coordinator who is a full-time member of the staff and responsible for the course content development. The University has already examined some options in order to increase the level of integration and these include common online lecturing sessions (this depends on the regulatory authority approval), develop and use the same educational interactive material (i.e. narrated presentations, interactive presentations and videos, learning scenarios and self-evaluation quizzes) and students (conventional and distance learning) participation in online discussions (i.e. through forums) and collaboration in exercises via the use of digital tools (i.e. collaborative shared documents, digital boards, wikis)
- (g) The percentage of the final exam from now on is it expected to be 50% in all courses of the master program, so as more emphasis will be given in continuous assessment. Please refer to Annex 2 – Course Descriptions for the assessment methods..



B. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
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Prof. George Demosthenous Rector

Date: 01/02/2023

