



Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 22 December 2023

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
European University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Κτηνιατρική (300 ECTS/5 Έτη, Πτυχίο)

In English:

Veterinary Medicine (5 Years/300 ECTS, Doctor of Veterinary Medicine, DVM)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
 - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

1. Study programme and study programme’s design and development
 (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Specific QA/QC details (policies, procedures, schematics and flow-charts) that relate to the proposed veterinary school are required.</p>	<p>We agree with the EEC, regarding the importance of QA/QC details. Additionally, 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.</p> <p>The School has not submitted in the application package 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., since this was not considered part of the application process, and hence was not included in the original application. We happily submit now here in our Response Report for the EEC’s review our “Development Plan” (please see Appendix I).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment
 (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The institution is not yet operational. Therefore, as per above comments it is only possible to provide supportive statements to each standard with a disclaimer that there are no actual ongoing teaching activities, practical training or student assessments. Therefore, any QA/QC and feedback regarding assessment outcomes will need to be stored and provided during the next accreditation process. Therefore, the recommendation is to clearly delineate policies and procedures applicable to support the quality control processes related to teaching/learning, practical training, and assessment outcomes.</p>	<p>As noted above, 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, including teaching activities, practical training, etc., as the School begins its functions.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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,</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>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”.</p>	
<p>In relation to practical training, specifically the external facilities, the EEC has some concerns related to formalised agreements as a way to prepare for incoming students in the next years. However, these concerns are discussed in different sections of the document.</p>	<p>Upon approval of the Veterinary Program, the School will proceed forthright with formalized MoUs with the External Partners identified during the site visit. While we consider the augmentation of external partners an ongoing process, the current identified partners have <u>all</u> agreed to sign a formal MoU with EUC once the School becomes a legal entity, as clearly stated to the EEC during the site visits.</p> <p>According to the Development Plan, formal MoUs are planned in Spring 2024, upon accreditation of the program and before its onset.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>It is strongly recommended to substantially increase the number of permanent and tenured staff of the Department 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.</p>	<p>We align 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 of 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. The vacancies have been announced on the EUC website and the deadline of submission of application is the 1st of February 2024 (please see the call https://galileo.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/european_university_cyprus_career_site/job/Academic-positions-in-Veterinary-Medicine--Any-Rank-_R-16457-2).</p> <p>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, as our vacancy call shows, EUC is currently seeking to recruit qualified academics for its Doctor of Veterinary Medicine program in the following disciplines:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Animal and Comparative Anatomy • Animal Physiology • Animal Histology – Pathology (Pathologic Anatomy) 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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 <p>As stated above, 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 full-faculty for first year), with continuous openings for new posts to complement the program needs across the semesters.</p>	
<p>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</p>	<p>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 CY.Q.A.A. announcement (14.7.2023; https://www.dipae.ac.cy/index.php/el/nea-ekdiloseis/anakoinoseis-el/710-14-7-2023-monimo-kai-plirous-apascholisis-akadimaiko-prosopiko-2). Visiting Faculty are invited from leading institutions to augment specific fields and disciplines. According to the EUC Charter: “The ‘University’ may appoint Visiting Faculty.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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". <p>In addition to Visiting Faculty, the University also offers the opportunity for Adjunct Faculty, and Adjunct Research Faculty, with similar conditions for employment.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	
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	<p>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.</p>	
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
 (ESG 1.4)

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<p>Provide details on re-sit options</p>	<p>The Resit Final Examination is a student’s prerogative and not an obligation. This means that any student who meets the criteria presented below, but does not wish to participate in a Resit Final Examination, is not obliged to do so. According to our EUC regulation:</p> <p>A student is eligible for a Resit Final Examination when s/he:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has failed a course (i.e. has received an F grade in a course). 2. Has received a total grade in the range of 50-59 (for undergraduate courses) or 60-69 (for masters’ courses). 3. Has no outstanding “1” in the other requirements of the specific course (i.e. mid-term, assignments) by the time s/he applies for a Resit Final Examination. 4. Has submitted a written application to the Department of Enrolment (along with the participation fee of 75 euro per course (this fee applies to courses in Conventional Programs of Study/courses), after he/she has been informed about his/her eligibility for a Resit Final Examination by the Department of Enrolment after the official announcement of the final 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>grades of the respective semester.</p> <p>A student who does not meet the above Resit Final Examination eligibility criteria will need to re-register for the failed course.</p> <p>In order for a student to successfully pass the failed course by taking a Resit Final Examination, the following must apply:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The student takes the Resit Final Examination on the specified date. Failure to participate in the Resit Final Examination on the specified date implies the student's disqualification from participating in a Resit Final Examination of the specific course on any other date or on any of the following Resit Final Examination specified dates. 2. The student scores in the Resit Final Examination the mark of at least 60% for an undergraduate course and at least 70% for a masters' course and for the courses of the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM). Regardless of the result of the Resit Final Examination, the maximum final grade that a student may receive for the specific course is the grade of D for undergraduate courses and the grade of C for masters' courses and courses of the Doctor of 	
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	<p>Medicine (M.D.) and Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM).</p>	
<p>and first-year transfer subject requirements.</p>	<p>Transfer will be accepted from other recognized Veterinary Medicine programs of study having successfully completed at least one (1) Full Year (60 ECTS) or at least two (2) Full Years (120 ECTS) with High Academic Achievement. The evaluation procedure is year by year and must cover all course content material as reviewed by the Department of Veterinary Medicine and/or written examination (if deemed necessary).</p> <p>Students will be admitted to 2nd or 3rd year accordingly, with no monitoring of Academic Path required. Course(s) that were not transferred will be attended in parallel with the semester of induction. In cases of clashing hours, the Department will offer such courses on a Direct Study basis, according to the provisions stipulated by the ΚΥ.Σ.ΑΤ.Σ. and Δ.Ο.Α.Τ.Α.Π. with regards to Cypriot and Greek students, respectively.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

5. Learning resources and student support
 (ESG 1.6)

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<p>It is highly recommended to establish concrete agreements with the establishments of veterinary interest required to contribute to the programme with resources (personnel, space, access, etc), making sure that the provisions in place secure its high quality and sustainability</p>	<p>We agree with the EEC for the need to establish concrete agreements with external partners. As noted above, upon approval of the Veterinary Program, the School will proceed forthright with formalized MoUs with the External Partners identified during the site visit. According to the Development Plan, formal MoUs are planned upon accreditation of the program and before its onset in Spring 2024.</p> <p>While we consider the augmentation of external partners an ongoing process, the current identified partners have all agreed to sign a formal MoU with EUC once the School becomes a legal entity.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

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<p>Recommendations: It might be advisable to take into account the possibility of future doctoral programs when appointing new staff. Staff with extensive research experience including supervision of PhD and master students might make the introduction of a research doctoral program easier at a later stage. Similarly, strategically appointing staff with clinical specialty training creates future opportunities for implementing clinical specialty training through residency programs.</p>	<p>We agree with the EEC with regards to the importance of future doctoral programs when considering new academic staff. The current intake of faculty will be able to supervise Ph.D. students in the Medical Sciences Ph.D. program, which was designed to be inclusive to all medical science disciplines (including dentistry, medicine, and veterinary medicine). Additionally, the University has a well-developed procedure that facilitates the introduction of new graduate programs – either Ph.D. or M.Sc.</p> <p>As can be seen in our call for full-time vacancies, we are also aiming to recruit in Veterinary Clinical Specialties. One of the aims of identifying early clinical faculty is not only to ensure quality student training, but to create the opportunity for clinical specialty training. We consider including Diplomates of European Specialization Colleges to facilitate initiating residency programs under the auspices of the respective Colleges with approval of the EBVS.</p> <p>It should be noted that the later will require close collaboration with the relevant Ministries, Agencies and Professional Bodies.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>The use of high fidelity models and virtual training at an advanced level might provide opportunities for educational research relating to clinical skill training and proficiency. This is an area that will only become more important in the future when the use of live animals and cadavers will be strongly discouraged in clinical training.</p>	<p>We are encouraged by the EEC's observation that opportunities for educational research using our investments in advanced high-fidelity models and virtual training would be opportune and possible. As our recruitment progresses, we are eager to identify applicants who are focused on Veterinary Education.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Risks: Not having a doctoral program might reduce commitment of new staff to relocate or remain on staff long term in the future</p>	<p>As noted above, the new academic staff will have immediate ability to accept Ph.D. students in the ongoing Medical Sciences program.</p> <p>Additionally, new academic staff will have ample opportunity to introduce new graduate programs, both PhD and M.Sc., as the University has a well-developed process to facilitate the introduction of new programs to be submitted to CY.Q.A.A. for final approval.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

N/A

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>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 in this Response Report (please see Appendix I). As noted above, 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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	<p>the spring of 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 (please see the 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 total the first year), with continuous openings for new posts to complement the program needs.</p> <p>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</p>	
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<p>in place that this new school can become a success; similarly as the EUC has made a success of their medicine and dentistry school.</p> <p>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.</p>	<p>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.</p> <p>We also agree with the EEC's observation and refer to the Development Plan which includes Gantt Charts with time-lined deliverables, outputs, milestones, etc.</p> <p>Final remarks:</p> <p>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.</p> <p>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</p>	
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	<p>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.</p>	
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C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Prof. Elizabeth Johnson	Dean. School of Medicine	
Prof. Dimitris Raptopoulos	Dean, School of Veterinary Medicine	
Dr. Kypros Protopapas	Chairperson, Dept. of Veterinary Medicine	

Date: 22/12/2023

