

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 26/06/2024

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:** European University Cyprus

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **Programme of study Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

«Νευρολογική Αποκατάσταση (18 Μήνες/90 ECTS, Μεταπτυχιακό)» Εξ Αποστάσεως

In English:

“Neurorehabilitation (18 Months/90 ECTS, Master of Science)” E-Learning

- **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>Try to keep a healthy student-staff ratio.</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for their valuable feedback and recommendations regarding our Master in Neurorehabilitation program of study during the recent accreditation team visit.</p> <p>We appreciate the insights provided by the EEC and acknowledge the importance of keeping a healthy student-staff ratio.</p> <p>As indicated in the attached syllabi (Annex 3), the program involves numerous instructors contributing on specialized areas. Thus, students will have the opportunity to have numerous instructors, in a way that the student-staff ration will remain healthy.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Integrate ICT (information & communication technology) people into the program, clarify where and how technology becomes integrated into the program.</p>	<p>We appreciate the EEC's recommendation about including instructors related to technology. Many of the instructors are involved in research and teaching related to the use of various technological advances in neurorehabilitation (please refer to the relevant CV descriptions in the initial application). Syllabi (please see Annex 2 & 3) and a sample study guide (please see Annex 1) have been extensively modified to make it clearer where and how technology is</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>integrated into the program (changes have been highlighted in both Annexes in red for the convenience of the EEC and CY.Q.A.A.)</p>	
<p>Develop a vision on assessment/examination. Consider the way students are assessed and what students should be able to produce, e.g. is it about reproduction of knowledge or development of critical thinking skills (consider Bloom's taxonomy; https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bloom's taxonomy)?</p>	<p>Syllabi have been reviewed and revised and the learning outcomes now reflect Level 7 of the National Qualifications Framework.</p> <p>In accordance, some textbooks have been substituted by relevant scientific papers. In Annex 2 & 3, please see the revised Syllabi (relevant changes are highlighted in yellow for the convenience of the EEC and CY.Q.A.A.)</p> <p>In addition, rubrics have been added to the two large assignments of the sample study guide presenting in detail what is expected out of students and how this will be graded (please see Annex 1, highlighted in yellow).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The time allocation per task should be revisited. Assignments should be rather not fulfilled by 100%. Offer students the opportunity to fulfill 8 of 10 possible assignments to pass the course. This adds flexibility to the program and "allows" students to miss assessments because of illness, Etc.</p>	<p>We appreciate the EEC's attention to time allocation per task for students and we find the recommendation very useful. We have therefore followed this suggestion and offer students the opportunity to choose among assignments of equal value (please see for example Annex 1, page 2, highlighted yellow section).</p>	

<p>For a full time program running three courses per semester (within 13 weeks!) for a period of 18 months (three semesters) created a too high load on students (about 60 hours per week!). Please consider carefully what students can manage in terms of ECTS per week of study and keep a healthy study-life balance.</p>	<p>We appreciate the EEC's concern about the workload of students taking the program full-time. Based on European standards and guidelines, a full-time academic semester equals to 30 ECTS. The actual semester at EUC lasts 16-17 calendar weeks, including vacation period, final exams and the 13 weeks teaching period. To avoid overloading of students, large assignments between courses do not coincide during the same period and workload balance has been reconsidered by carefully calculating estimated study times for every material and assignment given (please see the parts highlighted in in Annex 1 in green).</p> <p>In addition, all course material is provided beforehand on the Blackboard Learn Ultra platform, so that students have a chance to study it, prepare questions on the content and activities of the specific weeks, and discuss these during the synchronous session that follows.</p> <p>Moreover, the program offers students the part-time study option, with the possibility to complete their studies in a total of 5 years.</p>	
<p>Teachers in this new programme seem to have a high workload already because of other programmes to which they contribute.</p>	<p>We understand the concern of the EEC and we would like to clarify that all full-</p>	

	<p>time academic staff at EUC are contracted to teach a specific number of hours per week, which is consistent across all programs at EUC. Workload management and faculty support are very important. To support and reward excellence in research at EUC, we have implemented a Teaching Hours Reduction (THR) scheme (see Annex 4 EUC Research Policy-Section Teaching Hour Reduction Policy, pp. 26-28). Under this scheme, a reduction of 3-6 hours per week is awarded on a semester basis to faculty members who accumulate a certain number of points based on their research activity, allowing them additional time for research. This is consistent across all programs at EUC. Every semester based on the THR awarded to each instructor, the Chairperson of the Department ensures no faculty member exceeds their contractual teaching hours.</p>	
<p>Teachers should have more time and resources for research. This could also benefit the students' research projects and how these should/could be organized.</p>	<p>As described in the previous point, under the THR scheme, a reduction of 3-6 hours per week is awarded on a semester basis to faculty members who accumulate a certain number of points based on their research activity, allowing them additional time for their research as</p>	

	<p>well as for students' research projects.</p>	
<p>The shared vision about the program should be further developed (common vision), teachers should also consider their vision in relation to how and what is tested in the exams. There should be a connection in place between the tests/exams and the learning objectives.</p>	<p>The EEC's suggestion to further develop the common vision of teachers and establish a connection between exams and learning outcomes is positively noted.</p> <p>As of the beginning of offering the degree, instructors will participate in group meetings organized by the Program Academic Committee before initiation of the program to brainstorm, discuss and exchange ideas on practical issues, functionalities of the program, as well as ways to collaborate and involve students in research.</p> <p>In addition, a Faculty Orientation Day at the beginning of the academic year will be organized to further assist in bonding and developing a common vision of the operation of the program.</p> <p>Furthermore, it must be noted that the design of the final exams will take into consideration the learning outcomes for each course as set according to Bloom's taxonomy. Different types of questions will be included in the final exam that will approximately breakdown as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge and Recall: 10% 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comprehension and Understanding: 15% • Application: 20% • Analysis: 15% • Synthesis and Creation: 20% • Evaluation and Judgment: 20% <p>After the first year of the program's operation, experience will allow us to further develop the program's vision.</p>	
<p>Develop a vision on how to deal with generative AI and derive a policy from that vision.</p>	<p>The university's academic policy (recently drafted) on AI usage emphasizes the ethical, transparent, and academically integral application of generative AI tools by both students and instructors. Key principles include the promotion of AI as a learning enhancement rather than a replacement for critical thinking and original work. Students are encouraged to use AI for tasks that foster creativity and understanding, ensuring that their work remains authentic and properly attributed. Instructors are advised to integrate AI thoughtfully, using it to augment grading, feedback, and material preparation, while maintaining personal judgment and ensuring data protection and reliability. Both students and instructors must be aware of AI's limitations and biases, verifying AI-generated content for accuracy and</p>	

	<p>acknowledging its use to uphold academic standards. The policy also underscores the importance of designing assignments that engage students critically and creatively, reducing the potential for misuse of AI. In handling disputes related to AI-generated content, the policy recommends a focus on prevention and the validation of student-authored work through oral presentations.</p>	
<p>Connections to the current research and clinical landscape of Neurorehabilitation should be further developed, for example use of portable technologies (gait analysis) in a clinical setting.</p>	<p>We appreciate this recommendation of the EEC. Many of the instructors involved in this program are actively involved in research and clinical applications of technological advances in the field of Neurorehabilitation. You may see in the sample study guide in Annex 1, where and how technology is embedded within the program's contents (please refer to the parts highlighted in red).</p>	
<p>Add rubrics to course learning outcomes (through students' assessments). This ensures objectives are met.</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for this recommendation. Please see the rubrics related to the two large assignments embedded within the Sample Study Guide (Annex 1, pp. 15-16 & 53-55).</p>	
<p>In relation to the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe, the aspect of preparation of active citizens in democratic societies could be worked out in more detail by the</p>	<p>We appreciate the EEC's focus on preparing active citizens. To support this goal, we plan to hold</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>University. Also by facilitating own research in this area and by building up an alumni network, the development and maintenance of a new knowledge base in relation to the study topic may be facilitated through teaching and research.</p>	<p>conferences at the end of each academic year. During these conferences, graduating students from our program, as well as undergraduate students in occupational and physical therapy, will present their final theses. Alumni will also be invited to share their work and expertise.</p> <p>The conferences will be conducted in a hybrid format, even though we will make every effort to encourage in-person attendance and face-to-face interactions.</p> <p>Additionally, we will create a social media page to connect students with alumni, fostering the exchange of ideas and encouraging suggestions for improving the program.</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>Students from another programme mentioned that they would welcome some more interaction with other students. Further, the forums on a module that is currently on VLE do not seem to be very active. The programme could possibly create more opportunities for interaction and bonding. For example, an induction online or face-to-face event for the entire programme or an end of semester conference with some student presentations. Other ideas can include (a) a residential weekend (with students visiting the campus) and having a tour or even some hands-on experience (b) the creation of a more intuitive space for free discussion (e.g. slack?) and sharing of programme-related resources, for example relevant events or job opportunities.</p>	<p>In response to the EEC's recommendations, please refer to our earlier response (pp. 9-10) detailing our plans for a joint conference for students and alumni, as well as the creation of a social media page aimed at fostering open discussions, sharing experiences, and gathering suggestions for improvement.</p> <p>Additionally, we will organize an Orientation & International Week at the start of each academic year. This event will include students and academic staff from the program to promote bonding and active interactions. During this week, participants will have the opportunity to tour EUC's labs, meet staff and students, and engage with the local community.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The description of the programme on the VLE can be a bit dry and impersonal with students clicking on links and reading PDFs. A way to improve this would be to adopt a more conversational style, speaking to the student in the second person and connecting things with every-day life.</p>	<p>We confirm the EEC's comment, and relevant suggestions will be followed by adapting the language used on the VLE to make it more student-friendly and less impersonal. This will be implemented upon accreditation of the program with the offering of the first courses of the first semester.</p> <p>In addition, we have revised all learning outcomes in the second person in the sample</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	Study Guide (please see Annex 1) and relevant recommendations will also be followed for the platform environment.	
The ratio between tutor and students (1 to 30) may not be ideal with the number of assignments and possible one-to-one support requests.	We appreciate the EEC's concern on this matter. However, this ratio follows the guidelines set by the Cyprus Agency for Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, which advises for maximum 30 students per e-learning class.	Choose level of compliance:
Each activity should have an estimated completion time alongside to allow students for better time management - and also to ensure the time allocation per task is thoroughly considered by the content authors. At the moment some of the activities exceed the total weekly time allocation.	Even though variations among students may exist, the approximate time for an individual assignment preparation is estimated to approximately 20 hours, for a group assignment preparation approximately 15 hours and for preparing an oral presentation for approximately 5 hours. Please see estimated student workload added for every material and assignment within our sample study guide (Annex 1, highlighted in green)	Choose level of compliance:
Creating polls for teleconferences can be useful for student availability, but the teaching staff should be careful that this coincides with preparing for the next assignment to ensure students are supported and any questions are answered. Scheduling teleconferences in advance could further improve student availability and suitability of time.	The first and last teleconference serve as an induction and a pre-exam support for the students; thus, they always take place at the beginning and the end of the semester. The rest of the synchronous teleconference dates are set by the instructor of each course in coordination with the students in order to best accommodate their availability and needs. These are planned in advance to ensure students are supported before submitting large	

	<p>assignments and allow for enough time to discuss relevant questions.</p>	
<p>It should be worked out how students will be actively involved in research. This would preferably be based on research initiated by the educational staff themselves because this facilitates student involvement in relevant research projects.</p>	<p>In response to the EEC's comments, we would like to assure the Committee that it is within our aims to provide opportunities for students to engage in wider research programs as the program evolves. This may involve collaborations with research centers, industry partners, and relevant institutions.</p> <p>We will therefore systematically review and enhance the course to include dedicated research components, ensuring that students have the opportunity to apply theoretical knowledge to real-world challenges. This may involve the inclusion of research-focused projects, case studies, and opportunities for collaboration with faculty members on ongoing research initiatives.</p> <p>These opportunities can be utilized by students as part of their Master's thesis. The thesis, which must be research-based, can involve either designing and implementing a small-scale project or preparing a systematic review.</p> <p>In addition, we will actively encourage and support students to participate in research conferences and contribute to publications in the field. This exposure will not only enhance their</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



	research skills but also contribute to the broader academic community.	
--	--	--

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Try to develop a synergy between teaching and (staff) research.	Please refer to point 2, page 6.	Choose level of compliance:
Make sure that students can also be integrated in existing research at EUC.	<p>In response to the EEC's comments, we would like to assure the Committee that it is within our aims to provide opportunities for students to engage in wider research programs as the program evolves. This may involve collaborations with research centers, industry partners, and relevant institutions.</p> <p>We will therefore systematically review and enhance the course to include dedicated research components, involving opportunities for collaboration with faculty members on ongoing research initiatives. Collaboration with the Engineering and Computer Department will be strongly encouraged to facilitate the production of research into the use of technology in neurorehabilitation.</p> <p>Please, also refer to point 1, page 14.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
Formalize the commitment(s) of the visiting staff for a longer term to enhance the sustainability of the program and build up a wider research network.	All visiting staff at EUC are on annual contracts, which may be renewed. The program includes visiting staff as instructors responsible for specific weeks related to their expertise. These instructors are fully responsible for providing educational	Choose level of compliance:



	materials, responding to students' questions, grading assignments, and offering opportunities for students to engage in research as part of their Master's thesis.	
--	--	--

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>It is important the program only allows students to enter the program with sufficient qualifications.</p> <p>We advise negatively to admit students from a background other than OT or PT in the first years of running the programme.</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for their valuable feedback and recommendation, and we confirm that the program will allow only OT and PT students, at least for the first years of operation, as per the EEC recommendation.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>GDPR (general data protection rules) issues could be anticipated more readily. For example, not every student likes to be tracked in all weeks of the programme. Building awareness of possible future issues and how to deal with GDPR should be developed (e.g., webinars with further info). For example, students that refuse to use or adhere to certain procedures. How will the university respond to this? Will there be alternative solutions or will studying be impossible?</p>	<p>GDPR issues are of high importance and we thank the EEC for its insight. We have developed a structured approach to anticipate and address GDPR issues in an educational setting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We ensure that all data collection practices are transparently communicated to students. This includes explaining why data is collected, how it will be used, and who will have access to it through our privacy notice available online. • Furthermore, for specific processes, like marketing communication, we obtain explicit consent from students before collecting their data. This consent is informed, meaning students understand the implications and can withdraw their consent at any time. • We only collect data that is necessary for the administration and improvement of the educational program. We 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>always avoid excessive or intrusive data collection.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Where possible, we use techniques like anonymization or pseudonymization to protect student identities and reduce the risk of data breaches.• For specific cases, we provide support services for students who have concerns about data privacy. This includes access to a data protection officer by email, in person, or telephone.	
--	--	--

5. Learning resources and student support
 (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Think of ways to provide face-to-face meetings with staff and other students to improve their learning experience and, in the longer run, build a sense of “community”. This will help in the sense that students and alumni will continue to identify with the university.</p>	<p>Students and alumni will have the opportunity to connect face-to face during the year-end conferences. Additionally, a dedicated social media page will facilitate further interaction and the exchange of information, and experiences related to Neurorehabilitation and the educational program.</p> <p>Although the e-learning nature of the program does not foster face-to-face activities, faculty may encourage teamwork through group activities and possible collaborative thesis topics, which may involve pairs of students and/ or instructors.</p> <p>Please also refer to our responses at point 4, pp. 9-10 & point 1, page 11.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

7. Eligibility (Joint programme)
 (ALL ESG)

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The proposal on a new MSc of Neurorehabilitation contains many interesting components that could serve the further development of students in OT or PT. There are a number of points that may be addressed in more detail and/or improved, including the workload of students and teachers, the development of a shared vision on teaching and assessment, the integration of field based technology and latest developments in the program, the establishment of research time for teachers, more electives, commitment of external teachers, and improvement of student interactions.</p>	<p>We express our sincere gratitude to the EEC for the comprehensive review of our E-learning Master in Neurorehabilitation program of study. The EEC's valuable insights and positive observations affirm our commitment to delivering a program that meets the evolving demands of the neurorehabilitation landscape and contributes to the professional growth of our students. All recommendations have been addressed as described in detail above in the previous sections of this Response Report. Additionally, "Brain Imaging" course is changed to elective and a second elective on "Biostatistics" is added (Annex 5). Within the sample study guide (Annex 1) and syllabi (Annex 2 & 3), modifications have been made with respect to integration of field-based technology (changes have been highlighted in both Annexes in red for the convenience of the EEC and CY.Q.A.A.), students' assessment (highlighted in yellow in the documents) and students' workload (highlighted in green in the documents).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Prof. Panagiotis Papageorgis	Dean, School of Sciences	
Prof Chryssoula Thodi	Chairperson, Department of Health Sciences	
Dr. Pavlina Psychouli	Program Coordinator	

Date: 26/6/2024

