**Doc. 300.1.1**

**Date: 30 September 2022**

# External Evaluation Report

# (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution: Frederick University**

- **Town: Nicosia**

- **School/Faculty (if applicable): Health**

- **Department/ Sector: Pharmacy**

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

  **In Greek:**

  Programme Name

  **In English:**

  Pharmacy (3 years / 180 ECTS, PhD)

- **Language(s) of instruction: English and Greek**

- **Programme's status:** New

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  **In Greek:** Concentrations
  **In English:** Concentrations

**ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ**

**REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS**

**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].**

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## A. Introduction

*This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.*

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) visited the Frederick University Campus in Nicosia for the evaluation/accreditation of the department and the two new programs (Advanced Cosmetic Science & Natural Health Products 3 academic semesters / 90 ECTS, MSc; Pharmacy 3 years / 180 ECTS, PhD) on September 27, 2022. The EEC members first had a meeting about the program "Advanced Cosmetic Science and Natural Health Products" with the Coordinator Prof. George Albert Karikas. The coordinator made a short presentation concerning the program`s standards, admission criteria for prospective students, the learning outcomes and ECTS, the content and the people involved in the program`s design and development. During the meeting after the short break, Prof. Stavros Malamataris, PhD Coordinator introduced to the EEC the Pharmacy doctorate program (3 academic years, 180 ECTS, Doctorate, PhD) presenting the aims and goals of the program, committees and academic staff involved, program regulations, admission requirements, program structure, student financial support, project funding and research labs. Prof. Malamataris also presented a SWOT analysis for the program. After that, a short discussion on the content of each program took place. The EEC members met with members of the teaching staff on each course for all the years of study for both programs to discuss on the content of each course and its implementation, the learning outcomes, the content and the assessment of each course and their compliance with the level of program according to the EQF. After a working lunch of the EEC members, with the CYQAA Officer George Aletraris, the EEC held a separate meeting with members of the administrative staff. Finally, in the late afternoon, a guided tour to the campus was done, where the EEC could inspect all facilities including research and didactic labs, teaching rooms, research facilities and equipment inside and the library. In the end of the visit, a summing up and clarification meeting with the Head of the relevant departments and the programs' Coordinators took place. During the visit at the Frederick University, the EEC was given access to all additional material as requested, including study programs, the curricula vitae of all academic teachers, study guide, and document relevant to the structure of the university. The reception of the EEC by the administrative and academic staff of the university was excellent, and all staff members were particularly cooperative and willing to support the evaluation procedure.

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**External Evaluation Committee (EEC)**

| Name | Position | University |
|---|---|---|
| **Anna Birna Almarsdóttir** | Professor | University of Copenhagen |
| **Tomasz Pawiński** | Professor | University of Warsaw |
| **Konstantinos Avgoustakis** | Professor | University of Patras |
| **Niki Makri** | Student representative | University of Cyprus |

**B. Guidelines on content and structure of the report**

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*

- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
  (a) *sub-areas*
  (b) *standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
  (c) *some questions that EEC may find useful.*

- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*

- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

*<u>Findings</u>*

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

*<u>Strengths</u>*

*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

*<u>Areas of improvement and recommendations</u>*

*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*

- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*

- *<u>The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.</u>*

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

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**Sub-areas**

**1.1 Policy for quality assurance**
**1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review**
**1.3 Public information**
**1.4 Information management**

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## 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

*Standards*

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
  - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
  - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
  - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
  - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
  - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
  - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

## 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

*Standards*

- *The programme of study:*
  - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
  - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
  - *benefits from external expertise*
  - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
  - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
  - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
  - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*

- o *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- o *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- o *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- o *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- o *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- o *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

## 1.3 Public information

*Standards*

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
  - o *selection criteria*
  - o *intended learning outcomes*
  - o *qualification awarded*
  - o *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
  - o *pass rates*
  - o *learning opportunities available to the students*
  - o *graduate employment information*

## 1.4 Information management

*Standards*

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
  - o *key performance indicators*
  - o *profile of the student population*
  - o *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
  - o *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
  - o *learning resources and student support available*
  - o *career paths of graduates*

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

*Findings*
*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

There is a quality assurance body (Internal Quality Committee) for the whole university to monitor the quality of the programs.

There also is a Doctoral program committee that has the overall responsibility of its Quality Assurance. Other committees also exist, to support the Doctoral students and ensure the quality of the studies, such as the Research Advisory Committee and the Doctoral Dissertation Evaluation Committee.

*Strengths*
*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

The quality system uses measurable and objective criteria to assess the quality of the programs and monitors trends in student performance. IQC has transparency and representation from staff and students.

The Doctoral program committee oversees the Doctoral program and has the responsibility of its Quality Assurance.

*Areas of improvement and recommendations*
*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

It is recommended that the Doctoral Program Committee adopts quality criteria for the Doctoral programs at the University.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

| Sub-area | | Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant |
|---|---|---|
| **1.1** | Policy for quality assurance | Compliant |
| **1.2** | Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review | Compliant |
| **1.3** | Public information | Compliant |
| **1.4** | Information management | Compliant |

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

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**Sub-areas**

    **2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology**
    **2.2 Practical training**
    **2.3 Student assessment**

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**2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology**

*Standards*

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

**2.2 Practical training**

*Standards*

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

**2.3 Student assessment**

*Standards*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*

- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

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*Findings*

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

As the Doctoral program in Pharmacy (3 years / 180 ECTS, PhD) is a new program, it does not have a formal status and it is not publicly available.

General findings include:

- The program of study is highly structured, but it is uncertain whether it is appropriate to guide students through the program.
- There are 8 ECTS allocated to the Qualifying Exam in the first semester.
- All courses are compulsory, but it is questionable whether all of them are actual courses.
- It is not clear how the selection process adapts to each student's academic background.

*Strengths*

*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*
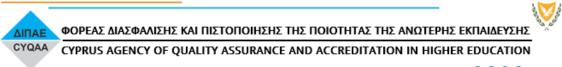
The academic personnel involved in the program is dedicated to advising and supervising the PhD studies and is enthusiastic for their duties.

*Areas of improvement and recommendations*

*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

- The program of study should be modified so that it provides more flexibility, while at the same time structuring the course work of the students, adapting it to each project and individual student's needs. This can be done by having the student and the Advisory Committee write a plan for courses to be taken at the beginning of the program, as well as a proposal for the project for the three years. It is advised that a minimum of 25 ECTS are allocated to course work, early in the program.
- The EEC suggests that the Qualifying Exam in the first semester is dropped as a course, as it cannot be considered as an independent course. The faculty should focus on admitting students that possess adequate proficiencies to undertake Doctoral studies in Pharmacy.
- The selection process should adapt to each student's academic background. In this context, during the admission process, the students may be encouraged to take undergraduate courses related to their proposed PhD studies. This should be done without the allocation of ETCS units, simply for the enrichment of their background.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

| Sub-area | Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant |
|---|---|
| | |

| 2.1 | Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology | Partially compliant |
|-----|--------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------|
| 2.2 | Practical training | Not applicable |
| 2.3 | Student assessment | Partially compliant |

3. **Teaching staff** *(ESG 1.5)*

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**Sub-areas**

    **3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**
    **3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
    **3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

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## 3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

*Standards*

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

## 3.2 Teaching staff number and status

*Standards*

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

## 3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

*Standards*

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*

> - *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
> - *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*
>
> *You may also consider the following questions:*
>
> - *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
> - *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
> - *Is teaching connected with research?*
> - *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
> - *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
> - *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

## Findings
*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

- The Department has competent academic personnel, for carrying out the program.
- The Department has a policy of involving external academic personnel, which will complement the existing personnel and may significantly contribute in fulfilling the aims of the program.

## Strengths
*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

The potential PhD supervisors involved in the program are enthusiastic for teaching and research.

## Areas of improvement and recommendations
*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

The program's Coordinators should strive to include faculty (PhD supervisors) for all modern pharmacy disciplines, including for example molecular pharmacology, clinical pharmacy, pharmacogenomics and pharmacogenetics.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

| Sub-area | | Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant |
|---|---|---|
| **3.1** | Teaching staff recruitment and development | Compliant |
| **3.2** | Teaching staff number and status | Partially compliant |
| **3.3** | Synergies of teaching and research | Partially compliant |

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

> ### Sub-areas
>
> **4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria**
> **4.2 Student progression**
> **4.3 Student recognition**
> **4.4 Student certification**

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## 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

*Standards*

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

## 4.2 Student progression

*Standards*

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

## 4.3 Student recognition

*Standards*

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
    - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
    - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

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**4.4 Student certification**

*Standards*

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

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*Findings*
*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

- The student progression is monitored by the Advisory Committee, along with the Evaluation Committee, which evaluates the whole Thesis work at the end of the PhD studies.
- The prospective PhD students need to hold a MSc degree of relevant specialisation, however the definition of what is relevant is unclear.
- There are predefined regulations regarding student certification.

*Strengths*
*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

The process of admission has been clearly described in the materials supplied to the EEC.

*Areas of improvement and recommendations*
*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

- It is suggested that specific criteria are set in place for potential PhD candidates coming from disciplines outside of pharmacy.

- At the beginning of the studies, the EEC recommends that a detailed research proposal should be written by the student in collaboration with the Advisor and approved by the Advisory Committee.
- There should be plans for proposed course work made prior to the start of the student's program, in order to strengthen the background of the student in the scientific area of the planned PhD project.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

| Sub-area | | Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant |
|---|---|---|
| **4.1** | Student admission, processes and criteria | Compliant |
| **4.2** | Student progression | Partially compliant |
| **4.3** | Student recognition | Compliant |
| **4.4** | Student certification | Compliant |

## 5. Learning resources and student support *(ESG 1.6)*

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**Sub-areas**

**5.1 Teaching and Learning resources**
**5.2 Physical resources**
**5.3 Human support resources**
**5.4 Student support**

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**5.1 Teaching and Learning resources**

*Standards*

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*


**5.2 Physical resources**

*Standards*

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

**5.3 Human support resources**

*Standards*

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*

- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

## 5.4 Student support

*Standards*

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

*Findings*
*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

The EEC was informed that PhD students may be economically supported during their studies via:

- A tuition fee reduction of up to 90%
- The opportunity to be employed by the Department as tutors or laboratory assistants
- Their participation in funded research programs

As the laboratories for research were not ready and running at the time of the visit, the EEC cannot comment on the research facilities available to support the program under evaluation. The EEC is of the opinion that the PhD program cannot be run until the necessary facilities are in place.


*Strengths*
*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

- The academic personnel potentially involved in the PhD program appears to be enthusiastic and competent on performing research of high standards.
- There is a clear scheme of economic support of students during their PhD studies.


*Areas of improvement and recommendations*
*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

The EEC strongly recommends that the laboratories are quickly organised and fully equipped so that they will be ready to successfully accommodate the research activities of the Doctoral program.


**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

| Sub-area | | *Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant* |
|---|---|---|
| **5.1** | Teaching and Learning resources | Compliant |
| **5.2** | Physical resources | Non-compliant |
| **5.3** | Human support resources | Compliant |
| **5.4** | Student support | Compliant |

6. **Additional for doctoral programmes** *(ALL ESG)*

> **Sub-areas**
>
> **6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**
> **6.2 Proposal and dissertation**
> **6.3 Supervision and committees**

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### 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

*Standards*
- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
    - *the stages of completion*
    - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
    - *the examinations*
    - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
    - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

### 6.2 Proposal and dissertation

*Standards*
- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
    - *the chapters that are contained*
    - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
    - *the minimum word limit*
    - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

### 6.3 Supervision and committees

*Standards*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
    - *regular meetings*

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> - ○ *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
> - ○ *support for writing research papers*
> - ○ *participation in conferences*
> - *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*
>
> *You may also consider the following questions:*
>
> - *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
> - *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
> - *Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?*

## *Findings*

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

- The student progression is monitored by the Advisory Committee, along with the Evaluation Committee, which evaluates the whole Thesis work at the end of the PhD studies.
- The prospective PhD students need to hold a MSc degree of relevant specialisation, however the definition of what is relevant is unclear.
- There are predefined regulations regarding student certification.
- The PhD work supervisors can be of any academic rank.

## *Strengths*
*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

- The process of admission has been clearly described in the materials supplied to the EEC.
- The potential supervisors have the necessary experience to supervise PhD studies.

## *Areas of improvement and recommendations*
*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

- At the beginning of the studies, the EEC recommends that a detailed research proposal should be written by the student in collaboration with the Advisor and approved by the Advisory Committee.
- During the admission process, the students may be encouraged to take undergraduate courses related to their proposed PhD studies. This should be done without the allocation of ETCS units, simply for the enrichment of their background.

- There should be plans for proposed course work made prior to the start of the student's program, in order to strengthen the background of the student in the scientific area of the planned PhD project.
- The EEC recommends that the supervisor of a PhD Thesis has high experience in supervising PhD studies, which usually means that she/he is already in the higher academic ranks.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

| Sub-area | | *Non-compliant/*<br>*Partially Compliant/Compliant* |
|---|---|---|
| **6.1** | Selection criteria and requirements | Partially compliant |
| **6.2** | Proposal and dissertation | Partially compliant |
| **6.3** | Supervision and committees | Compliant |

## C. Conclusions and final remarks

*Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.*

The evaluated program is highly structured, however the content of the studies should be further clarified. The EEC strongly recommends that at the very beginning of the studies, there is an evaluation of the background of the student (Qualifying Process), so that the students would receive on time proper guidance and additional preparatory courses, if required. Additionally, the program would benefit from students individually tailoring their own course work plan in collaboration with their supervisors. Although the EEC recognizes the difficulties of hiring academic personnel due to the particularities of the country (e.g. language limitations), the committee strongly recommends that the Department strive to complement the academic personnel with full-time scientists in all major and modern pharmacy disciplines. Lastly, the EEC recommends that the research facilities are put in place as soon as possible, and research laboratories are soon properly organised in order to efficiently serve the Doctoral program.

## D. Signatures of the EEC

| Name | Signature |
|---|---|
| Anna Birna Almarsdóttir | |
| Tomasz Pawiński | |
| Konstantinos Avgoustakis | |
| Niki Makri | |

**Date:** 29 September 2022