

Doc. 300.3.1/1

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report

(Programmatic within the framework of Departmental Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

Frederick University

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **School/Faculty:** School of Health Sciences

- **Department:** Nursing

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

Programme 1 – BSc in Nursing

In Greek:

Πτυχίο Νοσηλευτικής [4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, 1^{ος} Κύκλος]

In English:

Bachelor of Science in Nursing [4 academic years, 240 ECTS, 1st Cycle]

Language(s) of instruction: Greek and English

Programme 2 – MSc in Health Sciences

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακό Δίπλωμα Μάστερ στην Προηγμένη Φροντίδα Υγείας (Κατεύθυνσεις Α: Κοινωνική Φροντίδα Υγείας, Β: Επείγουσα Φροντίδα Υγείας)

In English:

Master(MSc) in Advanced Health Care (3 academic semesters, 90 ECTS (Specializations A: Community Health Care, B: Emergency Health Care)

Language(s) of instruction: Greek and English

Programme 3 – PhD in Health Sciences

In Greek:

Διδακτορικό Δίπλωμα στις Επιστήμες Υγείας

In English: Doctoral of Philosophy in Health Sciences

Programme Name

Language(s) of instruction: Greek and English



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. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

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The onsite visit took place from 04/07/2022 to 05/07/2022 in the premises of Frederick University at Nicosia-Cyprus and at the Apollonion Private Hospital. The onsite visit was performed by all 5 members of the EEC with the support of Mrs Emily Mouskou, from the CYQAA. During the visit, the EEC members had the opportunity to meet the Vice President of the Council, the Rector of the Institution, the Vice Rector of Quality Assurance, the Vice Rector of Research and International Relations, the School of Health Sciences Representative in the Internal Quality Committee, the Dean and Vice Dean of the School of Health Sciences, the Chair and Vice Chair of the Department, the PhD and the Clinical Practice Coordinators, the Head of Nursing Labs and Simulation, most of the faculty tutors/academic staff, (including some of the visiting faculty) representatives of administrative staff and a group of undergraduate nursing students as well as some MSc/PhD candidates and graduates. Most participants joined the meeting in person with a small number online. No major communication difficulties were encountered.

More specifically, on 04/07/2022 the agenda included a variety of power point presentations, and interactive conversations with all aforementioned people, as well as, a visit to the premises of the university (library, labs, teaching rooms, etc).

The Frederick University buildings include several spaces and classrooms/labs which are large and adequate for educational purposes. The lab facilities are up-to-date, well equipped with a variety mannequins (parts and whole body), including high fidelity models. Nursing students, by using these facilities, have the opportunity to be well prepared for the modern health care environment.

In general, it seems that the University is well organized, the environment is hospitable, the staff are open to questions. There was a good range of students, and all were informative and open about their experiences. Moreover, in the discussions with the senior staff, they seemed receptive and open to advice.

On 05/07/2022 the EEC members visit the Apollonion Hospital and met with the Head of Nursing services (Mrs Kotsiftopoulou Despina) as well as with the clinical practice coordinator (Dr Evanthia Asimakopoulou). We also met clinical mentors and undergraduate students with whom we had the opportunity to observe in a practice setting and to discuss their programme openly. According to information provided to EEC, up to 5 students per mentor can be assigned which we consider to be a strength of the BSc programme. In general, the clinical environment was very hospitable for experiential education and training and all students seemed enthusiastic. Based on the aforementioned, we concluded that the clinical placement component of the BSc Nursing program under evaluation is well planned as well as being organized and delivered effectively.

On 05/07/2022 the EEC members visit the Apollonion Hospital and met with the Head of Nursing services (Mrs Kotsiftopoulou Despina) as well as with the clinical practice coordinator (Dr Evanthia Asimakopoulou), clinical mentors and also with undergraduate students with whom we had the opportunity to observe in practice and to discuss. According to information provided to EEC, up to 5 students per mentor can be assigned which is a strength of the program. In general, the environment was very hospitable for clinical training and the students seemed enthusiastic. Based



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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



on the aforementioned, it seems that the clinical placement component of the BSc Nursing program under evaluation is well planned and organized.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Sanna Salanterä	Professor of Clinical Nursing Science, Vice Dean, Faculty of Medicine	University of Turku, Finland
Margarita Giannakopoulou	Professor of Fundamentals of Nursing	National Kapodistrian University of Athens, Greece
Daniel Kelly	Royal College of Nursing, Professor of Nursing Research	Cardiff University, UK
Ioanna Papaioannou	MSc, midwifery student	Cyprus University of Technology
Andreas Andreou	Representative	Cyprus Council of Nurses and Midwives
Name	Position	University

C. 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:*
 - sub-areas*
 - standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - 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:*

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.

Strengths

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

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 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 each programme of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

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

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

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

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*
 - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
 - *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*

- *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*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *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*
- *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:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

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

Findings for BSc in Nursing

The University has its own internal quality control system, which is described well in the documentation. Quality control is systematic and processes are clear. There are processes in place for academic fraud, which are also made known to students. The university has a support system for students who have learning difficulties or other challenges in their studies. There are internal but no external assessors in the various quality control systems of the programme.

The Bachelor programme has clear admission criteria. Students are selected on the basis of previous academic performance and competent language skills. The programme complies with European Union requirements and follows EU criteria for education and training. Students have a personalised support system to help ensure progress in their studies. The course workload is in line with EU guidelines and is monitored by the University and by this external assessment exercise. Student's work is graded according to the ECTS system. Students have access to a wide range of clinical placements and are provided with mentors to support them in practice.

The nursing degree follows national guidelines. It is important that material is up to date in all subject areas, it was commented upon by students that some topics need to be updated more regularly. This includes reading material and content of lectures. Library use appears to be low, but this is explained as being due to the Covid-19 situation. However, the University allows access to national electronic library systems providing access to a wide range of nursing materials and scientific journals. One librarian seems to cover all topics and there are no subject librarians that contribute to the teaching of literature searching or systematic reviews for health sciences.

The selection criteria for students are clear. Learning objectives are set out clearly in the curriculum. Students know the aims of the degree they are studying. There are relatively few drop-outs and only about 6% do not complete the degree. There is a good support system for low-achieving students. Graduates' employment outcomes are monitored. The success of students is monitored systematically, and their grade profile is known. Overall success is monitored, and there are appropriate support systems for students.

Findings for MSc in Health Sciences

The University has its own internal quality control system, which is described well in the documentation. Quality control is systematic and processes are clear. There are processes in place for academic fraud, which are also made known to students. The university has a support system for students who have learning difficulties or other challenges in their studies. There are internal but no external assessors in the various quality control systems of the programme.

Students could play a more active role in the development of courses that reflect the changing nature of practice. They do have the opportunity to express their wishes, but their role could be even more active and organized in this aspect of the programme's development at all levels.

The new programmes covering Community Health and Emergency care are innovative and relevant to modern health care practice. It will be interesting to see how successful these programmes will be attracting applicants in the future. Marketing will be needed to address this issue.

Findings for PhD in Health Sciences

The programme has a quality control system for recruitment and progression. However, quality assurance at the point of completion of the thesis requires attention.

The call is open and publicly advertised. The programme follows an appropriate curriculum. The number of graduates is monitored and there appears to be an opportunity for expansion of numbers in the future. This further supports the need for appropriate quality control of dissertations. Examples of high quality dissertations should be made available to students to allow them to compare with their own work.

Information management is appropriate. The profile of students is known. Progress of students is monitored and there is a feedback system for students. Teaching resources are adequate in terms of quantity. The placement of graduates in employment is monitored. Students are represented in various committees. Students have the opportunity to influence the curriculum but evidence of this was not very clear.

Strengths

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

Strengths for BSc in Nursing

see above

Strengths for MSc in Health Sciences

see above

Strengths for PhD in Health Sciences

see above

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Nursing

There are internal but no external assessors in the various quality control systems of the programme.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for MSc in Health Sciences

There are internal but no external assessors in the various quality control systems of the programme.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD in Health Sciences

There are internal and external assessors in the various quality control systems of the programme. However, quality assurance at the point of completion of the thesis requires attention.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BSc in Nursing</i>	<i>MSc in Health Sciences</i>	<i>PhD in Health Sciences</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant	Compliant	Partially compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

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

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

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 and 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)?*

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.

Findings for BSc in Nursing

The teaching process is claimed to be individual and student-centred. Teaching is flexible and students' wishes can be taken into account. Some teaching methods are innovative and also student-centred but some subjects are also taught in more traditional ways and it is unclear whether student suggestions are taken into account for improving understanding of some topic areas. Students have the opportunity to visit laboratories even after graduation, should they wish to do so. Both classrooms and laboratories are modern and use the latest technology. Students' wishes are collected through both informal and formal feedback systems. However, there could be more evidence of changes made to teaching methods as a result of student feedback. At present student opinion seems very positive with only limited evidence of the ability to reflect and make suggestions for improvement.

Practical training starts in the laboratories during the first semester. The laboratories allow students to monitor their own progress in a range of skills. It is claimed that practice and theory are well integrated, but the role of the clinical mentor appears crucial in this regard and should be developed further as numbers increase. It is not clear whether the remuneration of clinical mentors is sufficient to recruit even higher number in the future. Mentors could also be offered other incentives as they provide such an important role. Students are employed in both public and private organizations, but we only saw a private facility and were impressed by the leadership and support being offered.

Student evaluation is systematic. There are both mid-term and final examinations. Students also learn to evaluate themselves and their peers during laboratory courses. Student assessment is claimed to be transparent and appropriate. However, it is not followed up by alternative or external assessments. PhD examiners should be made aware of the global expectations for the structure of a PhD and the different routes for the doctoral award at Frederick University (either by publication or via an empirical study). This needs to be clarified for students, faculty and external examiners. Students appear to know how they are being assessed and have the opportunity to feed back about the assessment. Students complete a thesis in which they learn how to conduct research. However, the guidelines need to be clearer about the structure of the thesis to be assessed.

Findings for MSc in Health Sciences

Teaching appears to be student-centred and individualised. Teaching is flexible and students are guided effectively. Students are given tasks that encourage independent work. The teaching methods, tools and learning environment are modern and well suited to the subject matter. Students value the teaching they receive and consider it to be person-oriented. Students have the opportunity to express their dissatisfaction with the teaching and there are good practices in place. However, most feedback could be said to be uncritical and we would encourage students to become more questioning of approaches used to ensure that teachers remain open to suggestions.

The Master's programme does not include an internship or exchange programme which might be very useful. It would be important that students who study interdisciplinary work should also have the opportunity to practise interdisciplinarity. For example, would it be possible to organise short internships to other clinical settings as part of their learning objectives, even if it not possible to provide a longer internship. The compulsory inclusion of a thesis in the MSc is a strength of the programme. Technology is actively used in teaching. One Master's programme is offered entirely via distance learning and this seems to be well received by students.

The assessment system is clear and students consider it relevant. Assessment is usually carried out by a single teacher. It might be useful to have occasional parallel assessment with external assessors. The induction of new teachers could be more systematic. For example, the unit could have a written induction programme and peer-review of teaching could help strengthen the reflective nature of the faculty.

Findings for PhD in Health Sciences

Teaching is individualised and supports student learning. Teaching methods at Doctoral level appear to be flexible whilst following a core curriculum. Students receive support and there is mutual respect between teachers and students. Teaching is student-centred. The university has a system for student complaints.

There is no clinical placement in the doctoral programme. However, some opportunities for external visits or exchanges might be highly relevant for some students. This could be encouraged to help with the implementation of findings or even post-doctoral ideas. A post-doctoral support programme could be an additional attraction for PhD students and could encourage further publications and reputation building for the university. Some input on implementation science would help in this regard.

The evaluation is open and the evaluation criteria are known. However, some of the dissertations did not meet the international dissertation criteria and we questioned the quality of the final product. The structure was inadequate in places. Some PhD theses lacked an assessment of validity or ethics. Some also lacked a full discussion chapter as would normally be expected, especially when a clinical issue has been explored. Some also lacked a coherent 'plot' which will weaken their impact on improving practice. There is room for improvement in the evaluation of dissertations and the implications for healthcare in Cyprus.

Strengths

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

Strengths for BSc in Nursing

see above

Strengths for MSc in Health Sciences

see above

Strengths for PhD in Health Sciences

see above

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Nursing

There could be more evidence of changes made to teaching methods as a result of student feedback. At present student opinion seems very positive with only limited evidence of the ability to reflect and make suggestions for improvement.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for MSc in Health Sciences

Most feedback by students could be said to be uncritical and we would encourage students to become more questioning of approaches used to ensure that teachers remain open to suggestions.

It would be important that students who study interdisciplinary work should also have the opportunity to practise interdisciplinarity. For example, would it be possible to organise short internships to other clinical settings as part of their learning objectives, even if it not possible to provide a longer internship.

It might be useful to have occasional parallel assessment and external assessors.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD in Health Sciences

PhD students could have more opportunities than is available now to teach in the bachelor programme to increase their skills in pedagogy and synthesizing knowledge.

The evaluation is open and the evaluation criteria are known. However, some of the dissertations did not meet the international dissertation criteria and we questioned the quality of the final product. The structure was inadequate in places. Some PhD theses lacked an assessment of reliability or ethics. Some also lacked a full discussion chapter as would normally be expected, especially when a clinical issue has been explored. Some also lacked a coherent 'plot' which will weaken their impact on improving practice. There is room for improvement in the evaluation of dissertations and the implications for healthcare in Cyprus.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BSc in Nursing</i>	<i>MSc in Health Sciences</i>	<i>PhD in Health Sciences</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant



2.2	Practical training	Compliant	Not applicable	Not applicable
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant	Compliant	Non-compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

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

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.

Findings for BSc in Nursing

All teachers have a doctorate, however some are visiting academics and are not always experts in nursing science. More teachers with a nursing background will be required if student numbers increase, and more qualitative research expertise is needed. Vacant academic posts are open for applications and the selection is made by a number of assessors. The teachers are appropriately qualified. Teaching staff have the opportunity to attend conferences and are encouraged to undertake scientific research. Teachers have the opportunity to progress through four levels. Covid 19 has effectively increased the use of technology in teaching and all theoretical teaching can now be carried out in hybrid form. Visiting teachers are used for teaching, which is a strength, but it was not clear how the student feedback of their session is used to make improvements. This is a risk of having a high number of visiting academics.

The number of teachers appears to be optimal and proportional to the number of students. Teacher rank and full/part time ratio is good. The number of permanent staff is higher than visiting staff.

Teachers have international contacts. Teachers are encouraged to do research, both in terms of provision of funding, for projects and for attendance in research conferences and other events. Teachers have demonstrable publishing profiles, although these are currently quite limited, or dated, in some instances. Expectations about publishing could be clearer to raise the profile of the university. Some research topics are in the field of nursing, but not all. The profile of nursing research publications needs to be strengthened.

Findings for MSc in Health Sciences

Teachers are recruited through an open call for applications and are selected by a number of assessors. Teacher competences are appropriate and teacher ranks are evenly distributed over the four levels.

Teacher numbers and competences are adequate and teaching can be carried out with the existing staff. The number of visiting teachers is in good proportion to the number of permanent staff.

Teachers have clear teaching areas. Teachers' own research interests support teaching. However, the department does not have its own research programme and research is currently rather fragmented. The institution could benefit from a clearer research programme arranged under themes, which could be continuously strengthened by the theses, publications and research interests of bachelor, master and doctoral students. Both teachers and students publish, and publication activity has increased in recent years. However, this needs to expand further to enhance the profile of the university.

Findings for PhD in Health Sciences

Recruitment of faculty members is adequate. Faculty have good opportunities for personal development and research activity is supported financially and is encouraged. If faculty have funded research projects, they have the opportunity to receive a reduction in their teaching load. However, there was not much evidence of joint research projects. The unit could benefit from a thematic research programme and close research collaboration both within the unit and with teachers from other departments of the university. At present the impression is that research is rather random.

The number of faculty appears to be sufficient, and their skills are at an appropriate level. However, it is important that staff have an ongoing active research activity to develop the teaching of research skills and to inspire students to undertake research. Some visiting teachers are very long-term and bring important areas of expertise to the unit. There was a notable lack of expertise in social sciences (such as sociology and health psychology) which would strengthen the faculty further. We also noted a lack of expertise in qualitative research.

Faculty are involved in independent research projects and participate in international research. Most of the research in the department is currently quantitative. The department could benefit from having more experts in qualitative research and to engage them in research projects. Qualitative research methods are taught only at a basic level and further development is required from experienced faculty.

Strengths

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

Strengths for BSc in Nursing

see above

Strengths for MSc in Health Sciences

see above

Strengths for PhD in Health Sciences

see above

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Nursing

More teachers with a nursing background will be required if student numbers increase, and more qualitative research expertise is needed. It was not clear how the student feedback of their session is used to make improvements. This is a risk of having a high number of visiting academics.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for MSc in Health Sciences

The department could benefit from having more experts in qualitative research and to engage them in research projects. Qualitative research methods are taught only at a basic level and further development is required from experienced faculty.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD in Health Sciences

There was not much evidence of joint research projects. The unit could benefit from a thematic research programme and close research collaboration both within the unit and with teachers from other departments of the university. At present the impression is that research is rather random.

There was a notable lack of expertise in social sciences (such as sociology and health psychology) which would strengthen the faculty further. We also noted a lack of expertise in qualitative research.

The institution could benefit from a clearer research programme arranged under themes, which could be continuously strengthened by the theses, publications and research interests of bachelor, master and doctoral students.

The department could benefit from having more experts in qualitative research and to engage them in research projects. Qualitative research methods are taught only at a basic level and further development is required from experienced faculty.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BSc in Nursing</i>	<i>MSc in Health Sciences</i>	<i>PhD in Health Sciences</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant



3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant	Compliant	Partially compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant	Partially compliant	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

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*

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?*

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.

Findings for BSc in Nursing

Student selection processes are transparent and appropriate.

Student progress is defined and monitored systematically. Students who need additional support are referred to services which appear to be adequate.

Quality of studies is monitored systematically and student feedback is in place. However, the feedback to academics following their sessions could be clearer, especially for external teachers.

Graduation of students is regulated. There are clear criteria for the achievement of each qualification. The competencies of graduating students are defined clearly.

Findings for MSc in Health Sciences

Student selection processes are described and appear to be appropriate. Selection is based on previous academic performance, language skills and, where appropriate, interviews.

Students' prior learning is taken into account. The university has a policy for assessing prior learning.

Findings for PhD in Health Sciences

The admission criteria for students are presented openly.

Students' prior learning is taken into account. The university has a policy for assessing prior learning.

Admission criteria are in place.

Access policy is clear. Monitoring of student teaching is in place but progress processes could be clearer in terms of quality assessment of the final thesis.

Criteria for graduation of students are in place. However, it seems that the level and quality of doctoral theses should be considered as a priority issue. It may be that the guidelines for dissertation criteria are not sufficiently clear and detailed. This was highlighted when examining examples of dissertations. Particular attention needs to be paid to this point and evidence of improvement presented.

Strengths

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

Strengths for BSc in Nursing

see above

Strengths for MSc in Health Sciences

see above

Strengths for PhD in Health Sciences

see above

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Nursing

-

Areas of improvement and recommendations for MSc in Health Sciences

-

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD in Health Sciences

Monitoring of student teaching is in place but progress processes could be clearer in terms of quality assessment of the final thesis. See also previous points.

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

Sub-area	<p style="text-align: center;">Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</p>
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		<i>BSc in Nursing</i>	<i>MSc in Health Sciences</i>	<i>PhD in Health Sciences</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1. Teaching and Learning resources

5.2. Physical resources

5.3. Human support resources

5.4. Student support

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.

Findings for BSc in Nursing

The learning environment and teaching materials are modern and relevant. Resources are appropriate. Teaching arrangements appear to be flexible. Teaching is student-centred and feedback from students was positive about support from staff.

The university campus is well located, the library is close by, the technology is new and modern and supports teaching and learning. Resources are also adapted to managing Covid-19 risks.

Physical facilities are adequate. Classrooms are modern and spacious. Technology is new, functional and supported by investment.

The university has a good and effective mentoring system. The university has expanded its administrative staff over the last few years and they have a good relationship with the teaching staff.

Students have a good support system and different learners are catered for. Students are aware of these resources. Teaching methods are student-centred and students are considered as individuals. Students are encouraged to undertake international visits and the University is involved in the Erasmus+ programme. 1-2 undergraduate nursing students per year participate in the exchange programme and there are 2-4 exchange students per year.

Findings for MSc in Health Sciences

Teaching and learning resources are excellent. Resources are open to further investment and this will be a priority if student numbers increase.

Premises and study facilities are fit for purpose.

The university has a good and clear tutoring and mentoring system. There are sufficient numbers of administrative staff.

The university has good support systems to meet the needs of a wide range of students. Students are familiar with this system and have access to support when they need it. The Master's programme is short and does not usually involve exchanges. Exchanges opportunities are focused primarily on the bachelor's degree but could also play a role at masters level. This may also need some scholarships or access to additional funds (such as Erasmus +).

Findings for PhD in Health Sciences

Teaching and learning resources are adequate. It seems that there is a good number of staff to cover the PhD education. The resources are fit to purpose, but qualitative and social science expertise could be strengthened. Education is student centered. Based on discussions with the students critical thinking skills could be enhanced at all levels of education. This is especially important at doctoral level when critical thinking is being developed.

The library seems small and under used. It could be used more actively to teach systematic searching or for project work as books are a valuable resource. It is not clear whether students ever use this area as a study space.

There are adequate human resources available for both student and staff. The unit is loss-making for the university, but the university is willing to invest in it so growth and expansion will be vital. Research is financially supported, which is good, as it is difficult to get external funding for relatively young disciplines. We therefore recommend that

research be focused on themes that reflect the interests and strengths of the faculty alongside a clear research strategy and objectives that will be established for the unit.

Students are sometimes delayed in completing their studies by about half a year because they do not complete their research work within the planned timeframe. This may suggest the need to review the support offered or the limited timeframe of the programme if this becomes a common problem.

The university has support systems in place to assist students who are progressing slowly and have learning difficulties. This is important for doctoral students from overseas. Support for students appears to be highly individualised. Student mobility is based mainly on participation in conferences, which is compulsory for doctoral students. Other opportunities for exchanges or visits might be valuable for PhD students.

It would be good to see opportunities for masters or doctoral students to engage in international events such as the European Academy of Nursing Science Summer School. Students should be made aware of events outside of Cyprus to widen their horizons and encourage innovation.

Strengths

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

Strengths for BSc in Nursing

see above

Strengths for MSc in Health Sciences

see above

Strengths for PhD in Health Sciences

see above

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Nursing

Based on discussions with the students critical reflecting skills could be enhanced at all levels of education.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for MSc in Health Sciences

Based on discussions with the students critical reflective skills could be enhanced at all levels of education.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD in Health Sciences

Based on discussions with the students critical reflecting skills could be enhanced at all levels of education. This is especially important at doctoral level when critical thinking is being developed.

We recommend that research is focused on themes that reflect the interests and strengths of the faculty alongside a clear research strategy and objectives that will be established for the unit.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BSc in Nursing</i>	<i>MSc in Health Sciences</i>	<i>PhD in Health Sciences</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant	Compliant	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**

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*
 - *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.

Students must meet certain criteria in order to apply for a doctoral programme. These include previous qualifications, language skills and the presentation of a realistic research plan. The programme is a three-year programme and most students complete their studies in 3.5 years.

The research plan for the dissertation and the guidelines for writing the dissertation are currently inadequate. They should cover the thesis requirements in more detail. The dissertations we examined were relevant in terms of topics, but quality was very variable, and the content did not in all respects meet the requirements of scientific writing at doctoral level. This is especially important if the numbers are to be expanded in the future.

Plagiarism is addressed and is assessed using the Turnitin programme.

As a rule, each doctoral student has one supervisor. It is not clear how students can request a change of supervisor should this be necessary. Two external reviewers and three internal reviewers are used for the evaluation of the completed dissertation. The instructions and evaluation reports on thesis quality should be reviewed to address the inadequacies mentioned above.

Students are supervised regularly, with 2-3 seminars every six months to present their progress. Guidance is individualised. Students are supported in their scientific writing. However, the current requirement for a dissertation

is a published scientific article in either a scientific journal or conference proceedings. Conference proceedings in nursing science are not always of high quality and we recommend that the minimum required should be one of two papers in a refereed journal of high quality.

Strengths

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

see above

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 research plan for the dissertation and the guidelines for writing the dissertation are currently inadequate. They should cover the thesis requirements in more detail. The dissertations we examined were relevant in terms of topics, but quality was very variable, and the content did not in all respects meet the requirements of scientific writing at doctoral level. This is especially important if the numbers are to be expanded in the future.

As a rule, each doctoral student has one supervisor. It is not clear how students can request a change of supervisor should this be necessary. Two external reviewers and three internal reviewers are used for the evaluation of the completed dissertation. This seems unusually high number given the problems we encountered in some of the thesis provided. The instructions and evaluation reports on thesis quality should be reviewed to address the inadequacies mentioned above.

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

Sub-areas		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Compliant
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Non-compliant
6.3	Supervision and committees	Partially compliant

D. Conclusions and final remarks

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

Frederick University, School of Health Sciences, Department of Nursing is responsible for bachelor's, master's and doctoral education. The university has good quality assessment methods, a clear mission and vision, and the unit under assessment is in line with the university's strategy. The unit's educational programmes are generally up-to-date and the learning environment is excellent. A particular strength of the unit is the scientific orientation of the teachers (all have PhDs), the good team spirit and the highly student-centred teaching. Students have excellent support systems and very personalised support at all levels of education. Practical training is based on theory and science. Students are satisfied with the education they receive and many go on to study for masters and doctorates in the same unit after their undergraduate degree. Teaching resources are excellent and it was welcome that they had considered sustainable development goals to protect the environment. It would be good to see more of this across the different programmes in Health Sciences. It is important to maintain a good ratio of permanent and visiting teachers. Practical training and theoretical teaching are mutually supportive. A clear area for improvement is the PhD dissertation requirements, the implementation of which needs to be monitored more closely. In addition, the EEC recommends that the unit could have a research programme under specific research themes based on the expertise of the faculty where students at different levels of education could also participate in relevant research projects. In this way, the unit will strengthen its own level of expertise and knowledge and its reputation would be enhanced.

Staff are motivated and enthusiastic about their work and were very welcoming and open to suggestions. The unit was well prepared for the evaluation and the necessary information was at hand. The unit has excellent opportunities to develop and become more competitive.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Click to enter Name	
Sanna Salanterä	
Margarita Giannakopoulou	
Daniel Kelly	
Ioanna Papaioannou	
Andreas Andreou	

Date: Click to enter date

