

Doc. 300.1.1

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# External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
University of Nicosia
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Life & Health Sciences
- **Department/ Sector:** Life Sciences
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

**In Greek:**

Κλινική Διαιτολογία (2 χρόνια / 120 ECTS)

**In English:** Clinical Dietetics (2 years /120 ECTS,  
Master of Science)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Ελληνικά
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

**In Greek:** Concentrations

**In English:** Concentrations



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [[L.136\(I\)/2015 – L.132\(I\)/2021](#)].

## A. Introduction

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

A visit onsite was performed on the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2024. The External Evaluation Committee, as its composition as detailed below, received the programme information documentation and other resources including course structure, syllabus, staff qualifications and policies around quality assurance, programme administration and student support. The session started at 9 am and lasted up to 5 pm and it was chaired by Professor Konstantinos Gerasimidis. Other members of the EEC included Professor Amalia Tsiami and Professor Audrey Tierney. The EEC attended presentations by various members of the academic staff, MSc and a graduate student, managerial and administrative staff (Table). Each presentation was followed by a Q&A session.

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## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Konstantinos Gerasimidis</b>	Professor	Professor of Clinical Nutrition (Medicine), University of Glasgow
<b>Amalia Tsiami</b>	Professor	Professor of Food Science, University of West London
<b>Audrey Tierney</b>	Professor	Professor of Human Nutrition and Dietetics, University of Limerick
<b>Despo Loizou</b>	Clinical Dietitian	Member from the professional association
<b>Alexandros Themistokleous</b>	student	University of Cyprus

## 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:*
  - (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:*

### **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 the 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: tell me about it*
- *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: how do you interact with 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 how do you select students?*
  - *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)? Transferable 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.*

### Policy for Quality Assurance:

Quality Assurance at University of Nicosia is developed in accordance with European Standards and Guidelines and by local legislation. The University is also subject to Internal Quality Assurance carried out by the University Internal Quality Assurance Committee (UIQAC). The UIQAC through its subcommittees, assures quality at an institutional, departmental and programme level. Members of the UIQAC are also members of the UIQAC subcommittees, one of which is the subcommittee responsible for the Quality Assurance at a programme level which in cooperation with the Departmental Internal Quality Assurance Committees ensures the QA at programme level.

### Design, approval ongoing monitoring and review:

As per the University's Internal Rules and Regulations, all programmes and courses undergo periodic review. The review should result in a re-engineering of the Programmes/courses of study, based on feedback from the industry, alumni, students, and professional associations (where applicable). University of Nicosia maintains a student-centered learning environment that promotes and encourages student interaction and feedback throughout the curriculum design, evaluation and quality assurance of the programmes. Course/faculty evaluation questionnaires are conducted every semester (at a minimum), analysed and feedback is provided to all stakeholders.

### Public Information:

All information regarding the programme of study such as duration, ECTS workload, learning outcomes, course syllabi, semester breakdown, assessment method procedures, etc. is available through the University of Nicosia website. Course outlines/syllabus are also evident in providing information about module learning outcomes, assessment procedures (albeit broad) etc

### Information management:

All information about the teaching staff and student obligations, the policy for absences/ failure/ postponement/ interruption of study/ removal from students' registry, disciplinary control, etc. are outlined in the University of Nicosia Internal Regulations.

## Strengths

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

- A programme that provides training in the scientific field of Clinical Dietetics through the acquisition of skills relating to the discipline, analysis and interpretation of evidence based scientific research and provides graduates with specialisation in Clinical Dietetics.
- Evidence based teaching approaches with the required 1000 hours for recognition of the degree in UK, Ireland and the EU and Australia.
- External expertise is evident from staff's own experiences and learnings (studied overseas etc). The course has a logical sequence.
- Research led teaching approach is taken and its importance emphasised.
- Excellent resources available at the university to allow for innovative teaching methods to be employed.
- Clearly outlined supports for students with a wide range of services available - counselling, academic etc.

- Robust processes and procedures are in place to ensure continuous course review and evaluation. All course syllabi are submitted to the course coordinators and the programme coordinator for feedback and self-assessment of the programme is also conducted via anonymous questionnaires distributed to the students, however, the University noted that response is low.
- Internal Programme Evaluation Process with student representative allows for further enhancement of the programme.
- The Pedagogical Support Unit and the e-learning PSU offer further supports to staff and students to ensure high quality standards are achieved. The Pedagogical Advisory Board also guides quality improvement communication structures between students and staff.
- The programme has been designed with overall programme objectives being achieved with the scaffolding of learning across modules and years. External expertise evident from staff's own experiences and learnings (studied overseas etc). The course has a logical sequence.
- Module handbooks are detailed with learning outcomes, assessment criteria, reading materials clearly signposted.

### 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.*

- With regard to committees or bodies that have a role in quality assurance mechanisms, where possible ensure diverse student representation on as many – this means having more than one student present.
- How are the modules and placements mapped to the dietetic competencies and also how are they mapped to the student graduate attributes? This was not provided. For next review, please consider a mapping exercise to ensure graduates are meeting professional expectations. Please provide descriptors for progressing towards, competent and not achieving competency.
- On an informal basis (note not governed by university processes/policies or structures), consider the appointment of an External Examiner or an external advisory committee with key stakeholder involvement and international perspectives. Whilst external expertise has been evident from staff's own experiences and learnings (studied overseas etc) it's important that this remains current.
- To ensure continued course relevancy, patient and participant input is encouraged. Patient representatives on course review and course development is warranted.
- No evidence of where sustainability is being taught or practiced in this programme. Clinical dietitians need to ensure that the dietary advice they are promoting incorporates the principles of sustainability.
- Need to consider the embedding of digital competencies and mapping or scaffolding student's learning to these competencies across the programme given the current learning advances in this space.
- For staff, consider innovative teaching methods included effective blended learning teaching (not just online). To ensure graduate students are enabled to practice in an ever-blended working environment, model teaching methods on same.
- For achievement of digital competencies and blended learning approaches consider – flipped classroom approaches, online discussion forums, online videos, blogging, podcasting, social media use.

- Teach the students about AI. AI proof the assessments and utilise it to its potential, educating students on its limitations.
- At next review consider the overlap between some modules, especially with students coming from BSc programmes.
- A mapping exercise of learning outcomes (LO) is needed. LOs can be reduced and ensure the LOs align with programme objectives. No more than 5/6 learning outcomes. What are the cognitive learning outcomes, what are the affective and what are the psychomotor. These are what are stipulated by European standards. Teaching methods/strategies and assessments should align with the LOs. This will ensure flexibility of learning techniques and in assessment methods, all the time ensuring LOs are still achieved. An External Examiner from UK/Ireland can help with this.
- Ensure diversity in assessments and avoid over assessing students if LOs have been achieved. Heavy reliance and weighting on exams. Consider also more higher-level type assessments ie reflective type activities that consider that critical level thinking approach rather than (multiple-choice questions) MCQs or methods reliant on assessing knowledge.
- Consider blind double marking a % of assessment or moderation at the least. This is an integral part to course quality assurance.
- At next accreditation provide the committee with findings from the internal review and actions implemented from this – how was feedback from students in particular actioned?
- No information regarding process of attaining placements, how placements are allocated, are students afforded equal opportunities within the placement structures, feedback from sites and feedback and evaluation from students – this would be helpful to ensure the placements are fit for purpose and meet programme objectives and assigned competencies or standards for students to practice as clinical dietitians.
- Information on graduate profile is always helpful and important to publicise on university or course website.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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

## 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 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)?*

### 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.*

### Standards

The process of teaching and learning is in line with the European Standards and Guidelines, and all procedures discussed at the onsite visit are in line with the university practices in EU. It is a student-centred programme aiming to cultivate and develop critical thinking, decision making, spiral building of knowledge, technological education and skills. These skills reflect the postgraduate level considering the technological advances and challenges of clinical dietetic practice to act as responsible health professionals.

The process of teaching and learning has been developed based on the following three pillars:

- Education, (b) Service to the community and (c) Professional Development.

Some of the pedagogical methods used for delivering courses and achieving the planned learning outcomes include:

- Use of case studies
- Problem solving situations (method of Problem Based Learning) and simulation activities (OSCE)
- Site visits
- Reflect on evidence based practice
- Group discussions and debates (interactive exercises)
- Power point presentations (students and tutors) followed by small discussions, promoting discussion and reflection
- Practical Laboratory Sessions/ Demonstrations
- Tutorials
- Role playing

The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery and uses a variety of pedagogical methods. The Moodle Learning platform is used for delivering lectures, for communication purposes between student and staff and vice versa, as well as between peers. Through this platform, students can also upload assignments. Also, the Cisco Webex teleconference system, and the Planet E-Stream *versatile video platform can be used in the teaching process. Also, students have most of their textbooks.*

All teaching staff and well as the Practice Educators leading the Practical training undergo preceptor training.

These are either systemic reviews or experimental, supporting ongoing research project from academic staff and/or PhD students.



## 2.2 Practical training

### Standards

The practical training of this course has been designed so that it is aligned with the Cyprus law for the Registration of Dietitians in Cyprus (N31.6(i)96), as well as with EU and USA regulations and guidelines, aiming at intergrading knowledge and practice.

The practical training is spread out in all four (4) semesters of the programme, as module NUTR-535P -'Professional Practice for Dietitian' delivered in Levels I to IV. Each course-placement lasts for 254 hours (7.25 weeks) and each Level is accredited with 7.5 ECTS. Total hours of practical training 1015, which is a satisfactory number of practical training hours. The practical and the theoretical part are interconnected during the practical placement in a well organised manner, since theoretical knowledge acquired during teaching, is applied on placement.

University of Nicosia has a contract with the Eastern Region to provide education and placements. Thus, as far as the dietetic placement is concerned, members of staff are responsible to organise and direct placements and supporting students completing their practice. These people are: the Lead Placement Educator, the Practice Co-ordinator, the Practice Educator.

The practical training is assessed on the basis of 4 criteria:

- (a) communication skills
- (b) professionalism
- (c) clinical reasoning
- (d) dietary interventions

Those criteria are associated with specific learning outcomes presented in detail in the «Practice placement guide», while the evaluation of the placement is done by the Lead Placement Educator where the placement took place, in collaboration with the programme tutor. The student must receive at least 60% to pass each learning outcome. The EEC committee has requested a completed portfolio to evaluate the way that the competencies and skills are recorded. The Department provided the forms that students complete for attendance, the mapping though was missing.

During their practical placement, students perform specific activities, case-studies and reflections. Students are assessed for their technical performance and their professionalism by the Practice Educator, while the Lead Placement Educator monitors the progress of students, communicates with the mentor and provides feedback and support to the students.

## 2.3 Student assessment

Assessment is carried out through mid-term exams, assignments, OSCEs and finals exams



In accordance with the recommendations of EFAD (European Academic and Practitioner Standards for Dietetics, June 2005), the practical training of the programme is carried out in both clinical and non-clinical environments. Specifically, it includes placements in Private Hospitals, in private Clinical Dietetic offices, in food industry, in the community in Primary Health Care institutions, in all levels of Education (Kindergartens, primary and secondary schools).

Placement is done on a one-to-one basis in hospitals but in the rest of the establishments it is done as 1 Placement educator for 4 students. Students are afforded equal opportunities within their placement.

The class groups are small, each academic intake is relatively small in number as the total number of students for two years are 34 students. The EEC requested analytical information about the progression of students and graduates and did not receive this information. The academic staff reported that students continue their studies and all graduate; some they continue their studies at a higher level (PhD studies).

Students are taught in small groups and are continually monitored and assessed through various methods such as:

- Student Presentations
- *Interactive communication during lectures*
- OSCE (Objective Structured Clinical Examination)
- Coursework-assignments
- *Laboratory reports and exercises*
- Article Critique
- Clinical practice
- Midterm and Final exams

The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as the criteria for marking, are published in advance for every course unit in an «Assessment Guide», communicated to students through the Moodle portal.

### Strengths

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

1. By completing an MSc degree in Clinical dietetics, the professionals are eligible for certification as RDs in Cyprus.

2. Students start to develop during their programme, a Continuing Professional Development (CPD) portfolio, which meets the programme's guidelines and includes evidence from both university and placement study. This portfolio demonstrates their learning and development, as well as planning future learning.
3. There is internationalisation of the programme as the faculty cooperates with academics, academic institutions, industry and regulatory bodies within Cyprus and internationally.
4. During their practical training, students complete 'Reflective Practice', part of the self-evaluation process, which leads to their own personal improvement.
5. The students also complete 'placement feedback forms', an action that helps improve practical placement in future and also ensure the placements are fit for purpose and meet the programme's objectives and assigned competencies.
6. During their practical training students follow an ongoing formative practice as they use weekly progress and feedback forms, which help them monitor their progress.

#### 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.*

1. To ensure a well-structured and effective curriculum programme, it is recommended that the programme LO are clearly separated into knowledge, skills, and competences without overlapping. By doing so, students will have a better understanding of what they are expected to learn and what they can expect to achieve upon completion of the programme. Clear separation between these three components will also allow for a more focused and targeted approach to teaching and learning, enabling both students and teaching staff to better assess and evaluate their progress throughout the programme. Ultimately, this will result in a more comprehensive and effective learning experience for students, better preparing them for future careers.
2. To provide an effective learning experience, a well-balanced syllabus is key. This means distributing lectures and practicals according to the designated teaching hours. This balance lets students better understand expectations and engage with the learning process. Courses focused on practical skills may require more practicals, while courses focused on theory may need more lectures. With a course-specific approach, teaching staff should ensure students receive the most effective education. Revising the syllabus to balance lectures and practicals is essential for effective education. This helps students succeed in their future careers and make meaningful contributions to their field.
3. Some of the courses have 10 to 20 of 30 learning outcomes, those outcomes read like the content of the course rather than learning outcomes
4. In amending LO make sure they reflect the LO of the programme and level of study.
5. The personal details of each student should not be written on the exam papers, in order to avoid bias during marking.
6. As already mentioned there seems to be an internationalisation of the programme as the faculty cooperated with stakeholders all over the world. There is also the "Erasmus Traineeship"

programme which provides funding to recent graduates to work for a few months in an organization in another European country.

7. The programme should not offer a non-thesis option, the recommendation is that all students should experience the research opportunity either in clinical or systematic literature review at a master's level.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	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.*

- There is a good number of academic staff to support the teaching and research activities of the MSc in Clinical Dietetics.
- The academic staff hold qualification appropriate to the discipline and research degrees at PhD level, some from prestigious Universities in Europe. Some staff appear to engage in Continuous Professional Development.
- Some members of staff also hold postgraduate formal training and certification in academic practice, teaching, and learning.
- The ratio between students to academics is appropriate, ensuring a high-quality programme of training and learning experience is delivered to students.
- Currently the highest-ranking academics are two professors; one of which is primarily employed by another University in Greece.
- Outside their academic qualifications, staff engages in research activities and several members of the team have peer-reviewed publications.
- There is a policy in place for staff recruitment which follows international standards, with clear guidance and HR is involved in the process.
- Teaching staff are adequately qualified to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning experience.

- There is a policy in place for academic promotion and promotion criteria are reported for each rank. These promotion criteria are generic, not specific, or measurable. For the international calibre university, one would expect to see other important promotion criteria included such as research income generation, leadership in grants and in international professional body committees (e.g. ESPEN or ESPGHAN), esteem and internationalisation indicators, number of PhD and postdocs students and a continuous but more important sustained growth in all aspects above.
- Academic staff appear to engage in research activities with some research active Universities in Europe. This is important as it offers the Department a competitive international profile.
- The department claims an astonishing research income of research exceeding 17M Euros but the ECC has not seen any evidence of this level research activity, no research assistants or post-doctoral staff, not expensive specialist equipment.
- We could not identify members of specialist technical staff particularly involved in the run of practical laboratory sessions and student support during laboratory dissertations.
- Administrative staff has clear roles to support the running of the programme and student and staff learning experience.

### Strengths

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

Major strengths of the teaching staff include:

- Discipline appropriate academic qualifications, professional registration and ongoing engagement to research, particularly for a predominantly teaching department.
- Good staff to student ratio ensuring optimal conditions for academic learning and teaching are in place.
- Research and teaching interests cover a broad range of disciplines spanning from food science to clinical nutrition and dietetics.
- Some members of staff have academic qualifications in high education teaching and learning
- There is dedicated staff to student advising and support with well-structured procedures

### 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.*

- We would recommend that the institution develops clear, specific, measurable criteria for academic promotion taking into account other metrics of academic performance.



- There is need for quality research outputs and publications preferably avoiding predatory journals.
- Consider teaching and supervision workload and the impact this has on research metrics. Are there opportunities of decreasing excessive reducing the marking work.
- Considering CPD and further training in innovative teaching methods such as blended-learning and educational thegnologies

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

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

- For student admission, clear and appropriate requirements are in place (prerequisite courses, English language proficiencies, CV, references etc).
- A programme for student advice and support is in place, supporting students with housing, organizing social activities and providing career advice.
- Monitoring of student progress is not well described in the documents. It is stated that progress is monitored by the teaching staff and feedback is provided throughout the semester.
- Students follow a clear and concise schedule, with deviation for thesis/non thesis routes. All courses are well described, including aim and content, learning outcomes, schedule and assignments. In the case students have acquired credits in other places or programmes, these can be recognized.
- Candidates are awarded with a MSc degree and are recognised as a clinical dietitian in Cyprus. The material provided a copy of the degree transcript.

##### Strengths

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

- All procedures and courses are well described. It is acknowledged that students should have had completed a BSc in Human Nutrition and Dietetics or similar related course to be allowed to enter the programme.
- The study programme appears as a well-developed and reasoned programme.
- There is a clear outline of the courses per semester for the whole program. There is a strong guidance by the academic personnel. During the interview it was stated that the drop-out rate was zero.

### 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.*

- Regarding the prerequisite requirements, please state the 5 foundations courses prior to entering the programme. What exemptions are allowed – give examples.
- Exit pathways/exit degrees – appreciate this route has not been taken for students but is there a policy for this?
- How can the University promote more equality, diversity and inclusion at the entry point for students.

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

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

- The University of Nicosia appears to have an excellent environment to support teaching and learning activities as well as student advisory and support facilities.
- here is a good number of classrooms for large size plenary presentations but also purpose-built rooms for smaller group teaching. There is a library with a broad collection of academic literature and students have access to e-journals and other resources.
- From the resources shared with the EEC there are cluster rooms and free internet access for registered students.
- There is adequate equipment and specialist laboratory space for practical training in energy balance studies, body composition, food preparation and science, biomedical and biological sciences.
- The EEC has seen the laboratories and the equipment used to support learning.
- Students with disabilities are supported during teaching and learning.
- It is customary in academic institutions that students have the opportunity to refer to members of staff as a first point of contact for matters around learning and pastoral care. The staff ensured that this was indeed the case but the EEC would like to see some formal policy about pastoral care embedded in the programme's information documentation.
- Students were positive of the environment and support they have been receiving. It might be good for the academic staff to collect formal feedback on these aspects on regular intervals and use this to improve the study curriculum, resources and facilities

### Strengths

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

The University of Nicosia provides:

- An excellent environment to support teaching and learning as well as student advisory and support facilities
- A good number of classrooms for large size plenary presentations but also purpose-built rooms for smaller group teaching
- A library with a broad collection of academic literature and students have access to e-journals.
- Cluster rooms and free internet access.
- Adequate equipment and specialist laboratory space for practical training
- Human support resources available, and there is a student advising and support facility where students can refer to receive a broad range of services and support

### 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 customary in international academic institutions students to have the opportunity to refer to members of staff as a first line of contact for matters around learning and pastoral care. The staff ensured that this practice was indeed the case but the EEC would recommend staff to formulate

appropriate policies around tutoring and embed them in the programme's information documentation

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	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**

### **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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

### 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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Choose answer
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
6.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer


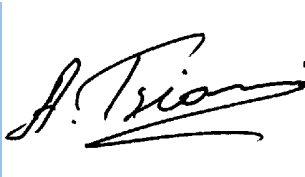
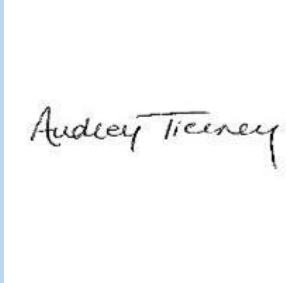
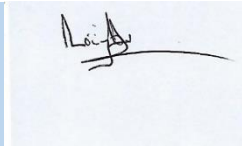

## D. Conclusions and final remarks

*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.*

We would like to thank all involved in the accreditation process for hosting the review and providing the EEC with the information and documentation prior to the on-site review evaluation.

We commend staff on the programme developed and in the quality assurance mechanisms in place and the student supports provided. In meeting the students, it is clear that they are well looked after, highly satisfied and that there is a healthy student staff relationships. We hope that our feedback is perceived as constructive by the institution and staff and addressing these recommendations will improve the quality of the course and the learning experience students receive.

## E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Konstantinos Gerasimidis	
Amalia Tsiarni	
Audrey Tierney	
Despo Louizou	
Alexandros Themistokleous	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 13/04/2024



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



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