



Assessment Report

**for the Application of
the European University of Lefke, Northern Cyprus
School of Health
Department of Nursing
for the Accreditation of the Study Program "Nursing",
Bachelor of Science**

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1 Introduction

The Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Sciences (AHPGS) is an interdisciplinary and multi-professional organization. Its mission is to evaluate Bachelor and Master programs in the fields of health and social sciences, as well as in related domains such as law or economics. By conducting accreditation and recommendation procedures, the AHPGS contributes to the improvement of the overall quality of teaching and learning. However, the higher education institutions remain responsible for implementing the quality assurance recommendations made by the AHPGS. Since 2004, the AHPGS has been a member of the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA). In 2006, the AHPGS also joined the ENQA and became a member of the International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (INQAAHE) in 2009. Since 2012, the AHPGS has been a member of the Network of Central and Eastern European Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education (CEENQA). Furthermore, the AHPGS has been listed in the European Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) since 2009.

In carrying out accreditation procedures, the AHPGS follows the requirements of the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG). In the present case, the decision regarding the accreditation of the study program is carried out by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission based on the following accreditation criteria¹:

1. Program aims and learning outcomes
2. Curriculum design
3. Personnel
4. Facilities and learning resources
5. Study process and student assessment
6. Program and quality management

¹ Approved by the AHPGS Accreditation Commission

I. The University's application

The AHPGS verifies the sufficiency of the documents submitted by the University, namely the Self-Evaluation Report and its corresponding annexes. These are to fulfil the assessment spheres as well as the AHPGS standards. With these information, the AHPGS produces a summary, which is to be approved by the University and subsequently made available for the expert group, together with all other documentation.

II. Written review

The main documents are reviewed by the expert group assigned by the accreditation commission of AHPGS. This is done in order to verify the compliance of the study program with the applicable accreditation criteria. Consequently, the experts comprise a short summary regarding the study programs.

III. On-site visit (peer-review)

The experts carry out an on-site visit at the University. During this visit, discussions are held with members of the University, which include University and department administration, degree program management, teachers, and students. These discussions provide the expert group with details about the study program beyond the written documents. The task of the experts during the on-site visit is to verify and evaluate the objectives of the program and its projected study results, its structure, staff, material resources, course of studies, methods of assessment (selection of students, assessment of achievements, students' support), as well as the program management (program administration, external assurance of study quality).

Following the on-site visit, the expert group writes the expert report. This report is based on the results of the visit, the written review of the study programs, and the documents submitted by the University. Finally, the report is made available to the University for the opportunity to issue a response opinion.

The expert report as well as the University's response opinion – together with the provided documents – is submitted to the accreditation commission of the AHPGS.

IV. The AHPGS accreditation decision

The accreditation commission of the AHPGS examines the documentation made available in the process of application, namely the University's self-evaluation report, its annexes, the summary comprised by the AHPGS, the expert report, as well as the University's response opinion. These documents represent the foundation for the commission's decision regarding the recommendation for accreditation of the study program. Consequently, the decision – together with all other documentation – is forwarded to the AHPGS Accreditation Commission for it to reach a decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

2 Information about the University

The European University of Lefke was founded in 1989 by the Cyprus Science Foundation and opened its campus in 1990. There are currently 10,532 students from 87 different countries studying at the University. The University provides a broad range of contemporary education and is committed to maintaining international standards of excellence through the accreditation of the degree programs and the recognition by the Higher Education Council of Turkey (YOK) and the Higher Education Planning, Evaluation, Accreditation, and Coordination Council of Turkey (YODAK). In total, there are 11 faculties, 8 schools, 104 associate/undergraduate degree programs, and 55 postgraduate/doctoral degree programs are offered. The University is a member of the International Association of Universities (IAU), of the International Universities Council (IUC), and of the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World (FUIW). Many departments have been accredited by specialized international accreditation agencies (SER 3.1.1).

The School of Health was established in 2014 with two departments teaching in Turkish language: Health Management and Nursing. After that the Nursing Department teaching in English language was launched in 2016. There are 128 students registered in the Department of Nursing (SER 3.2.1).

3 Overview

3.1 Procedure-related documents

The Self-Evaluation Report for accreditation (without the awarding of the official seal of the Accreditation Council of the Foundation for the Accreditation of Study Programs in Germany) of the Bachelor study programs "Nursing", "Psychology", "Pharmacy", "Tourism Management", "Physiotherapy" and "Nutrition and Dietetics" of the European University of Lefke (hereinafter the SER) was submitted to the Accreditation Agency in Health and Social Science (AHPGS) in electronic format on August 09, 2022. The contract between the EUL and the AHPGS was signed on October 05, 2022.

On April 03, 2023, the AHPGS forwarded the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter OQ) pertaining to the application for accreditation for the study programs to the University. On April 24, 2023, the University submitted the answers to the open questions and explanatory notes (hereinafter AOQ) to the AHPGS in electronic format.

The application documentation submitted by the EUL follows the outline recommended by the AHPGS. Along with the application request towards accreditation of the Bachelor study program "Nursing", the following additional documents can be found in the application package (the documents submitted by the University are numbered in the following order for easier referencing):

Specific documents for the study program "Nursing"

Annex	Description
1	Module Overview
2	Module Descriptions
3	Teachers CV
4	Internship Booklet
5	Diploma Supplement
6	Student Survey Template
7	Program Learning Outcome Matrix
8	List of Activities
9	Modules & Program Outcomes
10	Modules & Learning Outcomes
11	Teaching Matrix

Alongside the study-program-specific documents, the following documents pertain to all study program submitted for external evaluation:

Annex	Description
A	Quality Handbook
B	Code of Ethics
C	Organigram
D	EUL Board
E	Statute
F	Diploma Supplement
G	Regulations Students with Disabilities
H	Academic Calendar 18-19
I	Academic Calendar 19-20
J	Cooperation agreement
K	Declaration of Interest
L	Graduation Exam Evaluation Sample
M	Student & Graduate Surveys
N	Thesis Directives

The application, the open questions (OQ) and the answer to the open questions (AOQ) as well as the additional documents build the basis for the present summary. The layout bears no significance, as it solely reflects the agreed standard within the University.

3.2 Structural data of the study program

University	European University of Lefke (EUL)
Faculty/Department	School of Health/ Department of Nursing
Cooperation partner	- The ministry of Health of Turkish Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC) - The Association of Pharmacists
Title of the study program	„Nursing“
Degree awarded	Bachelor of Science (B.Sc.)

Form of studies	Full-time, on-campus
Organisational structure	3 hours blocks per week
Language of Studies	English
Period of education	Eight semesters
Credit Points (CP) according to the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS)	154 credit hours (= 240 ECTS)
Hours/CH	Theory modules: 1 contact hour per week = 1 CH practical modules: 8 contact hours per week = 1 CH
Workload	Total: 6,485 hours Contact hours: 1,834 hours Individual work: 2,787 hours Internship: 1,864 hours
Launch date of the study program	Fall 2016/2017
Time of admission	Fall Semester
Number of available places on the program	35
Number of enrolled students by now	128
Particular enrollment conditions	- High-school graduation diploma or equivalent - English Language Proficiency Test
Tuition fees	5,750 € per year

Chart 1: Structural data of the study program

4 Expert Report

The on-site visit was carried out on June 6th and 7th, 2023 according to the previously agreed schedule. Representatives from the head office of AHPGS accompanied the expert group.

The expert group met on June 5th, 2023 for preliminary talks prior to the on-site visit. They discussed the submitted application documents and the results of the

written evaluation as well as questions that had been raised prior. Furthermore, they prepared the plan of the on-site visit at the University.

During the on-site visit, experts conducted discussions with the University management, representatives of the Faculty of Nursing, the chair, vice chair and the teaching staff of the program “Nursing” as well as with students currently studying in the program. Furthermore, they inspected the learning premises, such as lecture halls, seminar classrooms, library, and computer classes. Moreover, experts had the opportunity to examine the equipment and the capacity of the laboratories.

In the course of the on-site visit, the University submitted the following additional documents at the request of the experts:

- List of research applications in the year 2021 / 2022

The expert report is structured in compliance with the “Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area” (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA). The study program will be described and analyzed in a comprehensive manner below. The documents submitted by the University, the Experts’ feedback to the documents, the observations made during the on-site visit, the results of discussions with the representatives of the University, School of Health and the department of Nursing serve as the foundation for the statements made in the expert report.

4.1 Program aims and their implementation

Summary

The objectives and learning outcomes of each module are listed in the module description. The learning outcomes are organized in four categories (Knowledge and Understanding; Cognitive Skills; Interpersonal Skills & Responsibility; Communication & Information Technology Skills). After studying in the Nursing program, the students should be able to:

- 1) Knowledge and Understanding
 - Demonstrate knowledge of the advanced and actual nursing theories and practices,

- Provide health education for the individuals, families, and society by using the advanced theories and practices,
- Understand the terminology used in healthcare settings,
- Explain the legal and regulatory environment in healthcare and implications for managers within the field.

2) Cognitive Skills

- Examine the health care settings and demonstrate problem-solving and leadership skills,
- Use critical thinking skills in provision of nursing care,
- Identify problems and improve strategies for enhancing the quality of the nursing care.

3) Interpersonal Skills & Responsibility

- Follow the latest research conducted in the nursing field and self-develop by having a lifelong learning approach,
- Take the responsibility of producing scientific knowledge specific to the nursing field,
- Act within ethical values and respect the rights of others.

4) Communication and Information Technology Skills

- Use both oral and written communication skills effectively in communicating with the colleagues, various stakeholders, and patients,
- Gain skills to work effectively as part of a team,
- Gain knowledge on the use of technology to gather information and evaluate data to assess the suitability, accuracy, and reliability of information (SER 1.3.3).

After graduating in the Nursing program, the students can work in the following institutions:

- State or private hospitals,
- Clinics,
- Psychiatric institutions,
- Care facilities including nursing homes, rehabilitation centers or residential care providers,
- Home health care agencies,
- Government agencies,
- Schools and camps.

The program also intends to educate graduates who can work as members of research centers and academic institutions (SER 1.4.1).

The increasing life expectancy at birth implies an increase of the health problems associated with aging. This increases the demand for the nursing care, especially long-term care in case of cancers, diabetes, etc. Although the demand for health care professionals is increasing, the number of graduates from health care related programs is diminishing. This will lead governments to invest more in healthcare services (SER 1.4.2).

According to the data of the Human Resources Office of the Presidency of the Republic of Turkey (<https://www.cbiko.gov.tr/projeler/uni-veri>), the rate of finding a job in nursing is 66.6% in the first 6 months after graduation. According to the same report, nurses take place at a rate of 78.3% in the sector of human health and social work activities. 73.6% of our nursing graduates are working and 26.4% of them are preparing to work abroad as nurses.

Judgement

The experts ask about the vision and mission of the EUL. The University states that the vision is to create a multi-ethnic cross cultural student profile on campus as well as to create international diversity by increasing the international student body on campus. Therefore, the mission is to offer up-to date and long-lasting quality education at international standards by meeting the needs of all stakeholders. It is explained by the University, that the proportion of international students is now close to 30 % within the University with a 50 % increase in the last five years, which the experts positively acknowledge. Due to the difficult political and geographic situation, the European University of Lefke is not able to be part of the Erasmus Program. Nevertheless, the University manages to send some students abroad through bilateral agreements and joint programs. Some programs in the University have collaboration agreements with institutions from various countries of the world. Most of the international students come from Africa or Asia. According to the University, the goal of the acquisition of the accreditation is to increase the number of international students. Therefore, the University will be able to offer exchange programs in cooperation with different universities. The experts also see the need to further expand international cooperation to enhance the University's reach and promote cross-cultural exchange.

The experts inquire about research grant sources, including the EUL Research Fund based on the application evaluation process and Tubitak (Scientific and Technological Research Council of Turkey). Regarding research funding and

support, the following information were stated: Research funding is available annually, and ethical approval is obtained from the University. On-site, the experts were shown peer-review publications, which they positively acknowledge. The provision of a day off for publication purposes is also deemed appropriate. As the University explains, students are also involved in research projects and publications. Research methods are taught within a specific module, where the students can gain intensive knowledge about different research methods and how to apply them. In conclusion, the experts note that research activities at the University, as well as within the Nursing program, are more intensive than what the documentation initially suggested. An overarching research concept or framework is advocated for, which can provide a clear direction and cohesion to the University's research activities.

Furthermore, EUL has some structured PhD program conducted in English, although a clinical Master's program following the Bachelor study program "Nursing" is currently not available. The experts encourage the University to consider implementing a consecutive Master's degree program in order to strengthen the research component at the University. The students also show interest in this idea during the interview.

The study program "Nursing" focuses on specific qualification objectives. These objectives cover professional and interdisciplinary aspects and particularly refer to the domain of academic competences, competences necessary for a qualified employment, skills of social commitment and personal development.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.2 Structure of the study program

Summary

The Nursing program is a four-year degree program with eight semesters. Each year consists of two semesters. The program has 38 modules in total, out of which six modules are elective courses. During the first four semesters, the students take 22 compulsory modules and three elective ones, which include basic and advanced modules. During the last four semesters, the students take ten compulsory and three elective courses which consist of advanced and

interdisciplinary courses. After passing all the courses, the students are required to complete 56 workdays in hospitals.

There are three to eight modules provided for each semester. All modules have to be completed in one semester. The Bachelor study program "Nursing" offers between 16 and 23 credit hours (CH) per semester. There is no period envisaged for exchange program or studies abroad (SER 1.2.1).

The list of modules offered:

Nr.	Title	Sem.	CP
COM105	Anatomy	1	3
HSC108	Principles of Nutrition	1	3
NS107	Introduction to Nursing	1	2
COM104	Psychology	1	3
COM111	Chemistry	1	3
COM103	Physiology	1	3
COM101	English I	1	3
COM100	Introduction to Computers	1	3
			23
NS151	Fundamentals of Nursing Skills and Concepts	2	7
NS106	Histology	2	2
COM114	Biochemistry	2	3
NS153	Physiology for Nursing	2	3
HSC102	Microbiology	2	3
COM110	English II	2	3
			21
NS251	Medical Nursing	3	8
NS253	Pharmacology	3	3
NS207	History of Nursing and Deontology	3	3
NS2XX1	Elective I	3	3
NS204	Communicable Diseases for Nurses	3	2
			19

NS252	Surgical Nursing	4	8
EULXX1	Free Elective I	4	3
HSC310	Human Behavior and Communication	4	2
HSC106	Pathology	4	3
NS2XX2	Elective II	4	3
COM106 /ORT106	Turkish	4	2
			21
NS351	Obstetrical and Gynecological Nursing	5	8
NS303	Emergency Care Nursing	5	4
HSC301	Biostatistics	5	3
NS3XX3	Elective III	5	3
			18
NS352	Child Health and Disease Nursing	6	8
HSC302	Management in Healthcare	6	3
COM351	Research Methods	6	3
Com108/ ORT108	History	6	2
NS3XX4	Elective IV	6	3
			19
NS453	Community Health Nursing	7	7
NS451	Mental Health and Psychiatric Nursing	7	7
EULXX2	Free Elective II	7	3
			17
NS400	Intern for Nurses	18	16
			16
	Total:		154

Tabelle 2: Modulübersicht

The module description/catalogue covers the following aspects: number of credit hours, teaching language, objectives, learning outcomes, content and examination.

The first and second years of the program include courses about basic medical scientific knowledge such as anatomy, microbiology, or biochemistry. During the second semester, the students take the first nursing core module named “Fundamentals of Nursing Skills and Concepts”. There are interdisciplinary courses in the three first years of study considered as service courses, which are shared with other study programs of the School of Health and other faculties. These service courses include Turkish language and history of Turkish reforms. The modules “Biostatistics” and “Research Methods” taken during the third year are provided by the other faculties and shared by other programs taught in English. Moreover, in the second and third years, the students choose among elective courses which are mainly in the health and nursing fields such as Occupational Safety and Health or Health and Technology. The other elective courses shared with other faculties are taken during the second and the fourth years and can be for example Environment and Sustainable Development or Leadership and Management (SER 1.2.2).

During the first year the students have 14 courses to take which provide them with the skills required for the advanced courses. Under these courses there are for example two English courses, an Introduction to Nursing, and general sciences courses like Anatomy, Physiology, Histology, etc. These courses provide the students with the necessary background for the future years. An Introduction to Computer ensures that the students have the skills required for the provision of patient care and the monitoring of the care.

During the second and third years of the program, more advanced courses are offered to the students including for example Medical Nursing, Surgical Nursing or Child Health. These courses also include practical sessions. The elective courses give the opportunity to the students to choose different subjects to study that they may be interested in.

The final year of the program is designed as a transformative year. The seventh semester includes courses like Community Health Nursing or Mental Health. The eighth semester is an internship semester during which the students apply the knowledge gained during the previous years (SER 1.3.4).

The University underlines the importance of using interactive teaching methods such as class discussions, projects, and presentations. These methods are used to help students gain more knowledge and practical skills. During the Covid-19 pandemic, distance learning was used through Moodle and Teams platforms. Moodle is still used for circulating class materials and Teams is used for online lectures. The system also enables video recordings of the lessons so that the students can listen to the lectures whenever they want. The involvement of guest speakers from various organizations in the field of nursing and healthcare, as well as local organizations, is supported by the Nursing program. These guests are invited to give seminars, presentations, panels, conferences, or workshops (SER 1.2.4).

The teaching staff of the program is using electronic and media teaching aids in the courses, including PowerPoint presentations and videos. Some courses are still taught in the form of distance learning. The lecturers have the possibility to upload their course contents to Moodle. In general, the courses are delivered in classrooms fully equipped with central cooling and heating system, desktop PCs and remote-controlled projectors. Microsoft Teams was still used for hybrid and online courses during fall 2021-2022. During the Covid-19 pandemic, the use of videos, graphics and animations as educational materials through Teams has shown itself as successfully motivating the students. The Department of Nursing organized an online meeting with its external stakeholders, the Turkish Nurses Association, during the pandemic process and the conference about "Nursing Profession: From a Gender Perspective" was held on Teams by a Turkish Nurses Association Board Member (SER 1.2.5).

The students must take an internship in the second semester of the fourth year after they successfully completed the modules and elective nursing courses. They have to complete 56 workdays in a hospital and have to write an internship logbook (SER 1.2.6).

Regarding the supervision during the internships, the University states the following: "At the end of each semester, the instructors who teach nursing courses submit a course report to the quality unit. This report includes the objective outcomes of the course and includes what skills the student did or could not achieve in the clinic, and suggestions for solutions. After this report is evaluated by the measurement and evaluation sub-committee, it is presented to the department board and then to the EUL High Quality Board and the Rectorate by preparing an activity report, together with the corrective and preventive

suggestions in the continuous improvement board. The annual assessments are performed in subsequent years to determine if the problems in application of internships are solved. Clinical care managers in practice hospitals have master's degree. Clinical trainers must also have at least a master's degree. Mentor nurse training is also provided to professional nurses working in the public hospitals with the decision taken by our quality board.”

Internationality is one of the core values of the University. The Nursing program is taught in English which allows international students to be admitted. Therefore, the Department of Nursing is an internationally and culturally diverse student platform. This aspect provides the opportunity for the students to network with students from other cultural backgrounds. This is a way for them to gain skills in communication that will be useful in their future professional life. In most of the courses, the students are offered the possibility to work in groups to prepare assignments, presentations or to make case studies. (SER 1.2.8). According to the University, the acquisition of the accreditation will increase the number of international students. Therefore, the University will be able to offer exchange programs in cooperation with different universities.

The students who are eager to improve their intercultural communication and nursing skills in other countries can apply for an exchange or a transfer of their credits to universities abroad (SER 1.2.9).

The advanced courses include practical hours where students observe practices done in the organizations. They spend time applying theoretical knowledge into practice by analyzing evidence on the specific field and by using literature. There is a module titled “Research Methods” helping students in gaining skills on research methods and analyzing the obtained data. The students apply skills learned from practical lectures and research methods course in internship course. The course outcome is evaluated based on a project and an exam (SER 1.2.7).

Judgement

The Bachelor study program “Nursing” has a course-based structure and a course-related examination system. Descriptions of the modules are embedded within the course syllabi for each program. The course syllabus contains information on the course code, the credit hours, pre-requisite(s), the semester and year, the instructors name as well as his or her phone number, mail address and the lecture times. Furthermore, the course objectives, the learning outcomes, and the weekly distribution of course topics/contents are presented. Regarding the assessments,

the assessment tools, the assessment plan and the teaching and learning resources are described. The experts value the detailed syllabus, which enables students to prepare adequately for individual lectures as well as scheduled examinations.

The combination of the courses of the study program are consistent with the specified qualification objectives (described earlier). The experts recommend updating the course content regularly and actively by incorporating contemporary scientific findings on an ongoing basis. This will ensure that students are exposed to the latest research and developments.

It is assured that students receive the support and guidance they need for the organization and accomplishment of assignments and the learning process in general. During the round of talks, the experts inquire about interdisciplinary taught modules, as the programs involved in this accreditation procedure offer good opportunities for this. The University reports that in the area of the elective modules, students are sometimes taught together. The experts see room for improvement related to interdisciplinary teaching and learning. Increasing cooperation between the different study programs and offering more interdisciplinary elective modules can foster collaboration and facilitate knowledge exchange across disciplines. Furthermore, streamlining and harmonizing the curriculum can help alleviate the examination workload and create a more balanced learning experience.

The arrangement of internships in the study program allows the acquisition of credits. During the interviews, the experts learned that the coordination of internships falls under the purview of the Department of Health, while the University determines the curriculum. The department ensures that internships are aligned with the theoretical coursework. Notably, the University employs clinical instructors to provide practical guidance, which is an exceptional arrangement. Typically, international students are assigned to foreign patients, constituting approximately 25% of the student body. In Cyprus, elderly care is predominantly managed within families, resulting in a limited number of internships in nursing homes. Nevertheless, an ample number of internship placements are available, encompassing various nursing fields such as hospitals and medical centers. Following completion of the program, graduates obtain recognition as nurses from the University and subsequently become members of the Nursing Association.

The experts further inquire about the graduation project. The faculty reports that graduation projects are supervised by advisors, providing guidance and mentorship to students. Projects are often presented at conferences within Turkey and are also published, showcasing students' research findings. The university offers a research method course where students collaborate in groups on a common project, fostering teamwork and developing essential research skills. The objective of the graduation project is to provide students with the experience in tackling the challenges associated with undertaking an individual research work. It aims to afford them the opportunity to apply, integrate, and expand upon the research skills they have acquired in previous years. Additionally, it aims to cultivate proficiency in effectively communicating research findings through written presentations, which holds particular significance for those aspiring to pursue further studies in the field of nursing. The experts acknowledge that the graduation project is not visibly integrated across all study programs, amongst others in the "Nursing" program. This should be adjusted as a matter of priority. Additionally, the experts suggest specifying the module description for the graduation project as stated above and possibly considering a title change to clearly indicate that students are required to write a final thesis-like research paper.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.3 Admission and Feasibility

Summary

The process and management of admissions is mainly carried out by the University's Registrar's Office alongside with the Faculties and the International Affairs Office. It is necessary to have completed the secondary education to apply for the Nursing program. The candidates must hold a high-school graduation diploma or equivalent and must show their English language ability by taking part to the English Language Proficiency Test. Students can also provide an international accepted English proficiency certificate.

Turkish students must take the Turkish University Entrance Examination (LYS) which is conducted by the Office of Student Selection and Placements (OSYM). The students are then placed depending on their examination scores.

International students must have a high school level diploma/certificate with a minimum average diploma grade of “C” (SER 1.5.1).

There are special requirements about the English language skills for the direct admission into the degree program. If the students don’t have an IELTS examination certificate with a minimum score of 5.5 or similar, they have to take the EUL English Preparatory School program which lasts for a year. (SER 1.5.4)

The University has installed different support services as well as specialized and general consultations to guarantee the feasibility of the study program.

Judgement

The admission policies and procedures along with the requirements are properly documented and made publicly available. The experts determine the admission procedure and requirements to be appropriate.

The University prioritizes social support and provides a range of services, including a kindergarten and support for pregnant individuals. To foster a vibrant community, the University encourages the formation of social clubs and organizes various social events, providing opportunities for students to connect and engage with each other. Additionally, students have access to an advisor who offers guidance and support throughout their academic journey. On-site, it became obvious that the teaching staff follows an “open-door-policy”. As another support mechanism, an academic advisor is responsible for a small number of students from the beginning of each semester. Students are supported through advisors with their registration process, financial and personal issues, and their performance during the semester. The University offers scholarships to every international student, including academic scholarships. Additionally, tuition fees can be paid in installments, and sibling scholarships are available. For first-year students, dormitories are provided to ensure a safe living environment. Furthermore, the university offers free rent to victims of earthquakes, demonstrating its commitment to supporting those in need. The workload and examination requirements are deemed feasible, enabling students to manage their studies effectively. The experts find the support services at the University to be exemplary and conducive to the health and success of the student body.

To prepare students for the level of difficulty and volume of exams, the type as well as the time of the different examinations is defined and communicated to the students transparently through the course syllabus at the beginning of each course. The experts confirm that the University takes good measures to guarantee the feasibility of the study program despite the high workload. The organization of the education process ensures the successful implementation of the study programs.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.4 Examination system and transparency

Summary

The number of examinations per semester depends on the module. The lecturers are responsible for the preparation of examinations in accordance with the learning outcomes of the Nursing program. In each semester at least one midterm and one final exam must be carried out. The lecturer may choose to evaluate an assignment, a project, a laboratory report, or similar work as midterm exam. The final exam aims to test whether the students have achieved the learning outcomes of the course. The contribution of exams and other evaluations to the final score also depends on the module. The following information are automatically given to the students either through the lecturer or on free access on the Moodle platform:

- Learning outcomes,
- Objectives,
- Topics to be covered weekly,
- Evaluation methods,
- Weight of each evaluation method for the final score.

Students with a grade from A to C are successful and pass the exam. Students with a grade from C- to D implies a "Conditional Pass", meaning that the students are successful given that the CGPA is above or equal to 2.00. Grades D- and F indicate "Failure" which means the students must repeat the course. Students who do not fulfill the requirements for the evaluations of the course are given the "FA" grade by the lecturer. The grades "S" (satisfactory) and "U" (unsatisfactory) are given to students who are registered for non-credit courses. "I" is given to

students who have not written the exam or who did not complete some of the course components because of a valid reason. The grade “W” is given to student who are allowed to withdraw from a registered course. At the end of each semester, the students can retake exams on defined days (SER 1.2.3).

The grading system is as follows:

MARK	GRADE	EQUIVALENT SCORES AND EXPLANATIONS
90-100	A	4.00
85-89	A-	3.70
80-84	B+	3.30
75-79	B	3.00
70-74	B-	2.70
66-69	C+	2.30
62-65	C	2.00
58-61	C-	1.70
54-57	D+	1.30
50-53	D	1.00
40-49	D-	0.70
0-39	F	0.00
Failing from Absenteeism	F	0.00
	I	Incomplete
	S	Satisfactory (Pass in a non-credit-course)
	U	Unsatisfactory (Failure in a non-credit-course)
	W	Withdrawal

The students transferring from another HEI or registrations following the Vertical Transfer Examination may be entitled for conversion of credits acquired from other HEIs. The students are required to submit their transcripts of records and the list of the courses taken at the other HEI. This information will then be evaluated by the exemption commission of the concerned department and a list of exempted courses will be provided. The following rules must be followed:

- In case of a compatible course content, the number of National or ECTS credits must be at least equal with the EUL course credits,
- If the number of credits is inferior to the one of the EUL course, then no exemption will be given for that course,

- For a course to be exempted, the grad must be at least equivalent to a C (2.00) in the EUL grading system (SER 1.5.3).

Judgement

The University uses a continuous assessment process to ensure the quality of education for its students. The study program has a course-related examination system. Its implementation, including the grading system, course load regulations, repetition of courses and exams is regulated and transparent for the students. Furthermore, information concerning the study program, process of education, admission requirements and tuition fees are documented and published.

From the experts' point of view, the examinations serve to determine whether the envisaged qualification objectives have been achieved. These examinations are focused on students' knowledge and competences. The transparent information of examination methods and of the examination schedule at the beginning of each term makes the high number of assessments during and at the end of each semester manageable. Nevertheless, in the experts' opinion, the study program includes a very high number of exams which causes a high workload not only for students but also for the teaching staff. Therefore, the experts recommend combining courses to larger modules.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.5 Teaching staff and material equipment

Summary

In the Nursing program, the total number of credit hours is 154 under which 89 credit hours are from Nursing related subjects. Therefore, the total staff demand for the Nursing program is 44,5 week hours/semester. In the Nursing Department, all modules are taught by the full-time academics except for a few modules which require faculty members with specialization like Biochemistry or Pathology. There are also postgraduate students acting as research assistants. Currently, there are 22 faculty members. Considering the members who are teaching only in the Nursing program, there are one professor, two associate professors, three assistant professors, and three lecturers. Considering the members who are also

teaching in other departments, there are one professor, one associate professor, seven assistant professors, and five lecturers. There are no adjunct professors in the program.

The ratio of the number of full-time teaching instructors to the total number of students with full enrollment capacity utilization would be 0,9. The actual student-teacher ratio constitutes approximately 2,8:1 (SER 2.1.1).

The teaching staff of the Department of Nursing is qualified with PhD degrees from accredited universities. According to the University, the teaching staff had various opportunities for self-development:

- Funding for attending seminars,
- Conferences,
- Conducting research,
- Making publications in journals,
- Participating in independent research projects.

The transfer of knowledge between colleagues contributes to the intellectual capacity of the instructors and improves their teaching effectiveness. The faculty members have several occasions to exchange their expertise and knowledge through conferences, seminars, round table discussions and panels. The cooperation between them is institutionalized through departmental meetings, joint committees or group works on specific topics. The primary aim of the development and career planning program is to identify strategies to maintain the faculty member's credential field and to enhance the overall performance and reputation of the Nursing department. To do so, the University encourages the teaching staff to co-operate research programs with other universities or to do post-doc in abroad universities to broaden their knowledge. The titles of assistant professors, associate professor and professor are given to the faculty members who satisfy the University promotion and regulation criteria for the given title. The faculty members are asked to prepare a report about the courses that they have been teaching, their publications and collaborations every year (SER 2.1.3).

There is one program coordinator who is responsible for the coordination of the lecture programs and exam schedules of all departments. There are also two research assistants responsible for assisting the lecturers if needed (SER 2.2.1).

The lectures take place on-campus in different buildings of the University. There is the Arts and Sciences Building which contains 48 classrooms and three

computer labs. The Central Lecture Hall has 9 classrooms, lecture theatres and numerous smaller seminar rooms. The Faculty of Pharmacy Buildings contains two amphitheatres and five classrooms. Audiovisual equipment is available in most classrooms and seminar rooms as well as in the meeting room (SER 2.3.1).

The library opened and expanded parallelly to the University. The 2500m² library building has 65 computers available for the students. It also has reading areas and private study rooms, which can be reserved by the students. Concerning the staff, the library has eight fulltime members and 15 assistants. The library is open from Monday to Friday from 08:30am until 11pm and Saturday-Sunday from 09:30am until 11pm. During the midterm and final exam periods, it is open 24/7.

According to the updated list of books available in the University Library, the number of Nursing related books are as follows: 2,152 Nursing books out of 63165 all available printed books, 432 Nursing related electronic periodicals out of 38142 all available electronic periodicals and 2972 Nursing related electronic books out of 281509 electronic books available in the library.

The Nursing Practice Laboratory has been designed in a similar way to the inpatient units of hospitals. The laboratory contains three multi-purpose adult patient models and one simulated adult patient model, all in patient beds that allow demonstrating and working on them. Apart from this patient models, there are one diabetic foot model, one decubitus wound model, one urinary catheter application model, one colostomy model and one breast examination model. Moreover, there are arm and hip models allowing the students to practice intravenous, intramuscular, subcutaneous, and intracutaneous treatments (SER 2.3.4).

The operating room laboratory has been designed in a similar way to the operating rooms of a hospital. In this laboratory, the roles of circular and scrub nurses such as surgical hand washing, surgical dressing, assisting the surgeon, and opening surgical equipment can be shown to the students. The students also get to learn how to sterilize the surgical instruments and textile materials used (SER 2.3.5).

In the Obstetric and Gynecological Nursing Laboratory, there are simulated birth models, manual birth models, episiotomy models, fetus models and twin babies models (SER 2.3.6).

The last laboratory is the Child Health and Diseases Nursing Laboratory. It contains a pediatric auscultation trainer, a pediatric resuscitation model and an 8-year-old

child model. Therefore, the basic examinations can be performed by the students (SER 2.3.7)

The University provides extra funding for research to promote the publication of articles and conference papers. There are three categories of funding:

- BAP Projects: funding for a project approved by the commission organized by the Rectorate,
- Publication in SCI-Indexed/SSCI-Indexed Journal: the University rewards the publication with a fund of 1,500\$ per paper,
- Attending of conferences: the amount of the funding depends on the type and location of the conference (SER 2.3.4).

Judgement

New teaching staff is thoroughly briefed about the program and their teaching responsibilities before they start teaching. Students evaluate the performance of all teaching and staff periodically. Overall, the teaching and academic staff of the Nursing program at the European University of Lefke shows a very high level of commitment and potential for the execution as well as further development of the study programs they are responsible for. The expert group concludes that there is a strong corporate identity and positive group dynamics among the University and the administration staff. As a motivation to work at European University of Lefke, the faculty cites the good reputation, the working atmosphere, the safe working environment as well as support mechanisms related to research and academic development. Work-life balance is also emphasized, with one regular work-from-home day, along with generous annual leave of 30 days and 14 days of sick leave. Promotion criteria from assistant to associate professor are clear and fair, ensuring transparency in career progression.

The experts find the amount of human resources allocated to the program to be sufficient to carry out its functions. The teaching staff is highly qualified. The teaching staff within the Bachelor study program Nursing is in possession of academic and technical credentials and experience adequate to their tasks. The University informs its employees about opportunities for personal and professional development transparently, and actively encourages their participation in workshops, training courses and conferences intended to further their abilities, which is confirmed during the talks with the staff on site.

The University boasts a sufficient library that caters to students' academic needs. Online access to resources and materials further enhances the accessibility and convenience of information. Staff internships are supported, and additional funding is provided for open access publications (approximately \$1,500 per year). Access to patient data is restricted, but efforts are being made to facilitate its use for research purposes. Research is considered as an addition to teaching hours and does not reduce teaching obligations. During the exam period, the University provides free food and coffee, ensuring students' well-being and support during this critical time.

The experts visited the premises of the department of Nursing, where the Nursing program is located. The skills labs are equipped with all relevant technology devices. From the experts' point of view, the quality of the laboratories and clinical areas used to train students in the programs are sufficient. As a whole, it was ascertained by the experts that the program has ample teaching facilities at its disposals.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.6 Quality assurance

Summary

Twice a year the Quality Assurance Office (QAO) of the Rectorate is responsible for the completion of an internal quality assessment procedure. The Rectorate, the Faculty, and the Departments have a shared responsibility in the assessment. The guidelines for managing the quality of the teaching, learning and research are listed in the Quality Handbook. Systematical and periodic evaluation is carried out by the faculty, the students, the alumni, and the employers. Internal quality issues are discussed in almost every department meeting. The received feedback is analyzed during the Faculty Executive Board meetings. Following that, recommendations are made to the Rectorate for a final decision to be made by the University Senate. The Assurance of Learning Quality Committee includes the Dean of the Faculty and four members of the faculty representing their department. The modules are evaluated at the end of each semester by course lecturers. The results are evaluated by the Higher Education Quality Commission sending feedback and recommendations to the department staff. Every student can fill out an online survey at the end of each semester where they can give feedback on the content

of the courses, processes and outcomes. The results are then evaluated and shared by the concerned departments. There is also an Ethics Committee Directive that lays down rules of conduct, ethic and deontology when conducting research (SER 1.6.1).

The program has its own Student Experience Survey administered at the end of every semester and its own Graduate Survey administered once a year. The results of the surveys are then evaluated by the academic staff of the department and plans are made for the necessary improvements. The Measurement and Assessment Board evaluates if the learning outcomes of each course matches with the program outcomes. The Continuous Improvement Board prepares reports including objective advice and recommends academic events to increase the satisfaction of the students (SER 1.6.2).

At the end of every semester the students can complete an online module evaluation survey. The results of the surveys are evaluated by the Higher Education Quality Commission and are then shared with every department. The Nursing Department academic staff considers the feedback obtained and implements the necessary measures to improve the quality of the program. The results are also used to verify that the learning outcomes are met (SER 1.6.3).

Feedback is also obtained from the graduates through the graduate experience survey. The results are used for the improvement of the quality of teaching and the practical relevance of the program (SER 1.6.4).

The workload per semester for the students is equivalent to 30 ECTS. The number of modules taken varies depending on the cumulative GPA. A student with a cumulative GPA of 2.0 can register for an additional module, while the students with a cumulative GPA of 3.0 or more can register for two additional modules (SER 1.6.5). At the end of every academic semester, questionnaires are shared via moodle to evaluate the feasibility of the workload of the modules.

The Nursing program has been accredited by YÖDAK (Higher Education Planning, Evaluation, Accreditation and Coordination council).

The number of enrollments per semester is limited to 35 (SER 1.6.6).

The following table shows the enrollment statistics:

2018	41
2019	42
2020	43
2021	41
2022	44

All the students enrolled in the program have access to an online system called the OIBS through the Deanship of Admission and Registration. This system provides them with all the details about:

- The academic requirements,
- The complete academic plan,
- The credit hours of the modules,
- The attendance statistics,
- The information about examination, grades, and cumulative GPA,
- The information on passed and failed modules.

OIBS is also the platform on which the students can select the modules to study, add, and drop of modules with the support of an advisor lecturer from their department. The students can also manage their study plan. The Examination committee follows a transparent procedure to fix the exam schedules, making sure that it fits with the other subjects from the students. The rules and regulations for the exams are communicated in advance to the students. In case of disabled students, the special regulations are communicated to the lecturers (SER 1.6.7).

The counselling support begins with an orientation program specifically designed to inform the newly arrived students about the campus, the faculties, and the facilities available. After the enrollment, every student is assigned to an academic advisor who can help with their progress, registration on courses, career advising, and other academic issues. Every instructor must schedule two office hours per week during which the students can book an appointment to ask questions or further explore the subjects taught during the lectures. During the rest of the week, the students can use the platform Moodle to contact the lecturers. The Career Center of the University:

- helps the students identify career opportunities,
- organizes job forums on campus,
- assists the students in their job research,
- assists the students in the CV writing and interview skills improvement,
- reaches out to students using social networking sites and leaflets.

The Dean's Office offers psychological counseling services. Moreover, the students have the possibility to get involved in one of the 44 clubs and 35 societies of the University, which can help with developing soft skills, teamwork, leadership, communication, and organizational skills (SER 1.6.8).

Judgement

From the experts' point of view, the University has a well-structured system of quality assurance spread across all of its units. The European University of Lefke has developed and documented a concept of quality assurance in education process, teaching, and research, which serves as the basis for the quality-oriented development and implementation of the study program Nursing.

Regular evaluation surveys are conducted after every course, allowing students to provide feedback on their learning experience. The University values feedback from students and implements actual changes based on evaluation surveys, addressing content, examination methods, and teaching approaches to enhance the learning experience. The results of the internal quality assurance management are applied for the continuous development of the study program. In doing so, the University takes into close consideration the quality evaluation results as well as the analyses of students' workload, their academic accomplishments and feedback from graduates. The experts appreciate that regularly meetings on different levels are held to improve the study programs.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

4.7 Gender equality and equal opportunities

Summary

The University follows the laws of the TRNC constitution and laws for protection, rehabilitation, and employment of disabled individuals and has its own regulations (Appendix 8). Therefore, the University facilities are planned to be accessible for the physically disabled students (SER 1.5.2).

According to the University, all the students have the same rights, and the classes are mixed with students from different backgrounds. The students without sufficient funds for their education are provided with scholarships. Part-time jobs on campus, such as research assistant, are offered to the students. The students

from the Nursing program also have the opportunity to work part-time in the University Health Center (SER 1.6.9).

The students with special requirements can discuss their needs with their advisors or with the head of the department. If it is possible the necessary measures are undertaken to satisfy their needs. The University has a Health Centre that offers primary health services and advice on health issues. In total there are one specialist physician of internal medicine, one general surgeon, one dermatologist and three nurses available (1.6.10).

Judgement

The University demonstrates its commitment to the provision of equal opportunities for all students and shows openness for diversity and social developments. Overall, the experts conclude that the University's actions on the provision of gender equality and promotion of equal opportunities for students with particular living circumstances are implemented in a transparent manner.

Decision

From the experts' point of view, the requirements of this criterion are fulfilled.

5 Conclusion

Overall, the experts gained a positive impression of the European University of Lefke as well as the Nursing program. The management of the University seems highly involved and dedicated, demonstrating a strong commitment to the University's success. This commitment is reflected in their active engagement in various aspects of the University's operations. The Nursing program maintains a small student population, allowing for nearly one-on-one teaching and fostering a more personalized educational experience. This close interaction between faculty and students contributes to a supportive learning environment. The working environment is described as familial, suggesting a supportive and friendly atmosphere among staff members.

An overarching research concept or framework is advocated for, which can provide a clear direction and cohesion to the institution's research activities. The experts see room for improvement in terms of documentation and materials.

Addressing these areas will ensure that the necessary resources are readily available and of high quality.

The institution places great emphasis on providing intensive support and guidance to students during practical training. This hands-on approach ensures that students receive comprehensive supervision and mentoring to enhance their learning and professional development.

The number of modules and the associated workload are perceived to be too high, resulting in a heavy examination burden for students. Streamlining and harmonizing the curriculum can help alleviate this issue and create a more balanced learning experience. Increasing cooperation between different study programs and offering interdisciplinary elective modules can foster collaboration and facilitate knowledge exchange across disciplines.

Based on the information from written documents and the results of the on-site visit, the experts concluded that the study program Nursing offered at the European University of Lefke fulfils the above-described criteria. Hence, the experts recommended that the Accreditation Commission of AHPGS make a positive decision regarding the accreditation of the study program.

For the continuous development of the study program, the experts have outlined the following recommendations:

- International cooperation should be further expanded to enhance the University's reach and promote cross-cultural exchange.
- An overarching research concept or framework should be developed, which can provide a clear direction and cohesion to the University's research activities.
- The course content should be regularly and actively updated by incorporating contemporary scientific findings on an ongoing basis.
- Interdisciplinary teaching and learning should be increased. Cooperation between the different study programs and offering more interdisciplinary elective modules can foster collaboration and facilitate knowledge exchange across disciplines.

- A consecutive Master's degree program should be implemented.
- The graduation project should be visibly implemented within the curriculum.
The module description for the graduation project should be specified and possibly a title change to clearly indicate that students are required to write a final thesis-like research paper should be considered.
- Consideration should be given to whether and to what extent courses can be combined into larger modules to reduce workload.

6 Decision of the accreditation commission

Decision of the accreditation commission September 18, 2023

This resolution of the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS is based on the University's application, as well as the expert review and the site visit covered in the Assessment Report. The Accreditation Commission has also taken the response opinion of the University regarding the study program into account.

The site visit of the University took place on June 6-7, 2023 according to the previously agreed-upon schedule.

The accreditation procedure is structured according to the Accreditation Criteria developed by the AHPGS. The Accreditation Criteria are developed by the AHPGS in close accordance with the existing criteria and requirements valid in the Federal Republic of Germany and based on the „Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area“ (ESG), established by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA).

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS discussed the procedural documents and the vote of the expert group regarding the Assessment Report.

The Bachelor study program requires the obtainment of 154 credit hours (CH) according to the internal credit hour system. The regulated study period in the program "Nursing" is four years (eight semesters). The study program comprises 38 modules in total, out of which six modules are elective ones. The language of instruction is English. The Bachelor study program "Nursing" is completed with awarding of the academic degree "Bachelor of Science" (B.Sc.). Admission takes place every fall semester. The first cohort of students was admitted to the study program in the academic year 2016/2017.

The Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS considers that all Accreditation Criteria are fulfilled and adopts the following decision:

The Bachelor study program "Nursing" is accredited without conditions for the duration of five years until September 30, 2028.

For further development and enhancement of the study program, as well as of the University as a whole, the Accreditation Commission of the AHPGS support the recommendations articulated in the Assessment Report.