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Date: 05/07/2021

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

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

In Greek:

Διατροφή και Διαιτολογία

In English:

Nutrition and Dietetics

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



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 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].

In Greek: Concentrations
In English: Concentrations



A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

An online visit was performed on the 5th of July 2021. Prior to the visit the External Evaluation Committee, as its composition is described below, had received documentation about the course structure, syllabus and staff and videos on the facilities of the University of Nicosia in general. The session was chaired by Professor Konstantinos Gerasimidis. There were several presentations by various members of the academic staff, BSc and PhD students, management and administrative staff. Each presentation was followed by a Q&A session. The evaluation lasted approximately 8 hours.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Konstantinos Gerasimidis	Professor of Clinical Nutrition	University of Glasgow, UK
Audrey Tierney	Senior Lecturer & Dietitian	University of Limerick, Ireland
Jutta Dierkes	Professor of Clinical Nutrition	University of Bergen, Norway
Despo Loizou	Dietitian	Representative of The Cyprus Dietetic and Nutrition Association
Michalis Charalambides	Student	BSc in Environmental and Technology, Technological University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
 - sub-areas*
 - standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

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

Strengths

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



Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding 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:*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

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

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

1.3 Public information

Standards

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

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

Policy for Quality Assurance:

External quality assurance is provided through various bodies and standards/regulations/laws to which the University adheres to/is regulated by, such as the Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Law of 2015, the European Guidelines and Standards for Quality Assurance, the European Approach for Quality Assurance of Joint Programmes, the Private Universities (Establishment, Operation and Control) Law 109(1) of 2005 and the KYSATS – Cyprus National Academic Recognition Information Centre - NARIC Law. 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), analyzed and feedback is provided to all stakeholders. On-line facilities and services (internet/intranet) are available for students to provide feedback and express complaints. Feedback is analyzed and answers are provided within set deadlines. "Board of studies" meetings allow students to interact with their instructors at the beginning and halfway through the semester to discuss issues pertaining to their studies. Details on monitoring student

performance and mentoring both from the academic but also from the personal point of view are provided in the relevant section/appendix of the application. When updating an existing course, several people are involved in order to provide the best possible result. In regards to the academic part, several faculty members (instructor of the course, department faculty and head) participate in the design process using their expertise and specified standards set by the institution. Each Department at the University of Nicosia has also a QA committee

Public Information: All information regarding the programme of study such as duration, ECTS workload, learning outcomes, course syllabi, semester breakdown, assessment methods, etc. is available through the University of Nicosia website. Module handbooks are also evident in providing information about module learning outcomes, assessment procedures etc

Information management: faculty provided information that approx. 88% of students go on to postgraduate studies.

Strengths

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

School QA composed of the Dean/Associate Dean, one senior faculty member from each department, one student representative

The Department QA committee is composed of: HoD or Associate HoD, a senior faculty member and one student representative. Additional suggestions offered by the faculty members of the Department in the Departmental Council ensuring all have input. 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 has been 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.

Clearly outlined supports for students with a wide range of services available - counselling, academic 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.

- 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. Need to consider the embedding of digital competencies and mapping or scaffolding student's learning to these competencies across the programme.
- At next review consider the overlap between some modules – mapping exercise of learning outcomes needed. Ensure diversity in assessments and not to over assess students.
- Consider double marking of % of assessment or moderation
- Look to ways to increase module and course student feedback – ie incentivise with vouchers or competition or allow time within class for completion.
- Ensure diversity of student representation on various committees and boards
- 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?
- Important to note in module handbook student endeavour hours expected for the ECTS allocation as well as face to face hours with lectures/tutorials/labs etc
- 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 nutritionists/dietitians

- For the 20% of students that do not undertake further postgraduate studies important to report the career path of these graduates

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

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

The process of teaching and learning is in line with the European standards and all procedures discussed at the onsite meetings are typical for the university practice in the EU, as it is student-orientated programme aiming always at cultivating and developing critical thinking, teamwork, knowledge building, technological education and basic skills that students must have to adapt to modern challenges in their chosen careers.

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).
- Publications in scientific journals referred to the subject of study
- Debates
- Group discussions
- Power point presentations (students and tutors) followed by small discussions
- Laboratory sessions/ Demonstrations
- Tutorials
- Cooperative and independent learning.

Feedback is delivered at least three times per semester either through the Moodle platform or in personal interviews between student and his/her tutor.

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. The teaching personnel undergoes professional development seminars, in the areas of contemporary teaching methods, new technologies in learning and online education to keep up to date with the students' academical needs. It was also noted that there is some overlap between courses which is necessary due to the spiral learning teaching method underlying all courses offered in the programme.

Furthermore, it was commented that there is satisfactory integration of practical skills and theory e.g. in the final Research Project (NUTR-495G), in year four.

In addition, there is a student exchange policy involving students from Greece and the UK, while students from the Middle East (e.g., Qatar) train for short periods of time at the University of Nicosia.

2.2 Practical training

Undergraduates go through a 'Dietetic Placement course' (NUTR -496PG) during semester G' and are accredited with 6 ECTS. This involves practical demonstrations, case studies-discussions, virtual training portfolio and oral presentations, as well as interventions in the form of 'observations' always taking place in the presence of the student mentor-educator. (Total number of observations -254 placement hours).

In line with the recommendations of EFAD (European Academic and Practitioner Standards for Dietetics, June 2005), the placement part of the above course (254 hours placement) takes place both in a clinical and a non-clinical setting. Specifically, it includes observation in Food Production Companies, in Primary Health Care (Municipal Clinics, Health Centres, public and private hospitals and clinics, rehabilitation centres), gyms, preschool education (Kindergartens) and primary and secondary education.

This part is assessed through case studies requiring critical thinking and the application of knowledge acquired throughout the whole course as well as written exams. Furthermore, students submit to their supervisors an activity report and an evaluation report regarding their hospital or other placement. In addition, student assessment includes the completion of observation forms during their visits, 'witness statements', as well as of all their work, which they also use for reflecting back on their work. In addition, students undergo mid and final exams regarding this module (NUTR-496PG).

Practical training regarding nutrition, is also included in the courses of 'Food science & management principles & lab' (FDSC -260) during semester C' and 'Food service systems management and lab' (FDSC -316) in semester E'.

In general, the organisation and the content of practical training, support the achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.

2.3 Student Assessment

Student assessment is both formative and informative/summative, while students are provided with feedback both officially and unofficially on a regular basis.

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

- Oral Presentations
- *Interactive communication during lectures*
- Quizzes
- Coursework-assignments
- *Laboratory reports*
- Lab Exercises
- Article Critique
- Midterm and *final exams*

Strengths

The whole approach of teaching, assessing and practical training of students followed in this specific BSc programme, gives students a broad perspective of Dietetics and Nutrition.

Students are educated in both the theoretical and the practical aspects of Nutrition and Dietetics.

Up- to-date student-centered methods are used in teaching.

Teaching is done in relatively small groups allowing the establishment of a relationship of trust

and mutual respect among teachers and students as well as the close monitoring of student progress. Students report being listened to and given enough personal attention.

Student assessment methods are in place and well aligned with the learning objectives of the programme.

A considerable part of the education is devoted to the development of lab and research. This is evidenced by the inclusion of the final projects in the fourth year as well as other assignments and coursework throughout the four-year course.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. Students are educated in various competencies including knowledge, lab skills, academic writing and presenting, critical thinking and professional behaviour (giving and accepting feedback). It seems that progress is monitored mainly by the teachers in close contact with the students.

Recommendation: it would be advisable to install a system through which the progress on various competencies, particularly those related to the profession of dietetics, are covered and examined during the course of the studies. Also, although digital competencies are developed and utilised through the Moodle platform, social media, youtube and Webex, it is recommended that there is a need for them to collaborate even more.

2. Presently all assurance of teaching and assessment quality lies within the lecturers and the common practice is that the course organisers use each other's advice as the main source of external support and control.

Recommendation: It might be advised to institute more formal methods of quality assurance and approval through for example, larger bodies, such as exam and curricular boards comprised of local faculty, as well as external examiners from other universities in Cyprus and the EU.

3. The officially requested feedback from the students to the University has a low response rate (approx. 10-15%).

Recommendation: Part of the time of regular teaching activities should be dedicated for registering feedback by the students. This will improve the response.

4. Recommendation: Although students do a substantial number of lab and placement hours, further strengthening of laboratory practice is recommended as many courses in the Programme assume familiarity with lab equipment and modern lab methods, and placement principles.
5. Most of the delivery of the course teaching and assessment depends on the lecturers who are also course organisers. They have most of the responsibility for material selection, ensuring quality, resolving overlaps and performing all student assessment. The typical teaching load is 12-15 hours per week, which leaves little time for research and postgraduate supervision.

Recommendation: Focus on balancing the teaching-load of individual staff.

Regarding assessment, at next review please provide sample assessment scripts across grades, and feedback provided against developed rubrics for transparency purposes. It would be beneficial to see an assessment map for the different semesters to ensure diversity amongst assessment types and to ensure minimal overlap. It would also provide the EEC with an idea of student assessment workload.

6. Thesis projects are given to the individual students based on their total academic performance. However, some students might be talented in the laboratory and the research field or/and in specific courses but not have the highest grade among all the students. Therefore, they might lose the opportunity to have an experimental thesis project and work in a laboratory, which may affect their further studies since they will not have the required experience to proceed to a research Master's or PhD degree. An experimental research project will prepare them better for their future studies and for their career - if they are interested in a career in research.

Recommendation: An alternative way could be to give the thesis projects to the students, based on their academic performance on the specific subjects, which are related to the thesis project they are interested in. Moreover, for the experimental thesis project, it might be a good idea to select the students based on their performance in the laboratory classes, too. If resources allow, an even better solution would be to offer experimental laboratory projects (Nutrition assessment, NCP-nutrition care process, food analysis etc.) to all interested students.

7. The curriculum offers sufficient courses of Nutrition and Dietetics and it is in compliance with the Cypriot law for Dietetics (N31/(i)96).

Recommendation: Incorporate placement hours in other courses offered in previous years and not offer all placement hours in year four. Also, incorporate more nutrition placement hours.

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 members of academic staff to support the teaching and research activities of undergraduate and postgraduate taught and research students. The academic staff holds appropriate to the discipline academic degrees, and research degrees at PhD level. Two members of the staff are fellows of the higher education academy in the UK but others seem to be lacking formal training and certification in academic practice, teaching and learning. The estimated number ratio between students to academic is appropriate, ensuring a high quality programme of training is delivered to students and staff has time to dedicate on professional development. Currently the highest-ranking academics are two associate professors and a full professor who is also affiliated with another University in Greece. There are opportunities for interdisciplinary interaction with other Departments and Units within the University and the existence of a Medical School is considered an advantage. The process of staff appointment is not clear but the committee would expect this to follow governmental policies and the principles of equality and diversity. Teaching staff are adequately qualified to achieve the objectives and planned learning

outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning experience. It was unclear from the documentation on how academic staff is engaging in continuous professional, teaching and research training and development. Promotion criteria were not described but again the EEC would expect this to follow governmental and internal policies or promotion and reward. Members of academic staff carry international experience from major research active Universities in Europe. This is important as it offers to the Department and competitive international profile. The research activities of the members of staff are good but research outputs could have been much better. There was a lack of specialist technical staff particularly with the run of practical sessions and student support during laboratory dissertations.

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
- 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 Public Health Nutrition to Clinical Nutrition and Nutritional Sciences
- 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.

- There is a need for members of academic staff to formally log and keep records of continuous professional development



- The department seems to lack of technical support staff in laboratory and it was unclear whether there are post-doctoral researchers to help with research teaching activities, including co-supervision of BSc students
- The department may want to leverage existing opportunities to engage more with visiting professors from other Universities across Europe and elsewhere
- There is need for high calibre research and research outputs. Consideration of teaching and supervision workloads and the impact this has on research metrics.

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 rules are in place (high school grade, course in mathematics, biology and chemistry, English proficiency, personal statement). 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, which also allows for electives and, if required, personal adjustments. All courses are well described, including aim and content, learning outcomes, schedule and assignments. There is also the option for exchange with other institutions of higher education abroad. Candidates are qualified for applying to MSc programmes in Europe, the USA and other parts of the world. In case students have acquired credits in other places or

programmes, these can be recognized. Credits may also be transferred from one programme to another.

Candidates are awarded with a degree and are recognized as 'dietitian' in Cyprus. The material provided a copy of the degree, but lacked the diploma supplement, thus it is not possible to evaluate whether this is appropriate.

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 courses in biology and chemistry at high school before entering the programme, and it is advised that exceptions to this rule are only made for serious reasons.

The study programme appears as a well-developed and reasoned programme.

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 material could contain the degree and a supplement detailing the course structure and brief curriculum.

Student progression could have been described in more detail – how many students fulfil the study in 8 semesters, how many drop-out, and how many achieve the bachelor degree in the end.

It would have been interesting to see the number and areas of outgoing and incoming students with international exchange programs. The form of assignment for the individual courses could have been described in more detail (for example, oral or written exam, duration of exams, whether resources are allowed during the exam).



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. There 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. It appears to exist adequate equipment and specialist laboratory space for practical training in energy balance studies, body composition, food preparation and science, biomedical and biological sciences. However the EEC has not seen photos or videos of such facilities and how accessible these are for students. The equipment detailed in the programme documentation aligns with the needs of a BSc programme in nutrition and dietetics. All these ensure students are provided with the support they require to achieve their learning objectives. The number of students admitted to the programme is modest so the EEC cannot foresee major issues with resource availability, particularly if numbers increase, and should this be the case e-learning opportunities may help overcome such problems. There are human support resources available and there is a student advising and support facility where students can refer to receive a broad range of services. These span from support for students with disabilities to teaching and learning support for the slow learner. It is customary in academic institutions student to have the opportunity to refer to members of staff as a first line 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 tutors impended 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.

- Excellent environment to support teaching and learning as well as student advisory and support facilities
- There 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.
- There are cluster rooms and free internet access.
- Adequate equipment and specialist laboratory space are in place for practical training
- The equipment detailed in the programme documentation aligns with the needs of a BSc programme in nutrition and dietetics.
- The number of students admitted to the programme is modest so the EEC cannot foresee major issues with resource availability if number increase
- There are human support resources available and there is a student advising and support facility where students can refer to receive a broad range of advisory 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 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 impend them in the programme's information documentation.
- It might be good for the academic staff to collect formal anonymous feedback, on regular intervals, and use this to review study curriculum, resources and facilities provision.

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
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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		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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.

Overall 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 review day.

We commend the staff on the programme developed and in progress and on the quality assurance mechanisms in place and the student supports provided. In meeting the students, it is clear that they are well looked after and that there is a healthy student staff relationship.

We feel the course meets the programme intended learning outcomes across years and semesters and prepares graduates for the working market in entry level nutrition and dietetic positions.


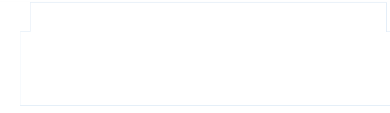
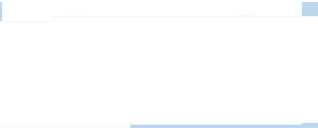
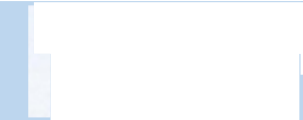
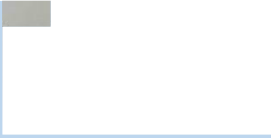
Following discussion at the review day it became apparent that the course is heavily governed by legislation or law that is somewhat limiting to the graduates of the course. It would have been beneficial to have received an outline of the titles used in Cyprus for dietitian, clinical dietitian, nutritionist etc to provide clarity and assurances on scope of practice and graduate opportunities from the BSc to MSc pathways.

It should be made very clear to enquiring students and student entering the course (clearly signposted on course prospectus material and on website) what the graduate opportunities are from graduating from this degree – their limitations and scope of practice within Cyprus and also with respect to applying for courses and registration in the EU/UK/US, especially around dietetic practice.

The EEC recommend a clear mapping of dietetic (and nutrition related) competencies/standards of proficiencies achieved from this course for related modules and placements.

Well done to all involved and we wish you well in your future teaching and research endeavours.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Konstantinos Gerasimidis	
Audrey Tierney	
Jutta Dierkes	
Despo Loizou	
Michalis Charalambides	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 12/07/2021