

Doc. 300.1.3

Date: 27 april 2022

Feedback Report from EEC Experts

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Nicosia
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Veterinary Medicine
- **Department:** Department of Veterinary Medicine
- **Programme of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Doctor of Veterinary Medicine (DVM) (5 years, 300 ECTS, undergraduate veterinary medicine degree)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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



A. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Mr. Jan Willem Hesselink (chair)	(Emeritus) Professor	Utrecht University, The Netherlands
Mrs. Vilhelmiina Huuskonen	Professor	University College Dublin, Ireland
Mrs. Valeria Grieco	Professor	University of Milan, Italy
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University



B. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

The EEC based on the external evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) and the Higher Education Institution's response (Doc.300.1.2), must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.

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

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

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

The external evaluation Committee is pleased to note that the suggestions given in order to improve the Vet Med study curriculum have been taken into account and it is satisfied. Courses of the years 3 and 4 have been adjusted inverting the semester allocation of some courses, in order to give essential knowledge bases for a better comprehension of the following courses. In particular Veterinary Pharmacology and Toxicology which was in the second semester of third year is now moved to the first one, constituting a solid base for a better comprehension of courses such as Herd Management and Medicine and Systems Medicine II, taught in the second semester of the same year. EEC stressed the importance of Food Hygiene in the Vet profession and suggested to dedicate more ECTS to these disciplines. These suggestions gave HEI the opportunity to emphasize that Food Safety is covered as a strand that passes through the entire programme and is included in relevant parts of the several courses. Moreover, the EEC also appreciate the clarification concerning Pathology Seminars and the reallocation of the course to the second semester of the fourth year. Regarding anesthesiology the Vet Med study program generally includes a dedicated course taught by an anesthetist. However, from the answers received, EEC understood that the curriculum design moved to a different approach embedding anesthesiology in several other courses. EEC appreciates the approach and the presence of a dedicated 2-week rotation, recommending however the importance of an anesthetist among the teachers.

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

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

The external evaluation committee concludes that the section previously assessed as “partially compliant” (i.e., the process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology) has now been satisfactorily addressed and can be considered “compliant”. The EEC previously felt that they did not have sufficient information about how the non-disabled students’ different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities were taken into consideration when conducting educational activities. The HEI (University of Nicosia School of Veterinary Medicine) has now provided the EEC with the required additional information (Appendix 3), which details their concept of Student-Centred Learning and the nine principles on which the SCL is based on. According to the document, the University recognizes that the students learn in different ways, have different needs and come from different backgrounds with different experience. Moreover, teaching is not imposed on the students, but the students have control over their own learning, which is aimed to empower and enable them by giving them the opportunity to develop their critical thinking and problem-solving.

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

In the area, the teaching staff has been assessed as compliant across the different sections by the EEC, but for the above reasons, this applies in particular to the first two years of the programme. We are pleased that the HEI has adopted the advice to pay attention to the recruitment and selection process of the staff for the later years of study. The multi-year planning document (appendix 6) provides more insight into this. However, the intended staff for clinical education still deserves extra attention. It was confirmed in the response of the HEI that 'all of those that are involved in veterinary clinical practice will meet all requirements to practice in Cyprus and fully licensed to do so, including meeting the Greek language requirements. Any non-Greek speakers that join the programme's academic team will not be teaching as part of clinical practice'. We would like to draw attention to the fact that there is currently a shortage of veterinarians across Europe with universities facing the difficulty of attracting and retaining well-qualified veterinarians/specialists for clinical education. The EEC is not aware of the situation in Cyprus and Greece and therefore does not know how large the supply of veterinary qualified for clinical education in these countries will be. Given the ambitions and the content of the study programme, it would seem obvious that diplomats from the EBVS would be involved in the clinical work and education, but in view of legislation and regulations this does not seem possible unless they speak Greek. The same limitation applies to attracting visiting professors in the clinical fields. The EEG has insufficient insight into whether the staff members to be recruited under these conditions will be able to carry out the clinical activities and the education therein in line with the high-quality level of the entire program. A period of training future clinical staff at other EAEVE and/or AVMA accredited faculties could potentially contribute to overcoming this problem.



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

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

The EEC has assessed this area as compliant within all sections. The additional explanation given on the software used (MyProgress), the case-by-case assessment for transfer student applicants and the language requirements is appreciated. The previous suggestion of the EEC to apply equal requirements to those applicants originating from the same veterinary programme, has been adopted.

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

All parts of this section have been assessed as compliant. The School of Veterinary Medicine will greatly benefit from using the knowledge and resources available at the university to support the programme and the students. The response from the HEI confirms the fact that the program is not only student oriented but that the infrastructure is in place to ensure this. The previous suggestion of the EEC that feedback from students will be mandatory for at least the first 5 years, has been adopted. It is indicated that regular feedback from multiple sources will be gathered to ensure that all stakeholder opinion is taken into account in reviewing the programme in its early development and delivery. The availability of good accommodation for students, especially on the farms further from Nicosia, has also been explained in more detail.



6. Additional for doctoral programmes
(ALL ESG)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Not applicable



7. Eligibility (Joint programmes) (ALL ESG)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

The proposed five-years program for DVM responds to the modern insights of a competency-oriented curriculum and prepares graduates for most career options for a veterinary professional. The curriculum covers all fundamental topics of veterinary medicine and professionalism and is also aligned with the One Health agenda. The entire five-year curriculum is solid and complete. It was noted that all fundamental courses were given within four years with the risk of course compression and potentially leading to extensive workload and student stress. In a number of places, this has already been improved by placing the courses in a more logical order. As indicated by the HEI, this is an ongoing process and will be regularly evaluated during implementation based on the indicated feedback mechanisms.

C. Conclusions and final remarks

The EEC must provide final conclusions and remarks, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

EEC's final conclusions and remarks

The School of Veterinary Medicine complies with the existing legal framework, internal regulations, institutional values, mission, and strategic planning expectations set out by the institute. A good system of quality assurance has been set up to expand and improve the quality of the programme. The facilities available at the medical school and the adjustments that have been/will be made for this (e.g. anatomy education) are suitable for carrying out the first two years of the program (basic and theoretical courses). The skills lab facilities are also suitable for training of veterinary students. The teachers who have been appointed for the first two academic years are experts in their field and able to give substance to the program. From this point of view, there is no obstacle to starting the program in September 2022. It is understandable that the content of education in later years and in particular clinical education has not yet been fully implemented. The EEC has no doubts about this in terms of content, but the recruitment of qualified staff for clinical education may face limitations due to the government's obligation of mastery of the Greek language for practicing veterinarians. Besides, the deployment of EBVS diplomats would be valuable to guarantee the quality of clinical activities and education. But in view of the aforementioned limitation due to the language and, moreover, the shortage of specialists in various disciplines within all of Europe, this does not seem feasible. The more certainty can be given about the realization of the Companion Animal University Hospital and the Equine facility and their functionality (i.e., referral vs. first opinion), the clearer the implementation of the clinical program will become. There is certainly still time, but the EEC does want to identify it as a potential risk factor. From a planning point of view, it seems desirable that teachers and infrastructure be ready in good time before the program becomes operational. At the moment, the HEI has achieved this for the first two academic years and seems to recommend such a time frame for the following academic years. In practical terms, this means that the third academic year must be completed in the current year 2022; the fourth academic year in 2023 and the fifth academic year in 2024.



D. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Mr. Jan Willem Hesselink (chair)	
Mrs. Vilhelmiina Huuskonen	
Mrs. Valeria Grieco	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

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