

Doc. 300.3.2

Higher Education Institution's Response (Departmental)

Date: *Date*

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Frederick University
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School:** Health Sciences
- **Department:** Pharmacy
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1

In Greek:

Φαρμακευτική

(5 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 300 ECTS, Ενιαίο και Αδιάσπαστο
Μάστερ)

ή

Φαρμακευτική

(5 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 300 ECTS, Πτυχίο (BSc))

In English:

Pharmacy

(5 academic years, 300 ECTS, Integrated Master)

or

Pharmacy

(5 academic years, 300 ECTS, Bachelor (BSc))

Programme 2

In Greek:

Προηγμένη Κοσμητολογία και Φυσικά Προϊόντα Υγείας
(3 ακαδημαϊκά εξάμηνα, 90 ECTS, Μάστερ (MSc))

In English:

Advanced Cosmetic Science and Natural Health Products
(3 academic semesters, 90 ECTS, Master (MSc))

Programme 3

In Greek:

Φαρμακευτική
(3 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό (PhD))

In English:

Pharmacy
(3 academic years, 180 ECTS, Doctorate (PhD))

Department's Status: Currently Operating

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].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the department in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.3.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- 1.a. The equipment support of basic pharmaceutical courses is not adequate and should be substantially enriched.

Department's Response:

As per the EEC's recommendation, the laboratory infrastructure and equipment have been significantly enriched. It is noted that the two research laboratories that were under construction during the EEC visit due to the global supply chain disruptions have now been finished and equipped with specialised facilities and are available for inspection by the CYQAA. Furthermore, teaching laboratory facilities have been upgraded with new equipment. Equipment further supporting pharmaceutical courses have been purchased according to the committee's comments and modern equipment, such as HPLC-MS, GC-MS, spectrofluorometer, granulators, tableting machine, and a modern organic chemical synthesis apparatus have been purchased. Please refer to Annex 1 with specifics of the acquisition. It is noted that any equipment waiting to be delivered does not affect the delivery and the quality of the educational process and is not used for teaching purposes (excluding possible use on project work) for the offering of the programme.

- 1.b. In order to justify the integrated Master degree, a number of basic pharmaceutical subjects should be at a very high level and include all the recent scientific findings on the subject.

Department's Response:

Specific advanced courses have been introduced in the Integrated Master program and their content includes the recent scientific findings in the field. Please see revised course descriptions in Annex 02, of: Advanced Pharmaceutical Biotechnology (PHA419), Advanced

topics in Design, Discovery & Development of Drugs (PHA420), Advanced Topics in Radiopharmaceutical Chemistry (PHA421), Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Care (PHA 413), Pharmacology II (PHA 405) and Pharmaceutical Chemistry II (PHA401).

1.c. No communication training is evident in the program in order to provide patient and health care professional counselling.

Department's Response:

Prior to starting their practical training, students will be required to complete a mandatory communication and patient counselling training. Please see Annex 02 in the syllabus of PHA509, PHA504. Completion of this seminar series is mandatory in order to be able to initiate with practical training. Please see description in the syllabus of PHA509, PHA504.

Furthermore, topics on pharmaceutical care and patient communication have been introduced to Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Care, PHA413 which also involves patient communication due to practical training in hospitals and clinics.

This course has been revised as described in Annex 02 and it has also been increased by two hours per week. Management, pharmaceutical care and patient communication has also been introduced in Principles of Management and Economics in Pharmaceutical Business, PHA420.

1.d. The students need to receive structured assignments relevant to the practical training and that are monitored and assessed by the appropriate faculty staff with a background in pharmacy practice

Department's Response:

The practical training course has been substantially modified according to the committee's comments, especially as far as the learning outcomes, the course content and the assessment methods are concerned. The course content describes the demanded procedures and assignments the students need to undertake and their performance will be assessed on a regular base by the registered pharmacist and the practical training committee (please see course description of Practical Training - PHA504, PHA507 and PHA509 – "Placement Guidelines" with the Instructions for Pharmacy Students (Trainees) and Supervising

Pharmacists, PT1 - Practical Training Assessment, PT2 - Practical Training Self-Assessment and PT3 - Final Practical Training Assessment). Please refer to Annex 03 – Practical Training Documentation.

According to the Pharmacy Board in Cyprus, all pharmacists practice within strict Codes of Ethics and Professional Standards and have a personal commitment to maintaining professional competence through continuing professional development. The practical training required for pharmacist registration has been set at twelve months. The six months of practical training is compulsory in an approved private or government pharmacy and the rest can be done apart from the pharmacies mentioned above in one of the following activities:

- (a) Preparation of pharmaceutical form of medicinal products
- (b) Preparation and control of pharmaceutical products
- (c) Testing of medicinal products in a testing laboratory pharmaceutical product
- (d) Storage, preservation and distribution of pharmaceutical products in wholesale stage
- (e) Supply, preparation, control, storage, distribution and disposal safe and effective pharmaceutical products of the required quality in pharmacies that are open to the public
- (f) Preparation, control, storage, distribution of safe and effective pharmaceutical products of the required quality in hospitals

As the number of primary care services available through community pharmacies is currently expanding due to the implementation of a General Healthcare System (GHS) in Cyprus, pharmacy students are trained to develop more patient-centred roles. They are motivated to manage issues such as increasing prescription volume, overall population aging, increasing polypharmacy, innovations in chronic disease management, advances in technology and personalized medicine, greater administrative requirements for handling third-party payments that require an expanded competency in pharmaceutical science.

Students are evaluated by the registered pharmacist of the community pharmacy, hospital pharmacy or pharmaceutical industry in the following evaluation categories:

- **Theoretical knowledge and research application.** The trainee pharmacists access, retrieve, critically analyze and apply relevant information to make evidence-based decisions within their practice with the goal of ensuring safe and effective patient care.

- **Ethical, Legal and Professional skills.** The trainee pharmacists practice within legal requirements, demonstrate professionalism and uphold professional standards of practice, codes of ethics and policies.
- **Patient Care and health promotion.** The trainee pharmacists, in partnership with the patient and in collaboration with other healthcare professionals, meet the patient's health and drug-related needs to achieve the patient's health goals. Pharmacists use their expertise to advance the health and wellness of patients, communities and populations.
- **Communication and education.** The trainee pharmacists communicate effectively with patients, the pharmacy team, other healthcare professionals and the public, providing education when required.
- **Drug dispensing and product distribution.** The trainee pharmacists ensure accurate product distribution that is safe and appropriate for the patient.

The Practical Training component of the Programme is supervised by Dr Charalambos Triantis who oversees all aspects of the Practical Training content, delivery and assessment. Dr Triantis is in constant collaboration with the external stakeholders that host the students, as well communicating with the students regarding any issues that may arise during their practicum. Ms Sophia Karavergou (Pharmacist) and Mr Elias Papadopoulos (Pharmacist) are staff members who supervise students and monitor their progress during placement. The students are also monitored and evaluated by members of the Departmental Practical Training Committee (Dr Charalambos Triantis, Dr Panagiotis Nompelos, Dr Giorgos Papagiouvannis). Professional supervision during the practical training period is also provided by the Registered Pharmacist.

Practical training is assessed through direct observation, question-based assessments to evaluate theoretical knowledge, answering questionnaires / interviews and submitting a "Practical Training Book". A "Practical Training Book" is kept by students as a diary in their practical training. It is a log book where the basic activities, exercises, assignments and obligations of the intern at the pharmacy, attendance at the pharmacy, attending lectures and examination at the end of each semester are described. It includes also pharmaceutical practice in community pharmacy, specific clinical cases in prescriptions, first aid, ethics, and safety, as well as functionality, organization of the hospital pharmacy, the construction in the pharmacy and validation process. The "Practical Training Book" is checked by the registered pharmacist regularly, by the faculty members who are monitoring the progress of the students'

practical training, and at the end of each 3-monthly period, it is also evaluated by the practical training committee of the Department.

The supervision and assessment of practical training has been better structured using the appropriate forms (see below) and also different types of assessment (self-peer-evaluation, continuous - final):

- Monthly Attendance Forms (6)
- Practical Training Book
- PT1. Monthly Practical Training Assessment (by the Registered Pharmacist)
- PT2. 3-Monthly Practical Training Assessment (by the trainee)
- PT3. Final Practical Training Assessment (by the Practical training Committee)

The assessment is continuous and recorded every month and at the end of practical training. A Likert-type scale is used to evaluate students in practical training, which has a qualitative characteristic, as no grade is entered. In addition to the scale, the registered pharmacist can also write some comments/observations for improvement. Additionally, the students fill in a self-evaluation report in a trimonthly base (PT2 - Practical Training Self-Assessment) with the aim of identifying the deficiencies/gaps and filling them up after consultation with the practical training committee.

The preceptors at the pharmacies who take on a Pharmacy student for practical training must be registered pharmacists with at least three-year experience, and the students are always under their close supervision. They do not have any type of relationship with the trainee student (direct relationship, marriage, financial interests, etc.), they are included in the list approved by the Competent Authority and train only one student at a time. They are in close contact with the practical training committee of the Department and receive the detailed “Placement Guidelines” with the learning objectives, the forms and contact numbers. Also, the preceptors at the pharmacies are prepared by attending a training/workshop which is held by the Department, every semester/year, so that they are adequately prepared to undertake the training of the students. The specific workshop aims to support the development on teaching, training and supervision skills as well as assessment skills using various methodologies. The workshop is offered in person and online and is recorded and shared with all participants in order to be able to refer back as needed. A Certificate of Attendance is issued to all participants. Moreover, the University supports the professional development of its academic staff members and trainers through the Personal and Professional Development Center

(P²DF) initiatives which also offers specific training sessions to the Teaching Staff Members for the adoption of modern teaching methodologies.

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The preceptors at the pharmacies who take on a Pharmacy student for practical training must be registered pharmacists with at least three-year experience, and the students are always under their close supervision. They should not have any type of relationship with the trainee

student (direct relationship, marriage, financial interests, etc.), they should be included in the list approved by the Competent Authority and train only one student at a time. They are in close contact with the practical training committee of the Department and receive the detailed “Placement Guidelines” with the learning objectives, the forms and contact numbers. Also, the preceptors at the pharmacies are prepared by attending a training/workshop which is held by the Department, every semester/year, so that they are adequately prepared to undertake the training of the students. The specific workshop aims to support the development on teaching, training and supervision skills as well as assessment skills using various methodologies. Moreover, the University supports the professional development of its academic staff members and trainers through the Personal and Professional Development Center (P²DF) initiatives which also offers specific training sessions to the Teaching Staff Members for the adoption of modern teaching methodologies.

1.e. The university should address the issue of non-Greek speaking students with regard to the practical training at the final year of the program.

Department’s Response:

The Registered Pharmacist who will train and supervise the students must be fluent in English language (Proof of English language proficiency, such as the TOEFL (minimum grade 90), the IELTS (minimum grade 6.5), or other equivalent language examinations or who have completed an undergraduate or graduate program where the instruction language was English, satisfy the proof of English language proficiency requirement). Moreover, practical training may be performed abroad through the Erasmus+ Programme and students are generally encouraged to gain an international experience.

1.f. The teaching and assessment of students should include more diverse methods.

Department’s Response:

The assessment of students usually includes a final written examination which takes place at the end of each semester and may involve open-type questions, short answered, computational, etc. This usually comprises 60% of the final grade of the course. The course work assessment (40% of the final grade) which is performed throughout the semester may involve a combination of the following assessment methods:

- Participation in the lesson and solving of exercises or problems
- Individual work and presentation
- Group work and presentation
- Project (usually offered in 4th year courses)
- Critical assessment of selected scientific literature and presentation
- Learning journal (where the students record their learning progress and reflect on what they have learnt during a course or if they had hard time understanding specific points)
- Laboratory assignments where students analyse an experimental procedure they have performed and interpret/present the results of an experiment
- Laboratory written examinations
- Case studies analysis (i.e. in Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Care, Pharmacology I and II, Pharmaceutical Legislation and Ethics)
- Practical Training

The University supports the professional development of its academic staff members through the Personal and Professional Development Center (P²DF) initiatives which also offers specific training sessions to the Teaching Staff Members for the adoption of modern teaching methodologies and assessment method. Practical training will be assessed through direct observation, question-based assessments to evaluate theoretical knowledge, submitting the practical training log book, answering questionnaires and interviews.

1.g. Students should be enabled to apply their knowledge on real life situations.

Department's Response:

The laboratory practice and the practical training as well as the study and analysis of clinical cases are methods/ways enabling the students to adopt and apply their knowledge on real life situations. Additionally, as far as the clinical aspects are concerned, clinical practice in real life situations has also been adopted in Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Care course (PHA413) as per the committee's suggestions (see Department's response to comment 2q). Prior to starting their practical training, students will be required to complete a mandatory communication training and patient counselling seminar series of a total of 10 hours. Completion of this seminar series is mandatory in order to be able to initiate with practical training.

2. Quality Assurance

Sub-areas

2.1 System and quality assurance strategy

2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study

Areas of improvement and recommendations

2.a. It could be considered to have a separate IQC for the Integrated MSc pharmacy program, which is new and highly academically demanding.

Department's Response:

The Internal Quality Committee of the University has developed and applies the Quality Assurance Policy of the University. The Internal Quality Policy concerns the following four broad areas: (a) its programs of study and teaching, (b) the research output and the creation of new knowledge, (c) the management of the University and the administrative services and (d) the connection with the society and the social contribution.

The internal quality system includes the processes and methodologies which (a) define, monitor, analyse and evaluate the quality indicators, (b) identify weaknesses and opportunities for further improvement and (c) apply remedial measures. The internal quality process is achieved through annual reporting from all parties involved in the operation of the University. The internal quality processes concerning the academic staff, the student performance and the programs of study is achieved through student questionnaires and self-evaluation reports. The Internal Quality Committee monitors the implementation of the internal quality process and reports to the Senate every two years.

The internal quality reporting process is achieved through a number of report templates and questionnaires. These templates include the Student Course Evaluation (IQC100), Faculty Course Evaluation (IQC101), Program Self Evaluation (IQC104), Faculty Activity Report (IQC105), Faculty Appraisal Report (IQC106) and the Department Self Evaluation Report (IQC107).

The Department of Pharmacy has adopted and applies a quality assurance policy which is the departmental implementation of the Quality Assurance Policy of the University. Through this

policy, the Department is committed to the continuous improvement of the quality of its Programs.

The internal evaluation of the Program is the responsibility of the program Coordinator, in cooperation with the Departmental Quality Committee. This committee consists of two of the department's Teaching and Research Staff (TRS) members appointed by the Council of the Department and one of the student representatives in the Council of the Department.

After the end of each academic year, the Coordinator of the Program completes the Program Self Evaluation (IQC104) report which includes quality indicators related to the program (structure, content, etc), the students (assessment, progress, etc), and the graduates (employability, degree grades, duration of studies, etc). This report utilizes also data and information obtained through the Student Course Evaluation (IQC100) questionnaires, the Faculty Course Evaluation report (IQC101), as well as comments and suggestions made by the focus groups (students, graduates and employers). The Program Self Evaluation reports also on the action taken, related to the Program, with respect to the implementation of the Departments Action Plan agreed between the Department and the Internal Quality Committee.

The Program Self Evaluation report is submitted to the Council of the Department and is part of the Department Self Evaluation Report (IQC107), which is submitted to the Internal Quality Committee of the University. The suggestions of the Department and the Internal Quality Committee are reported in the Action Plan of the Department, which includes also agreed actions and measures that aim in the upgrade and improvement of the Program. The implementation of this action plan is reported in the relevant (next academic year quality reports reports) and is monitored by the Departmental Quality Committee, while it is also checked by the Internal Quality Committee of the University.

Program Review:

The programs of study, offered by the Department, are reviewed following the process specified in the "Regulations for Review of a Program of Study" of the University. Changes in the programs of study are decided by the Council of the Department following the suggestions of an ad-hoc committee set by the Council of the Department for this purpose. This committee is chaired by the Program Coordinator, while the students are represented with one of the Program's student, appointed by the Students' Council. For the revision of the Program the committee considers (a) the findings and suggestions from the Program Self-Evaluation

Report, including suggestions of the students, the academics and the focus groups (students, graduates and employers), (b) the current developments in the fields related to the Program, (c) suggestions from the Internal Quality Committee, the external evaluation teams, professional bodies, such as the Pharmacy Board, as well as suggestions by international bodies, such as the International Pharmaceutical Federation.

The revision of the Program can include the revision of the courses of the program and/or the revision of the structure of the Program.

Course Review:

The revision of courses aims to update/upgrade the courses of the Program. This revision might refer to:

- Update of the content and the learning outcomes of the course. Changes in the content of the course must be in accordance with the set learning outcomes, the number of ECTS and the student's workload. If this revision requires significant changes, then these changes must be considered as a program revision and the relevant procedures must be followed.
- Change in the prerequisites of the course.
- Update of the bibliography of the course.
- Introduction of new teaching methods.
- Changes in the assessment methods, criteria and weights.

The revision of the courses is decided by the Council of the Department before the beginning of the new academic year, while the School Council and the Senate are notified. The Chairperson of the Department acts upon updating the Departments web site and the Study Guide of the Program.

Course Structure Review:

The revision of the Program structure may refer to:

- Significant changes in the content of the courses of the Program.
- Changes in the learning outcomes of the Program.
- Significant changes in the semester allocation of course and/or course prerequisites.
- Changes in the number of ECTS and the teaching time of courses.
- Introduction of new courses and removal of existing ones.

Changes in the type (compulsory, elective, etc) and the level of courses.

The review of the structure of the Program is decided by the Council of the Department and submitted to the Council of the School and the Senate for approval. The Chairperson of the Department informs the Studies Office on the changes and acts upon updating the Departments web site and the Study Guide of the Program.

In the case that the review of the Program requires significant restructuring of the Program (eg add new courses and remove existing ones, etc), the changes are submitted to the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA) for approval.



3. Administration

Areas of improvement and recommendations

3.a. none.

Department's Response:

We would like to thank the EEC for their positive remarks.

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

Areas of improvement and recommendations

4.a. The teaching and assessment of students should include more diverse methods.

Department's Response:

Please refer to answer 1.f.

4.b. It is suggested that the postgraduate Thesis and the practical training are executed separately, so that each one covers 30 ECTS on distinct semesters.

Department's Response:

We accept the EEC recommendation. The postgraduate Thesis (PHA 508, 30 ECTS) and the Practical Training (PHA509, 30 ECTS) are now on distinct semesters and are offered separately on the 9th and 10th semester, respectively. Please refer to Annex 4– Course Distribution per semester.

4.c. More time should be allocated for skill development (e.g. counselling and monitoring patients) and more professional supervision in the practical training period is needed.

Department's Response:

Prior to starting their practical training, students will be required to complete a mandatory communication training and patient counselling seminar series of a total of 10 hours. Completion of this seminar series is mandatory in order to be able to initiate with practical training. Please see description in the syllabus of PHA509, PHA504. Furthermore, topics on skill development such as counselling, management, pharmaceutical care and patient communication have been introduced to Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Care, PHA413 (which also involves patient communication due to practical training in hospitals and

clinics) as well as in Principles of Management and Economics in Pharmaceutical Business, PHA418 (elective course).

Practical training from the University's side, is supervised by Dr Charalambos Triantis. Dr Triantis is in constant collaboration with the external stakeholders that host the students, as well communicating with the students regarding any issues that may arise during their practicum. Ms Sophia Karavergou (Pharmacist) kai Mr Elias Papadopoulos (Pharmacist) are staff members who supervise students and monitor their progress during placement. Professional supervision during the practical training period is also provided by the Registered Pharmacist. According to the regulations set by the Pharmaceutical Services, Ministry of Health, the preceptors at the pharmacy must be registered pharmacists with at least three-year experience, and the students are always under their close supervision. The preceptors at the pharmacies are prepared by attending a mandatory training/workshop which are held by the university so that they are adequately prepared to undertake the training of the students. The students are also monitored and evaluated by members of the Departmental Practical Training Committee (Dr Charalambos Triantis, Dr Panagiotis Nompelos, Dr Giorgos Papagiouvannis).

comments, especially as far as the learning outcomes, the course content and the assessment methods are concerned. The course content describes the demanded procedures and assignments the students need to undertake and their performance will be assessed on a regular base by the registered pharmacist and the practical training committee (please see course description of Practical Training - PHA504, PHA507 and PHA509 – “Placement Guidelines” with the Instructions for Pharmacy Students (Trainees) and Supervising Pharmacists, PT1 - Practical Training Assessment, PT2 - Practical Training Self-Assessment and PT3 - Final Practical Training Assessment). Please refer to Annex 3 – Practical Training Documentation.

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Practical training is assessed through direct observation, question-based assessments to evaluate theoretical knowledge, answering questionnaires / interviews and submitting a “Practical Training Book”. A “Practical Training Book” is kept by students as a diary in their practical training. It is a log book where the basic activities, exercises and obligations of the intern at the pharmacy, attendance at the pharmacy, attending lectures and examination at the end of each semester are described. It includes also pharmaceutical practice in community pharmacy, specific clinical cases in prescriptions, first aid, ethics, and safety, as well as functionality, organization of the hospital pharmacy, the construction in the pharmacy and validation process. The “Practical Training Book” is checked by the registered pharmacist regularly, by the faculty members who are monitoring the progress of the students’ practical training, and at the end of each 3-monthly period, it is also evaluated by the practical training committee of the Department.

The supervision and assessment of practical training has been better structured using the appropriate forms (see below) and also different types of assessment (self-peer-evaluation, continuous - final):

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The preceptors at the pharmacies who take on a Pharmacy student for practical training must be registered pharmacists with at least three-year experience, and the students are always under their close supervision. They should not have any type of relationship with the trainee student (direct relationship, marriage, financial interests, etc.), they should be included in the list approved by the Competent Authority and train only one student at a time. They are in



close contact with the practical training committee of the Department and receive the detailed “Placement Guidelines” with the learning objectives, the forms and contact numbers. Also, the preceptors at the pharmacies are prepared by attending a training/workshop which is held by the Department, every semester/year, so that they are adequately prepared to undertake the training of the students. The specific workshop aims to support the development on teaching, training and supervision skills as well as assessment skills using various methodologies. Moreover, the University supports the professional development of its academic staff members and trainers through the Personal and Professional Development Center (P²DF) initiatives which also offers specific training sessions to the Teaching Staff Members for the adoption of modern teaching methodologies.

5. Teaching Staff

Areas of improvement and recommendations

5.a. Teaching staff should be expanded to include pharmacology (molecular pharmacology) and patient and societally orientated pharmacy disciplines. The teaching staff should strive to adopt modern teaching methodologies, such flipped classroom, online discussion forum and peer-feedback.

Department's Response:

We agree that it is beneficial to increase the full-time faculty members with research capacity and this is also in the strategic planning of the Department. We have made two announcements for full-time posts, in line with the specializations suggested by the EEC for the current program ([Link](#)) as well as the MSc in Advanced Cosmetic Science and Natural Health Products. More specifically, two full-time positions (one position in Pharmaceutical Technology with specialization in cosmetology and one position in Pharmacology with specialization in Clinical Pharmacology) have been advertised, in addition to part-time positions.

For the full-time position in pharmaceutical technology, following due process, **Dr Constantinos Gardikis** ([CV](#)) has been selected. Dr Gardikis has significant research background in pharmaceutical technology with expertise in cosmetology and cosmetics production and a clear research potential in addition to satisfying the needs of the specialization. The University and Dr Gardikis have already agreed terms and it is expected that his election will be formally finalized in the next University Council meeting. In the agreed terms, due to prior engagements of Dr Gardikis employment will commence from the new academic year (September 2023).

With respect to the full-time position in pharmacology, no applications that meet the minimum criteria have been received and we have reposted the job vacancy announcement with a new deadline set at April, 30th ([Link](#)). The University has been taken the necessary steps to promote the vacancy and aid the recruitment of suitable candidates.

It is noted that currently the academic demands in patient-centred pharmacy and social aspects of pharmacy for teaching purposes are fully met with a combination of specialized visiting faculty members and full-time faculty members. Specifically, the following personnel is involved in these subjects:

- Visiting Associate Professor Nikolaos Drakoulis ([CV](#)). Dr Drakoulis is a medical doctor with specialization in Clinical Pharmacology. He has a long teaching and research experience in clinical pharmacology, clinical therapeutics and pharmacogenomics/pharmacogenetics.
- Visiting Assistant Professor Dimitrios Panides ([CV](#)). Dr Panides is a pharmacist with specialization in Clinical Pharmacy and Clinical Pharmacology. He has extensive experience in pharmaceutical policy making, clinical trials / pharmacovigilance, pharmacoinformatics, methodology of epidemiologic research in pharmacy and evidence-based medicine.
- Special Teaching Staff Member, Mrs Stavroula Kitiri ([CV](#)). Mrs Kitiri is a Clinical Pharmacist in the Bank of Cyprus Oncology Center who specializes in pharmaceutical care and therapeutics.

Furthermore, full time staff members also supporting patient-centred pharmacy are the following: Prof. Maritsa Gourni (medical doctor who specializes in pharmaceutical microbiology), Associate Professor Giorgos Charalambous (medical doctor who specializes in Internal Medicine and Healthcare Management), Lecturer Phivos Simeonides (medical doctor with expertise in Cardiology Pharmacology), Lecturer Savvas Ioannou (a medical doctor who specializes in Internal Medicine, Infectious Diseases and Diabetes Mellitus).

Modern teaching methodologies have been included, such as flipped classroom on clinical cases study analysis. Furthermore, online discussion forums and the peer-feedback are applied in some of the courses (i.e. Clinical Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Care, Pharmacology I and II, Pharmaceutical Legislation and Ethics) especially regarding the exercises and the laboratory assignments as well as at the case study analysis. The assessment of students usually includes a final written examination which takes place at the end of each semester and may involve open-type questions, short answered, computational, etc. This usually comprises 60% of the final grade of the course. The course work assessment (40% of the final grade) which is performed throughout the semester, may involve a combination of the following assessment methods: Participation in the lesson and solving of exercises or problems, Individual work and presentation, Group work and presentation, Project (usually offered in 4th year courses), Critical assessment of selected scientific literature and presentation, Learning journal (where the students record their learning progress and reflect on what they have learnt during a course or if they had hard time understanding specific points), Laboratory assignments (where students analyse an experimental procedure

they have performed and interpret/present the results of an experiment), Laboratory written examinations, Case study analysis, Practical Training Assessment.

Finally, the University supports the professional development of its academic staff members through the Personal and Professional Development Center (P²DF) initiatives which also offers specific training sessions to the Teaching Staff Members for the adoption of modern teaching methodologies.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

5.b. The equipment support of all pharmaceutical courses is not adequate and should be substantially enriched. The academic staff should be increased and supplemented with full-time faculty members with expertise and research capacity in pharmacology, patient-centred pharmacy and social aspects of pharmacy.

Department's Response:

Please refer to answer 1a and 5a.

6. Resources

Areas of improvement and recommendations

6.a. Department feasibility studies were not conducted apart during the creation of a new Program of Study that leads to the established of a new Department of Pharmacy. Therefore, it is necessary to examine the key performance indicators of the department, including student recruitment trends, adequacy of human resources, relevance of program of study, research output and service to society. Based on this assessment and management feedback the departmental action plan should be revised.

Department's Response:

We fully agree with the EEC comment that it is necessary to examine the Department's performance through appropriate indicators. Feasibility studies are conducted upon the establishment of new academic entities (departments, programs of study, etc). The establishment of the new Department of Pharmacy and its Program of Study was a mature decision taken by the University's Council and the School of Health Sciences after performing a feasibility study where many factors were carefully evaluated, such as compliance with the University's mission and strategic plan, the society's needs, involved stakeholders opinions, human resources, profile of perspective students, prospects for student recruitment, prospects for employment of future graduates, program development costs for teaching and research, synergies to existing programs of study, risks. However, the university has a structured process for review along the lines that the EEC suggests. Specifically, each department, including the Department of Pharmacy, follows a two-year cycle review with the University's Council Strategic Committee. Under this review specific Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that concern the education (relevance of programs of studies, human resources, teaching infrastructure), research (infrastructure, funding, output) and extroversion activities concerning the market, the community, society and our alumni), are used to guide the process. For example, in relation to feasibility and viability matters the following KPIs are tracked: student-to-staff ratio, Full-Time/Visiting-Staff ratio, candidate student applications vs registrations, and student numbers. For each of this KPIs the university maintains a desirable range and if the KPI is outside this range or has a trend towards deviating, action is planned. It is through this review that actions for new full-time faculty positions have been made in the past. A similar process has been formalized in relation to research production from the department.



Research-focused KPIs are selected such as Scopus-indexed publications per faculty member and total grants obtained from funded research. It is noted that during the first cycles of this review the focus of the Department has been in ensuring the necessary development of the academic program, the faculty and the teaching resources, including the teaching laboratories. In the latest review focus has been given to research and it is through this process that the two new research laboratories have been developed as well as the support for the development of the doctoral program.

At the end of these reviews a mutually agreed revision of the department's strategic action plan is informed.

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC following the visit to the Department, the discussion with the teaching and administrative staff and the students, as well as after careful evaluation of the provided material has come to the conclusion that the Department has the necessary infrastructure, administration staff and teaching facilities required to successfully run the programs it offers. The EEC recommends that substantial improvement should be made with regard to the expansion of the academic personnel to modern pharmacy disciplines, hiring highly competent scientists preferably as full-time personnel, although it acknowledges the difficulties to do so given the particularities of the country (e.g. language limitation). Also, it is strongly recommended that the laboratory facilities, both teaching and research, should be enriched in order to efficiently support the offered programs.

- The BSc and Master programs need reorganisation regarding compulsory and elective courses.
- Patient and societally orientated courses should be mandatory in the BSc and Master programs and the teaching staff should be expanded accordingly.
- The laboratory equipment should be substantially enriched, especially for the core pharmaceutical courses.
- Diploma work (involving research) should be included in the BSc program.
- External stakeholders should be more involved in monitoring and assessing all programs offered by the Department.
- International collaborations in research and teaching and student mobility should be enhanced in all programs offered by the Department.. The EEC recommends that for the suggestions for each program offered, reference should be made to the relevant program reports..

Department's Response:

We would like to sincerely thank the EEC for their dedicated work and invaluable comments provided both within their evaluation report and during the frank discussions held throughout the visit. All suggestions made by the EEC have been adopted and implements, as seen by the answers throughout sessions 1-7.



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Prof. George Demosthenous	Rector	

