

Doc. 300.3.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

(Departmental)

Date: Date

- **Higher Education Institution:**
National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
(NKUA) - Cyprus Branch-Nicosia

- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Medical Sciences
- **Department:** Department of Nursing
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**
Nursing (4 Academic Years, 240 ECTS, A Cycle Bachelor)

Programme 1

In Greek:

Πρόγραμμα Προπτυχιακών Σπουδών Τμήματος
Νοσηλευτικής

In English:

Undergraduate Study Programm
Department of Nursing

- **Department's Status:** New



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. 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**

The site visit provided access to the buildings that have been made available, however, the lack of laboratory and skills spaces was noted. There were panels of stakeholders and former students who spoke positively about the university. The parent university has an established faculty, but they need to provide more information on development planning in the short term. There are positive relationships with the city and the basic funding is secured. Strategic additional funding will rely on investment (such as provision of additional buildings). This will require more detail in investment over a five-year period.

Answers:

- a) Lack of laboratory and skills spaces: we have collaborations with Cyprus University (state university) but we plan to have our own labs in the permanent buildings of the department within a four-year strategic period plan.
- b) Faculty development planning in the short term: hire 5 academic personnel per year meaning 20 in a four-year period. We will perform also train the trainers program. In addition, teaching research will have full administrative, financial and technical support. Also, a clear framework for faculty rights and obligations, aligned with both NKUA regulations and Cypriot law. Access to library, IT, and academic resources will be provided.
- c) Faculty will have access to mentorship and academic advising structures, and will be encouraged to contribute to the research, teaching, and strategic development of the Branch. Finally, Opportunities for participation in evaluation and quality assurance processes, ensuring continuous professional development.
- d) Strategic additional funding will rely on investment (such as provision of additional buildings): this project is in under development with a plan of three years and the support of the Archbishop of Cyprus.

The mission statement and goals of the department should better reflect the needs of the Cypriot students. A risk analysis for the first three years should be provided.

Stronger connections with Cypriot society should be developed to assure mutual benefit and improve the impact of this branch.

Answers:

- a) Mission statement and goals: The parent university, and particularly the faculty and administrative staff of the Department of Nursing, are well-acquainted with Cypriot culture. This familiarity stems from our shared language, common historical experiences, and longstanding academic collaboration with Cypriot institutions. Additionally, we have been training Cypriot students in our department for nearly four decades. Consequently, we anticipate no cultural or communication barriers in engaging with Cypriot students.
- b) Risk analysis for the first three years: The anticipated risk is low to negligible. For over 40 years, Cypriot students have consistently chosen the NKUA Department of Nursing for their studies. We currently have 48 active students and 401 alumni from Cyprus, despite the legal restriction of 7% admissions for Cypriots (equivalent to up to 10 students per year). Cypriot private hospitals regularly participate in our departmental activities (e.g., career days) and actively recruit our graduates, demonstrating strong demand for our nursing alumni. Furthermore, our tuition fees are highly competitive with those of private universities in Cyprus (a



minor difference of 5%, or €300–€600 per year). Our university holds a high international reputation and is ranked among the top 150 globally. The viability of the Branch during its first three years is based on admitting 35 students in the first year and more than 40 students per year thereafter (with a cap of 60 for reasons of academic quality and clinical training organization).

- c) Connections with Cypriot society: Connections are already strong. Four current faculty members in the Nursing department at the parent university are Cypriots, and many others maintain close collaborations with Cypriot universities and institutions. Notably, more than 11 professors currently serving at Cypriot universities are alumni of NKUA. There is a long-standing cultural and scientific collaboration between our institutions and societies, which provides a robust foundation for future engagement.

2. Quality Assurance

Sub-areas

2.1 System and quality assurance strategy

2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study

Clarity needed on how they prepare clinical mentors. Policies to detail authorship and intellectual property. Links to staff need to be made available for potential students and quality assurance mechanisms may need to adapt to meet the needs of students in Cyprus.

Answers:

- a) Preparation of Clinical mentors. In case of collaboration with the ministry of health we will utilize public hospitals, who are already involved in clinical teaching/training of nursing students having the knowhow and the adequate qualifications for this purpose. We already have the procedure which will be applied in Cyprus also using Logbook, the train the trainers program, education etc.
- b) Policies to detail authorship and intellectual property: all regulations regarding policies to detail authorship and intellectual property of the parent university will be applied in the Cyprus branch.
- c) Links to staff need to be made available: https://www.nurs.uoa.gr/anthropino_dynamiko/dep
- d) Quality assurance mechanisms may need to adapt to meet the needs of students in Cyprus: this will be endorsed according to Cyprus authority's guidance and state regulations as soon as the accreditation is approved.

3. Administration

Internationalization strategy (inward and outward) would be helpful. The quality of these experiences needs to be ensured and publicised. Meeting the required practical hours must be balanced with overseas visits. This is a major opportunity for the students.

Answers:

- a) Internationalization: NKUA maintains over 800 MoU with Universities from 58 countries. It participates actively in the Erasmus + student and faculty exchange program, and it is a founding member of the CIVIS European University Alliance and the association of Universities of European Capitals (UNICA). Internationalization is listed and incorporated in the Nursing program strategic plan and several collaborations already exist including one with Columbia University.
- b) Meeting the required practical hours must be balanced with overseas visits: the nursing students in the NKUA-Branch will visit regularly the facilities of the Nursing program at the parent institution. Also, visiting professors, including graduates from NKUA serving in Universities abroad (USA, Canada, UK, Sweden etc), will support our academic plan

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

There is a wide variety of modules taught at present. Exams feature highly. There is a need to develop more competency-based education and to assess this appropriately.

Criteria for admission and credit transfers are needed. International experience should be more transparent in the future.

Answers:

- a) There is a wide variety of modules taught at present: it is our intention to modify the program and improve the content of modules appropriately. We acknowledge that this program has deficits to some extent. It is our plan to apply the new program having significant modifications and improvements.
- b) Exams feature highly: exams criteria will be clearly quantified and personalized written feedback to the students will be provided. During each course evaluation the feedback of the students will be seriously considered.
- c) There is a need to develop more competency-based education and to assess this appropriately: a more detailed expected competences will be provided for each module.
- d) Criteria for admission and credit transfers are needed: admission criteria are: we have developed admission criteria and please see attached file. Credit transfer through prior learning and professional portfolio will be considered by the study program committee and the related teaching personnel. We will provide further details in our internal regulation regarding credit transfer. A formal RPL and credit transfer policy aligned with EQF will be adopted, allowing credit transfer and portfolio-based assessment.
- e) International experience should be more transparent in the future: as stated above we already have internationalization in our strategic plan and current activity.



5. Teaching Staff

Needs a clear plan for recruitment of future faculty that reflect the specialisms within the local health system. This should include visiting professors and could assist with the staff student ratio.

A clear plan is needed for the recruitment of future faculty members, ensuring alignment with the specializations required by the local health system. This plan should also include the appointment of visiting professors. We have addressed this in our short-term faculty recruitment strategy, which includes engaging a significant number of NKUA graduates currently serving as academic staff in universities worldwide. This approach will substantially improve the staff-to-student ratio.

6. Research

Develop an independent research strategy to support this undergraduate research programme. Give details on how to implement research of relevance to Cyprus.

Future curricula could make research more student centered as an activity rather than theoretical.

- a) Independent research strategy to support this undergraduate research programme. Thank you very much for your suggestion. Actually, we help and guide our students through their annual congress incorporating their research along with their professors. This will be applied in the Cyprus branch and will be promoted in order to have a research collaboration of the two departments, the parent and the Cyprus branch. Most of our academic staff include in their research programs, undergraduate students and this culture will be transferred to Cyprus branch academic personnel.
- b) Research of relevance to Cyprus: to be applied as the program is accredited and starts with local academic personnel.
- c) Future curricula could make research more student centered as an activity rather than theoretical: actually, is our policy and we strongly support and involve students in our research programs and we support them in their annual congress but we also support them to participate in Nursing congresses and present their works in collaboration with their professors – supervisors.

7. Resources

The budget relies on recruiting sufficient students so a risk assessment for alternative situations would be helpful.

Answers:

- a)** The parent university will support the Cyprus branch until it becomes self-sustaining, primarily through income generated from continuing and lifelong learning programs, as well as research projects led by local faculty and in collaboration with faculty from the parent university.
- b)** A risk assessment of alternative scenarios would be helpful. One such possibility currently under consideration is the development of an English-language program aimed at meeting the needs of Cyprus, the Middle East, Africa, and Asia. This has significant potential for success, given the global nursing shortage, which exceeds 5 million, particularly in European countries.

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Immediate (1-12 months): Recommendations, actions required	Response
1. Risk assessment for budget and staffing is also needed	Analyzed in the document
2. Staffing plan	5 per year, visiting professorship, current staff at NKUA
3. Recognition of prior studies and experience needed in line with European standards	We accept prior studies and experience using credit transfer according to workload certified
4. Links between the different departments establish to use resources effectively	We have already established this along with Medical School, Psychology dept., Pedagogy dept., Financial dept., and Business Administration - Management dept.
5. Marketing material needs to be developed	It is under development

Longer term (3-5 years): Recommendations, actions required	Response
1. More precise market analysis as the expansion is being planned. This should include the competitors in the market.	We will create such analysis
2. Strategic plan for research appropriate to Cyprus.	We will with our local collaborators and others
3. International collaborations strengthened	We are doing so including our visit to Johns Hopkins University and Columbia University this August – September



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Pavlos Myrianthefs	Chair, Department of Nursing	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	

Date: 05/08/2025

