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Date: 01-August - 2025

External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

NATIONAL AND KAPODISTRIAN UNIVERSITY OF
ATHENS (NKUA) – CYPRUS BRANCH

- **Town:** Nicosia, Cyprus

- **School/Faculty:** Medical School

- **Department:** Basic and Clinical Science

- **Department's Status:** New

- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation:**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1

In Greek:

ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ ΠΡΟΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΩΝ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ ΤΜΗΜΑΤΟΣ
ΙΑΤΡΙΚΗΣ (ΕΚΠΑ) – ΠΑΡΑΡΤΗΜΑ ΚΥΠΡΟΥ (6 ΧΡΟΝΙΑ,
360 ECTS, ΠΡΩΤΟΣ ΚΥΚΛΟΣ ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ)

In English:

UNDERGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMME –
DEPARTMENT OF MEDICINE (NKUA) – CYPRUS BRANCH
(6 YEARS, 360 ECTS, FIRST CYCLE)



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].



Department's programmes (to be filled by the CYQAA officer and verified by the EEC):

DEPARTMENT	PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) of the CYQAA undertook a two day visit (24th-25th July 2025) to the Theological Academy of Nicosia in order to meet with the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) team responsible for their new Cyprus branch campus.

We heard how the University already has five campuses across Greece with 44 undergraduate and 238 postgraduate accredited programmes. They are the top-ranked university in South East Europe and the first choice for school graduates in Athens and Cyprus alike. Approximately 10% undergraduate students at NKUA are Cypriot nationals and links between NKUA and the University of Cyprus (UCY), as the premier public university in Cyprus, are long-standing.

Within medicine, approximately one quarter of doctors practising in Cyprus are NKUA alumni, and this initiative has strong and broad support from stakeholders – including national and local government, Cyprus Medical Association leaders and the Church, many of whom are NKUA alumni and with whom we met. We have heard how there is also strong support for this initiative from the Cyprus population, with a phone survey undertaken as part of an initial feasibility study.

We have been advised that the current Council of NKUA, instated in September 2023, identified the formation of this branch campus as a strategic initiative in October 2023. Since then, a change in Greek law had been necessary in order for the branch application to be possible. Because of the series of decision points already undertaken, the accreditation visit occurred approximately two months before the initial three programmes (Medicine, Business, Management) were due to start, with a further four programmes (Nursing, Psychology, Education, Classics) scheduled to start, subject to accreditation in academic year 2026/7.

As part of the branch campus development, the Theological Academy will provide classrooms and similar university buildings (which we visited) until a permanent campus is established, with the local government recognising that this development aligns closely with plans to regenerate the Old Town in Nicosia, and investing accordingly, resulting in the provision of student accommodation. The branch campus initiative, then, has four main drivers:

1. Increasing the quality of education within Cyprus, uniquely positioned at the gateway between Mediterranean and Middle Eastern cultures.
2. Accelerating academic research in Cyprus to create world-leading impact as part of true academia.
3. Improving the breadth and quality of healthcare on the island and driving the retention of locally-trained doctors in the Hellenic world.
4. Acting as a nidus to drive the regeneration of Nicosia Old Town which began in 2016.

The principal benefit of an institution with status such as NKUA establishing a branch campus is as a driver to establish a University Hospital in Cyprus, which will be transformational in clinical academia on the Island. By creating a route for research-intensive clinicians to continue their clinical practice while contributing to research and educational initiatives, the provision of sustainable high-quality care across Cyprus will be accelerated.

While we have no doubt of the high standard of *clinical* medical education provided by NKUA in Athens, including the management or ownership of 14 hospitals, of which 10 are public institutions; material available to us as part of this accreditation exercise was limited to preclinical education,

medical educators across all semesters and current buildings scheduled for teaching. While we were provided with the MoU with El Greco Hospital, we had no opportunity to directly evaluate or observe clinical learning environments, schedules, simulation etc. We have therefore refrained from considering the clinical three years of this traditional medical curriculum, instead advising that this is undertaken within the next 1-2 years as part of ongoing quality assurance processes.

Three members of the EEC have uniquely been part of the accreditation process of all medical schools in Cyprus and two other branch campuses of Cyprus universities elsewhere – and we see the benefit of a University Hospital as the key instrument for future success *across all four institutions*, for the Island.

In order to comprehensively assess a whole programme, the committee usually observes and evaluates all aspects of the programme. This includes stakeholder meetings with all relevant groups (university, school, pre-clinical and clinical faculty, hospital staff, students, administrative staff and external stakeholders) and site visits to labs, teaching facilities and hospital premises. Equally, a departmental evaluation refers to the branch department, and an Institutional one to the branch institution (rather than the parent department or branch).

With two previous accreditations involving establishment of a foreign branch, both universities presented the parent faculty as well as the new branch settings. This is logical when the parent institution falls under the remit of the CYQAA. Understandably here, this is not the case. It equally means that the EEC cannot accredit or evaluate the learning experience and facilities in Greece directly.

Although we have no doubts about the credibility and impact of the National and Kapodistrian University of Athens (NKUA) and its general capability for successful transfer of their clinical programme to the Cypriot conditions, we can only accredit what we have actually seen/been shown. With this in mind, our rankings are based as follows: “partially compliant” (3) is appropriate in all cases where we didn’t have the opportunity to assess things in practice. This is not to degrade the NKUA or their potential Cyprus branch but our responsibility as highly professional accreditors to keep up with internationally recognise standards. Readers may want to recognise this in their interpretation of our report below.

We sincerely thank the NKUA colleagues with whom we met for the paperwork they provided and the openness and collegiality of our discussions. The visit was organised promptly and effectively by key members of the CYQAA, who we hold with very high regard.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Professor Nicki Cohen	Dean of Medical Education	King's College London, UK
Prof. J.-Matthias Löhr	Professor of Gastroenterology	Karolinska Institutet, Sweden
Prof. Anne Herrmann-Werner	Professor of Medical Education	University of Tübingen, Germany
Mr. Michalis Andreou	Medical Student Representative	University of Cyprus

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report refers to the Department as a whole (programmes offered, teaching staff, administrative staff, infrastructure, resources, etc.).*
- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas and sub-areas.*
- *Under each assessment area there are quality indicators (criteria) to be scored by the EEC on a scale from one (1) to five (5), based on the degree of compliance for the above mentioned quality indicators (criteria). The scale used is explained below:*
 - 1 or 2: Non-compliant*
 - 3: Partially compliant*
 - 4 or 5: Compliant*
- *The EEC must justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.*
- *It is pointed out that, in the case of indicators (criteria) that cannot be applied due to the status of the Department, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the Department's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality indicator.*
- *In addition, for each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - 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 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.**
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
- 3: *Partially compliant*
- 4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
1. Department's academic profile and orientation		
1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)		1 - 5
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	5
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	5

1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	5
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	5
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Department's development strategies.	4
1.1.6	Stakeholders such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Department's development strategy.	5
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Department's academic development is adequate and effective.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

While the involvement of academics from the main campus (NKUA/UoA) is well documented, the participation of the local academia cannot be assessed at present.

Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.
2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

There is a strategic development plan running till 2028 easily accessible on the Athens homepage of NKUA. External stakeholders were involved in the decisions for Athens and additional ones were included for establishment of the Cypriot branch. A homepage dedicated to the Cyprus branch of NKUA will soon be active giving direct access to these items.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

As to analysing data, it is suggested to establish a system where by default information from both sites (Athens and Cyprus) is used to the mutual benefit of either program/department.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.2 Connecting with society

1 - 5

1.2.1	The Department has effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities.	5
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1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	4
1.2.3	The Department ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	5
1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	3

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Since the branch is not operational, the actual communication cannot be assessed. Talking to students from the Athens operations, communication with active students seems to function well. A system to better record the progression, achievements and positions of alumni is suggested, and as the Cyprus branch will benefit from its unique gateway position geographically, we may expect that the dissemination of alumni will expand this need.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.3 Development processes		1 - 5
1.3.1	Effective procedures and measures are in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure that they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach, carry out research and effectively carry out their work.	4
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	4
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	5
1.3.4	The funding processes for the operation of the Department and the continuous improvement of the quality of its programmes of study are adequate and transparent.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The operations can only be judged based on the procedures in place at the mother institution

Additionally, write:

- Expected number of Cypriot and international students
- Countries of origin of international students and number from each country

The application is for up to 60 students/year, only Greek speaking (Greece, Cyprus, expats), to be reviewed after the first year cycle with a view to potential expansion.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The mission statement, vision and values are the same as for the parent institution (NKUA/UoA, Athens campus). The program for the Medical School as such will be copied from the Athens operations. Albeit effective (major review 2019), it does appear rather traditional by international standards.

Strengths

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

The launch of the Cyprus branch will greatly benefit from the sound experience of centuries garnered in the Athens branch. The leadership of NKUA has identified a need for more Greek-speaking medical students to be educated in Cyprus - based on their statistics of students applying to their public university in Athens. This will certainly benefit the Cypriot people - we recognise how fluency of the healthcare team in the native language of the patient is beneficial for patient care. This medical school will certainly be focused more on education for South Eastern Europe provision of healthcare, while some of the existing institutions are naturally more international in the alims of the graduates. The formation of the Cyprus branch enjoys the unabridged support from Cyprus and especially Nicosia, and regional leaders should be congratulated for this initiative.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Care should be taken to ensure that this department intentional and overtly works to bring the medical educational efforts of the island together, for mutual improvement, rather than to dominate or potentially alienate.

NKUA is encouraged to develop a more strategically placed alumni program.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	compliant
1.3 Development processes	compliant

2. Quality Assurance

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8)

Sub-areas

- 2.1 System and quality assurance strategy**
- 2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study**

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: Non-compliant*
- 3: Partially compliant*
- 4 or 5: Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
2. Quality Assurance		
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy		1 - 5
2.1.1	The Department has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of the Institution's strategic management.	5
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	5
2.1.3	The Department's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.	5
2.1.4	The quality assurance system adequately covers all the functions and sectors of the Department's activities:	
2.1.4.1	Teaching and learning	5
2.1.4.2	Research	4
2.1.4.3	The connection with society	4
2.1.4.4	Management and support services	4
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	4
2.1.6	Students' evaluation and feedback	-

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Since the Medical School in Cyprus is not operational at present, all indicators (KPI) etc. can only be deduced from the - admittedly - well-functioning business ongoing in Athens. It remained unclear how research (for students during their studies) is organised and conducted. Since NKUA prides itself rightly as the leading institution in the Hellenic world, organising the opportunities for research in the Cyprus department during medical studies, equivalent in standing and richness as those in Athens is paramount.

2. Quality Assurance		
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study		1 - 5
2.2.1	The responsibility for decision-making and monitoring the implementation of the programmes of study offered by the Department lies with the teaching staff.	4
2.2.2	The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Department are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	4
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective, which have been presented and discussed.	5
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	4
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	4
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	4
2.2.7	The Department publishes information related to the programmes of study, credit units, learning outcomes, methodology, student admission criteria, completion of studies, facilities, number of teaching staff and the expertise of teaching staff.	5
2.2.8	Names and position of the teaching staff of each programme are published and easily accessible.	3
2.2.9	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	5
2.2.10	The Department flexibly uses a variety of teaching methods.	5
2.2.11	The Department systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.	4

2.2.12	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	4
2.2.13	The Department ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and/or international practices, particularly:	
2.2.12.1	Building facilities	3
2.2.12.2	Library	3
2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	3
2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	5
2.2.12.5	Academic support	4
2.2.14	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.	4
2.2.15	The Department's mechanisms, processes and infrastructure consider the needs of a diverse student population such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities.	4
2.2.16	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.	5
2.2.17	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.	Not applicable
2.2.18	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff, enables continuous and effective feedback to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.	4
2.2.19	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.	5
2.2.20	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Most of these items can only be deduced from the operations ongoing in Athens. Since no dedicated academic staff have yet been appointed, they cannot possibly be assessed. Discussions with medical students (and graduates) from the main campus suggests that the system as such is working well.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The quality control system and the KPI for evaluation of the teaching program, as it is operating in Athens, was explained and seems satisfactory. This shall be duplicated in the Cyprus branch as well. Departmental administration will be undertaken by a mixture of staff working at both campuses and some who are keen to move, and this initial arrangement will ensure success. With time, we would suggest that recruitment of high-quality local staff will further enhance the integration of the department with its locality.

Strengths

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

The well-functioning system from Athens will be used, thus ensuring a high standard of proven instruments.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

While online / virtual tools for literature and simulation are available, a spacious, well-equipped physical library is missing. Since the facilities in the new Medical School building for UCY on their main campus will be used by the Cyprus branch of NKUA, there may be opportunity for UCY’s excellent library to be made available for NKUA Cyprus campus students also, perhaps through the existing MoU.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	compliant
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study	compliant

3. Administration
(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
- 3: *Partially compliant*
- 4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria	
3. Administration	1 - 5

3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	5
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of specified procedures, in the management of the Department.	4
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	5
3.4	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Department's council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	5
3.5	The Department applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	4
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	4
3.7	The Department's council operates systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the law and / or the constitution of the Department without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	4
3.8	The manner in which the Department's council operates and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	4
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	4
3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	5
3.11	Internationalization of the Department and external collaborations.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Most of these items can only be deducted from the operations ongoing in Athens. Questioning of medical students (and graduates) from the main campus suggests that the system as such is working well.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

Meeting the administrative staff from the NKUA in Athens revealed a very professional and highly motivated team, ready to kick-start operations in Cyprus.

Strengths

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

Motivation and enthusiasm of the administrative staff is palpable, alongside their professionalism. The team is well placed and experienced to manage recruitment and induction of the 40 new faculty. They also have a clear understanding of the challenges moving the existing faculty between Athens and Cyprus. On the administrative level, a good cooperation is already established with UCY (clinical placement of UCY students in Athens with NKUA hospitals).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Since it is not operational yet, the function can only be deduced.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
3. Administration	compliant

4. Learning and Teaching

(ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Planning the programmes of study**
- 4.2 Organisation of teaching**

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: Non-compliant*
- 3: Partially compliant*
- 4 or 5: Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria	
4. Learning and Teaching	
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	1 - 5

4.1.1	The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study.	5
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	4
4.1.3	Intended learning outcomes, the content of the programmes of study, the assignments and the final exams correspond to the appropriate level as indicated by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	5
4.1.4	The programmes of study are in compliance with the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	5
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The stakeholder involvement for the Cyprus branch can only be assessed theoretically - based on the operations in Athens.

4. Learning and Teaching

4.2 Organisation of teaching		1 - 5
4.2.1	The Department establishes student admission criteria for each programme, which are adhered to consistently.	5
4.2.2	Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	4
4.2.3	The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	3
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Department has regular and effective communication with their students, promoting mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship.	4
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	5
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	4
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	5

4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	5
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Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Most of these items can only be deducted from the operations ongoing in Athens. Questioning of medical students (and graduates) from the main campus suggests that the system as such is working well.

Assuming the use of UCY's facilities, at least 30-40 students should be accommodated in their (UCY's) facilities.

Particularly in the practical exams (OSCE) there is still room for improvement to better align with international standards (as outlined in the basic medical science document).

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The general study plan and some timetabling was shared. Some assessment material was also shared and we discuss the opportunities in this area in the accompanying programme documentation.

Strengths

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

In lieu of facilities for teaching (wet lab, skills lab, histology/microscopy etc.), KNUA for their Cyprus branch will use the facilities of UCY - a constructive initiative for the foreseeable future to provide all students with state-of-the-art facilities. While we have coincidentally toured these excellent facilities recently, we would strongly advise that the UCY and NKUA medical student cohorts should be equally sized, certainly for the first few cohorts, to maximise community and student belonging.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The joint use of the UCY facilities requires a very tight co-ordination between the two Medical programs. Knowing the time schedule of UCY (from the EEC evaluation there) and UoA's timetable, this seems feasible.

The EEC feels that it is important that the UCY students do not feel dominated by too many NKUA students in their own facilities.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	compliant

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
5. Teaching Staff		1 - 5
5.1	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	3
5.2	The teaching staff of the Department has the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	3
5.3	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Department's programmes of study.	3
5.4	The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study.	3
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	3
5.6	The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught by teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	3
5.7	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the programme of study.	3
5.8	Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Very few of this can be assessed since the program is not yet in operation. The faculty is "on loan" from Athens to the branch.

Also, write the following:

- Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work

- Number of visiting Professors
- Number of special scientists on lease services

We were told that all subjects to be taught during the first year will be covered by faculty coming from Athens. A total of 40 FTE faculty are suggested and to be appointed within the year, and this number certainly feels appropriate if the combination of areas covered is, as we anticipate, sufficient to cover the breadth of the programme. We have not heard about formal visiting appointments, but recognise of course that many of the existing Athens faculty are likely to visit, perhaps less formally, as part of early establishment of the branch campus.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

NKUA plans to immediately start the process of announcing, then evaluating and eventually appointing a total of 40 FTE to the Cyprus branch. In the meantime, faculty from Athens is willing to cover the subjects to be taught during the first year.

Strengths

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

The nature of the first year of the programme (and focus on one programme within the department) is such that it should not be a challenge to cover the first year's material, while providing additional academic input such as academic tutors, mentors etc. We would expect NKUA to rapidly implement a more proactive strategy to secure the further years of study while generating research opportunities for students on the island, and we anticipate a PhD programme in the near future to solidify the research capabilities and sustainability of branch activity without such immediate reliance on the parent department.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Onboarding and induction must be operationalised very carefully to ensure the same quality of academic delivery in Cyprus. Little has been said about the research opportunities (and possibilities) for the academic staff to be placed in Cyprus. Using facilities together with UCY at their premises is an option - maybe even creating opportunities to the mutual benefit of both universities (and joint PhD programs).

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
Teaching staff number, adequacy and suitability	Partially compliant

Teaching staff recruitment and development	Partially compliant
Synergies of teaching and research	Partially compliant

6. Research

(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
 3: *Partially compliant*
 4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
6. Research		1 - 5
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	5
6.2	The Department consistently applies internal regulations and procedures of research activity, which promote the set out research policy and ensure compliance with the regulations of research projects financing programmes.	3
6.3	The Department provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	2
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development of students' research skills.	3
6.5	The results of the teaching staff research activity are published to a satisfactory extent in international journals which work with critics, international conferences, conference proceedings, publications, etc. The Department also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	4
6.6	The Department ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	4
6.7	The Department provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	5
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	2

6.9	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the teaching staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	2
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Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Most of these items can only be deducted from the operations ongoing in Athens, however, research needs physical space that is not available at present.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

NKUA rightly prides itself to be the leading Hellenistic University, also in Biomedical research. While this is an excellent basis and definitively needed in the Cyprus sphere, establishing the teaching at a Cyprus branch appears to be the priority #1.

Strengths

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

The existing NKUA faculty providing education are experienced in research. NKUA has the necessary track record and measures to support and facilitate research - all the way to support student research.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Coming to an agreement with UCY for the use of their facilities in the new building (where an entire floor is to be used for research) would provide the necessary access for medical students for research projects and even give (new) faculty the possibility to conduct research projects on their own - or potentially in collaboration with UCY academics, for the benefit and sustainability of both institutions. Transferring research-active faculty from Athens to Cyprus and appointing new research-intensive new faculty could kick-start this process. Internal funding incentives are certainly necessary to speed up this process. Also, students should have specific training in research skills e.g. lectures on general approaches to medical research or small group teaching on writing scientific articles.

We would see attention paid to grow early career research at the branch as a strategically (and financially) sensible approach to embed research impact on the island for the long-term. Related to this initiative, we would advise that a PhD program should be established as soon as practical to further enhance the research ambitions of NKUA working "as brothers in arms" with Cyprus institutions. There is benefit to be gained in joint PhD programmes, and potentially MSc programmes, for future sustainability.

The Cyprus branch of NKUA should take advantage of existing bioscience possibilities (e.g. Zebrafish lab, Biobank) in a collaborative effort. We would expect that data science and population health initiatives would provide opportunities for more immediate output as a more immediate marker of academic success.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
Research mechanisms and regulations	compliant
External and internal funding	non-compliant
Motives for research	Partially compliant
Publications	Partially compliant

Resources (ESG 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
7. Resources		1 - 5
7.1	The Department has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Institutional and Departmental bodies.	4
7.2	The Department follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	4
7.3	The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	4
7.4	The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	4
7.5	The Department carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.	4
7.6	The Department's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	5
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The financial resources will be in-aid by providing faculty from Athens, the tuition fees (of at least 30 students), and financial support from the local government (grant-in-aid, rooms, student housing). A break-even is envisioned by year 4 of operations.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

See above. The budget plan sounds reasonable. While asking for tuition, the Cyprus branch of UoA will legally be a non-profit organisation.

Strengths

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

The enthusiasm is palpable and transmits into financial commitments from Cyprus (local government, church) providing resources.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

No formal contingency plan for continued education of students on the island in the event of the branch campus initiative not being sustained - a "teach out" commitment, and/or potentially undertaking for an existing institution on the island to do so would be a more usual expectation in the panel's experience of branch campuses. While we are reassured from discussions that existing students could be accommodated in Athens if needed, this should be made more explicit and binding for incoming students to allow for potential changes in senior leadership without detriment to students.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
7. Resources	compliant

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 Department under review may be achieved.

The EEC would like to thank NKUA for the information it shared, both formally and informally with us through the two day visit and associated paperwork. We are all very clear of the ambition, commitment and huge expertise that NKUA will bring through a branch campus in Cyprus.

We see several positives in the development, which have clearly been articulated by all stakeholder groups

1. The opportunities for this to increase the provision of doctors in the Hellenic world who aim to stay local.
2. The opportunities this provides to society, in terms of research capacity and local regeneration, and to patients in terms of enhanced patient care.
3. The **paramount advantage** here being in the development of a **University Hospital**. While this will clearly take lobbying and political will, we see in NKUA a new level of expertise and gravitas to make this a reality, and we sense that this is shared by politicians and other leaders.

There are also several challenges

1. As a panel we have witnessed and accredited three excellent medical schools in Cyprus. We have heard how NKU has worked with UCY for several years. It is essential that the development of a fourth school on the island does not hamper the initiatives of the other three. To be beneficial to the Island it must evolve but not dissolve the educational landscape.
2. The University Hospital must be available for clinical academics across all medical schools to continue their clinical practice. There is true value in this inclusive approach.
3. The timeline here is incredibly tight. While we understand that this has been a strategic initiative of NKUA since late 2023, we are in the position of being invited to approve something a few weeks before it starts.

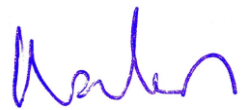
On that basis, our findings are the following

1. While we support this initiative, it is on the basis of **meaningful co-operation** with the three existing schools, public and private, without impingement on their clinical training capacity or existing research successes. Evidence of this co-operation should be a central feature of all future quality assurance.
2. We consider starting a six year programme in a few weeks a considerable risk. Concrete written contingency arrangements are minimal. It may be that these are possible either with UCY or with NKUA Athens branch - but the specifics of this are for a future EEC panel to evaluate, rather than this one to determine.
3. We therefore **provisionally approve** an initial cohort of 30-40 students, to match rather than exceed those at UCY, mitigating risk, noting that this is economically viable.

4. We cannot currently approve the clinical years of the Cyprus programme, and ask that this is evaluated by a further visit in perhaps 18 months, in advance of the clinical programme starting. This will provide greater insight into the operation of the campus and allow for formal approval of the clinical years in advance of their beginning.
5. Until then, we have heard of the clinical training capacity that exists in Greece, and would strongly advise that this is formally held in backup so as not to disadvantage the initial cohorts of students starting at the branch in Cyprus.
6. Accordingly, the initial cohorts of students admitted should be provided with a written undertaking by the University that their full training programme will be honoured even if this is not possible on the island.
7. Should the University hospital not materialise, or NKUA feel that it cannot, for other reasons, continue with the branch, existing students must not be disadvantaged and clinical training opportunities for example those in Greece should be drawn upon.

EEC wishes NKUA every success with this exciting and vital initiative.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Prof. Nicki Cohen	

Prof. J.-Matthias Löhrl	
Prof. Anne Herrmann-Werner	
Mr. Michalis Andreou	

Date: 01-August-2025

