



Doc. 300.2.2

Institution Response (Institutional Evaluation)

Date: 04 July 2025

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Nicosia
- **Town:** Athens
- **Institution Status:** New Institution

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.300.2.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the Institution in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, in the section building facilities, student welfare services, infrastructure, the HEI must respond on the comments and scoring of the EEC.*
- *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. 300.2.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

BUILDING FACILITIES - STUDENT WELFARE SERVICES - INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Building facilities

1.1 Plans and licenses

Praxis 1131683 (23/07/2024) and Renewal Praxis 1358128 (27/02/2025) were submitted during the meeting.

According to the regulations of the Greek Authorities, once the construction is completed, the permitting authority will conduct a building inspection using the assistance of contracted third party inspectors who will check the completed building and verify its compliance with the permitted drawings. The team of inspectors will confirm this compliance and the permitting authority will issue the Certificate of Compliance of the Building called the ΠΕΚ (Πιστοποιητικό Ελέγχου Κατασκευής). The next step will be the issuing of the Operation License from the authorities. This procedure is scheduled to take place in July to August 2025.

1.1.3.1

The visual inspection Form E.O.E. 102 is specifically tailored for existing buildings and therefore cannot be used for the current situation. The building to be used for the operation of the Medical School, is a building initially constructed in 1980 and is currently undergoing a complete restoration and rehabilitation including seismic strengthening. The construction works have been promptly permitted by Building Permits Praxis 1131683 (23/07/2024) and Renewal Praxis 1358128 (27/02/2025). These permits were submitted during the site meeting held on 29/05/2025 between the following persons:

- George Aletraris (CYQAA Officer)
- Alexis Valiantis (Civil Engineer Evaluation Committee)
- Antonis Polemitis (UNIC CEO)
- Voula Makrides (UNIC Director of Facilities)
- Stephan Buerger (UNIC Architect)
- Chad Schou (UNIC Director of Laboratories)
- Nicos Gkonis (UNIC Campus and UNIC Health Director)
- Elena Kontemeniotis (UNIC Director of CEO's Office)

According to the discussion, as per the regulations of the Greek Authorities, once the construction is completed, the permitting authority will conduct a building inspection using the assistance of contracted third party inspectors who will check the completed building and verify its compliance with the permits. The team of inspectors will confirm this compliance and the permitting authority will issue the Certificate of Compliance of the Building called the ΠΕΚ (Πιστοποιητικό Ελέγχου Κατασκευής). The next step will be the issuing of the Operation License from the authorities. This procedure is scheduled to take place from July to August 2025.

It is the opinion of the Committee's Buildings Expert that the above procedure is equal and covers the requirement of the E.O.E. 102.

1.1.3.2

The above notes are relevant. As stated above the building is currently undergoing a complete seismic strengthening using proper materials. The design has been done by licenced civil / structural engineers. The design has been permitted through the above permits and the construction is implemented by a licenced Contractor. Currently the University representatives have submitted to the committee the Structural Design and Structural Drawings included in the above Permits.

The next step will be the issuing of the Certificate of Compliance of the Building ΠΕΚ (Πιστοποιητικό Ελέγχου Κατασκευής).

It is the opinion of the Committee's Buildings Expert that, based on the special nature of the current evaluation, the above procedure is equal and covers the requirements of the E.O.E. 103.

1.1.3.3

The above notes are relevant. It is the opinion of the Committee's Buildings Expert that, based on the special nature of the current evaluation, the above procedure is equal and covers the requirements of the E.O.E. 104. Once the construction is completed the authorities will issue the proper certificates of final approval (Certificate of Compliance of the Building) titled the ΠΕΚ (Πιστοποιητικό Ελέγχου Κατασκευής). It is the opinion of the Committee's Buildings Expert that, based on the special nature of the current evaluation, the above procedure is equal and covers the requirements of the E.O.E. 104.

1.1.3.4 – Fire Safety

The Fire Safety Study for passive and active safety has been submitted at the respective authorities through the above mentioned permit process. The Fire Experts are Samaras & Partners SA. Upon completion of the construction works through the process of the issuance of the ΠΕΚ the above works and measures will be verified. It is the opinion of the Committee's Buildings Expert that, based on the special nature of the current evaluation, the above procedure is equal and covers the requirements of the Fire Inspection Certificate.

1.1.3.5 – E&M Installations

The above required certificates are mandatory requirement for the issuing of the ΠΕΚ and are expected to be issued in July – August 2025. It is the opinion of the Committee's Buildings Expert that, based on the special nature of the current evaluation, the above procedure is equal and covers the requirements of the E&M Installations Certificate.

1.2 Other facilities

Regarding parking spaces, the building will have 52 parking spaces:

- out of which 5 are for disabled
- 10 for EV
- 11 at ground floor and 41 in basement
- 4 for motorcycles, 60 bicycle stands and 3 service bays

The building is well served by public transportation (Vouliagmeni Metro Station, Buses and Tram).

The above parking spaces are according to the requirements of the Greek legislation and the total number of these spaces has been approved by permits Praxis 1131683 (23/07/2024) and Renewal Praxis 1358128 (27/02/2025)

CONCLUSION

The writing of the current report did not follow the standard procedure for the following reasons:

- 1) The building is located in Greece and not Cyprus, where different codes and building regulations and permitting procedures apply.
- 2) The building is not complete yet, as it is currently under construction (renovation of existing building) and the works are expected to be completed in July – August 2025.

Therefore:

The undersigned Buildings Expert evaluator went through the existing conditions and through the documentation submitted by UNIC's representatives and has the opinion that, provided that the building is completed on time and acquires the Final Approval by the Greek Authorities (scheduled for August 2025), then the procedures followed can be considered as equal and acceptable and successfully cover the CYQAA requirements.

2. Student welfare services

Grading of facilities is based on the completion of the new building (where applicable).

Grading of student welfare issues:

At the present time the administration staff that supports the student welfare services appears to be adequate, as the University of Nicosia Athens Branch is under establishment. The Student Welfare Service is currently staffed by two Officers based in Athens, that have been trained by expert staff from the University of Nicosia (parent institution).

The following statements are made on the basis of our discussions with the UNIC administrative staff and the written documentation. As stated, the services have been planned, but have not yet been implemented and tested at the Athens branch. The administrative structure of the UNIC Medical Athens branch will be operational when is accredited.

The Head of UNIC Student Welfare Service and the Associate Dean for UNIC Medical students presented us with the administrative organization chart, which is considered satisfactory. The institution will employ more University qualified and experienced Officers to give the best possible student support, before they accept the first student cohort. As stated, they have already completed the interview process for the relevant positions and gave pending offers of employment to the selected candidates.

As stated, the existing UNIC staff will continue to provide student welfare support and services at the Athens Medical branch until the appropriate personnel are appointed to permanently staff the service. This can be done either online or through staff visits to the Athens branch in order to oversee operations and provide training to the new staff.

1. Special access for students with disabilities:

The admission process will be accessible to students with disabilities provided that they are capable of carrying out and completing the programme.

The procedures will be thoroughly communicated to students from the beginning of their studies, ensuring equal access to academic studies.

2. Recreation areas:

The premises of the Medical Athens branch provide a small cafeteria for students, a reception/lobby area, a break zone area with flexible seating, a small retail space, terrace like spaces suitable for students to gather informally.

3. Policy and statutes for academic student support:

There will be a strong network of academic counselling providing guidance and support to the students. Each student will be assigned an Academic Advisor from the first day of their studies who will assist them with academic planning, course selection and addressing any problems or concerns.

4. Policy and statutes for financial student support:

UNIC Medical Athens Branch will offer scholarships to medical students based on excellence or socio-economic criteria.

Moreover, the administrative staff stated that if students have difficulties in paying off their tuitions, the Institution will offer them more flexible payment methods.

5. Counseling services:

A number of advisory services will be available for students. Personal Tutors will provide pastoral and academic support and monitor the students' academic progress. The Student Affair Officer will refer students where necessary to more specialised recourses either on campus or externally.

6. Career office:

The Career Advisor will support students in their career development and job placement.

7. Service linking the institution with business

The Institution will use the UNIC Medical School services and partnerships linking with employment market.

8. Mobility office:

All students and full-time staff will be participating in all schemes of the Erasmus+ program.

9. Student clubs/organisations/associations:

UNIC Athens Medical branch will offer a variety of clubs that cater to diverse interests.

There will be also a Student Union and International Associations.

10. Other services:

Student Identity Card: The Student Identity Card will be issued for all UNIC students offering several benefits.

Visa for international students: The International office will guide the prospective international students in relation with all necessary documents that need to be filled out and the procedures to be followed through the government authorities.

Medical Student Induction/Orientation Program: All new Medical students will be introduced to the Medical School curriculum, policy and activities during the Medical Student Orientation Program which will take place the week before classes start.

Housing Office: Currently, there is no housing offered at Athens campus by UNIC. In line with the broader development plans of the Ellinikon, student accommodation will be available next to the main medical school building.

3. Infrastructure

Grading is based on the completion of the new building (where applicable).

UNIC Response:

With respect to the Building Facilities, Student Welfare Services, and Infrastructure, we are pleased to note that the experts have indicated all areas as satisfactory and not noted any areas of improvement, and that the building facilities were deemed to have successfully covered the CYQAA requirements.

1. Institution's Academic Profile and Orientation

Sub-Areas

1.1 Mission and strategic planning

1.2 Connecting with society

1.3 Development processes

Quality Indicators/Criteria Findings

1.1 Mission and strategic planning: N/A

1.2 Connecting with society: Evidence of societal engagement and involvement and communication is, for now (in Athens) based upon Nicosia clinical student descriptions of patient engagement at HHG hospitals, supported by our observations of HHG staff in the same context.

1.3 Development processes: N/A.

Majority of the students expected to be enrolled in UNIC Athens branch are envisioned to be coming from Greece, then Cyprus, and then international.

Findings

The Athens branch of UNIC has the same mission, values and strategic orientation as the Nicosia Campus - as it is the same University to provide the best English-speaking education at a private university both to Greek/Cypriot but even more so international students.

After years of evaluation and planning, the decision was made to start a branch in Athens comprising six schools, amongst them a Medical School being the first and foremost of all schools to start. The leadership of UNIC, UNIC Health, and the Medical School took great care in explaining the organisation of the branch in Athens, underscoring the fact that by default of the organisational structure, UNIC (Cyprus) will be in full control of the operations in Athens. This is supported by the fact that the leadership/management, both academic and administrative running UNIC in Cyprus is intimately involved in the start in Athens. Site directors and managers are partly already in place - taking advantage of the fact that year 5 and year 6 students are placed in Athens at HHG hospitals for several years now - requiring an administrative infrastructure.

Strengths

The staff running UNIC, UNIC Health and the Medical school took the strategic decision to extend their operations and start a branch in Athens several years ago and have planned accordingly. Joining forces with HHG, already a partner for the year 5/6 clinical placement of the Nicosia campus students, appears to be an excellent approach. HHG is running postgraduate training including continuous professional development through their "HEAL academy". Transplanting a well-functioning operation together with guidance of the very same academic and administrative staff is an excellent prerequisite ensuring the success of this operation. The new building for UNIC will support this.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A clear ongoing review of processes will be important within UNIC (Athens) once it is fully operational, and we would see this working along the lines of their Programme Evaluation Report, in Quality Assurance terms.

UNIC as a whole has benefitted from a number of partnerships with other universities both within and without Greece for joint and double degrees including some distance teaching programmes. Within time it will be important to explore how the branch campus can both benefit and contribute to this. Similarly, research collaborations, for example through the Neolaia alliance have clearly been beneficial to the standing and research capacity of the Nicosia campus. Athens academics should be encouraged both to contribute and to benefit from this with time.

UNIC response:

We thank the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for finding the new UNIC Athens Medical School compliant in each WFME sub-section throughout the report, and welcome the areas of improvement and recommendations that have been given, that will strengthen our provision.

A clear ongoing review of processes will be important within UNIC (Athens) once it is fully operational, and we would see this working along the lines of their Programme Evaluation Report, in Quality Assurance terms.

Our plan for the new Medical School at UNIC Athens involves transcribing processes and procedures that are long-established in Nicosia, and we confirm that this applies to the Programme Evaluation Report (PER). This annual requirement of all Programme Coordinators / Directors, whereby a reflection on the previous academic year's delivery is undertaken, culminates in the presentation of the PER at the respective departmental Quality Assurance Committee. The same will apply to the programmes when delivered in Athens, and will provide us with the opportunity to scrutinise the roll-out.

Alongside this there will be regular review on an ongoing basis, whereby counterparts in Nicosia will support the faculty and administration in Athens. This will expedite the solution to any emerging issue. Further, feedback from this longitudinal support will feed into the PERs, alongside other evaluative processes (such as student feedback, monitoring progression and graduation rates).

UNIC as a whole has benefitted from a number of partnerships with other universities both within and without Greece for joint and double degrees including some distance teaching programmes. Within time it will be important to explore how the branch campus can both benefit and contribute to this. Similarly, research collaborations, for example through the Neolaia alliance have clearly been beneficial to the standing and research capacity of the Nicosia campus. Athens academics should be encouraged both to contribute and to benefit from this with time.

We share the committee's view that the branch campus should engage fully with the School's and University-wide initiatives and, in particular, with the NEOLAIA European University alliance. As part of NEOLAIA's current infrastructure-mapping exercise, Athens facilities/ infrastructure will be catalogued alongside those in Nicosia and, to which Athens faculty will have access to identify complementary equipment and expertise that can support joint proposals. Athens faculty and doctoral candidates will be integrated into NEOLAIA's medicine and health network meetings, which convene regularly to exchange project ideas. In parallel, they will have opportunities for mobility schemes within the Alliance and early-stage researchers at the branch campus will be also have equal opportunities to enrolled in the Alliance's mentoring and training programme—covering grant writing, research integrity and transferable skills—so they can both contribute to, and benefit from, the growing cross-campus research community.



Sub-Area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	compliant
1.2 Connecting with society compliant	compliant
1.3 Development processes compliant	compliant

2. Quality Assurance

Sub-Areas

2.1 System and quality assurance strategy

2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study

Quality Indicators/Criteria Findings

2.1 System and Quality Assurance Strategy: Since new/not operational, connectivity with society can only be assumed from UNIC Cyprus experience.

2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study: While the hospital(s) have study rooms and libraries, the new building, which will be complete for the enrolment of the first students, is still under construction.

Findings

Since the university is the same as in Cyprus, systems for quality assurance etc. are the same.

Strengths

The best practice system or yearly feedback and Programme Evaluation Report (PER) is a highlight of UNIC's operations and will serve them well for the Athens branch. The new building will be a tremendous asset once it is complete, which we understand will be in time for enrolment of the first cohort.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

These are better considered when programmes are all active.

UNIC response:

We welcome the EEC's recognition of the annual Programme Evaluation Reports as a strength, and their complimentary comments about the planned new facility during their visit were welcomed. We look forward to them visiting the facilities once again in the autumn, so that they can experience the student facilities *in situ*.

As noted by the EEC in respect to connectivity with society and the new facilities for students, these are areas that we are confident will be met fully in the coming period. Social contributions will echo those in place in Cyprus, and our existing partnership with the Hellenic Healthcare Group (HHG) enables us to leverage networks that will facilitate this. For example, through the HHG outreach programme, Παντού (Everywhere), that supports underserved and remote communities and has, so far, date undertaken 31 expeditions and >48k clinical examinations across Greece.

Sub-Area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	compliant
2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study	compliant

3. Administration

Quality Indicators/Criteria Findings

3. Administration: N/A

Findings

After visiting UNIC Cyprus, the Athens branch was explained to us. The leadership of UNIC, UNIC Health, and the Medical School took great care in explaining the organisation of the branch in Athens, underscoring the fact that by default of the organisational structure, UNIC (Cyprus) will be in full control of the operations in Athens. UNIC Health Athens, aligned to UNIC Health, will remain relatively autonomous from the rest of UNIC, akin to the model in Nicosia.

Strengths

The leadership/management, both academic and administrative running UNIC in Cyprus is intimately involved in the start of operations in Athens.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

We recommend these are formally evaluated once the school is running, but have no major concerns based on our knowledge and experience of the Nicosia campus.

UNIC response:

As noted by the EEC, the Medical School at UNIC Athens will indeed maintain a similar degree of autonomy from the wider UNIC Athens structures, as takes place in Cyprus, whilst still being able to benefit from all institutional expertise.

In line with existing expectations, we will monitor closely all levels of administrative provision, throughout the implementation of the new Medical School at UNIC Athens, and thereafter on an ongoing basis. This includes through formal processes such as the annual Programme Evaluation Report.

Sub-Area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
3. Administration	compliant

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-Areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

Quality Indicators/Criteria Findings

4.1 Planning the programmes of study: N/A

4.2 Organisation of teaching: Running the same programs in Athens as in Cyprus, these issues shall be the same. We anticipate that the teaching staff will provide excellent communication and timely and effective feedback, given the experiences at Nicosia and the extensive induction they will receive - but this is not yet, understandably, in place.

Findings

Since the university is the same as in Cyprus, planning for the teaching and organisation are the same.

Strengths

Since the university is the same as in Cyprus, systems for quality assurance etc. are the same.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Cannot be evaluated pending the start of any of the schools.

UNIC response:

We thank the EEC for finding the quality indicators and criteria compliant throughout in respect to learning and teaching compliant. We can confirm that the same processes to quality assure our provision are in place for Athens that are implemented in Cyprus.

Sub-Area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	compliant

5. Teaching Staff

Quality Indicators/Criteria Findings

5. Teaching Staff: The number of special teaching staff, and visiting professors is satisfactory for the first year of the programme, recognising that this will evolve with time.

Findings

The single department within the medical school at UNIC Athens is currently planning to start with two MD programmes and a PhD in Medical Sciences only. The future faculty was presented. The EEC talked to the clinical teachers taking care of the year 5/6 students currently coming from the UNIC Cyprus MD program.

Strengths

While the faculty at UNIC Cyprus will be busy attending the students there, part of the teaching faculty will assist, at least during the initial phase, in the start of teaching. For the Medical school and the PhD program, 16 academic staff expanding to 22 are identified and will follow the UNIC standard processes for appointment. This will grow in future years. The future faculty members we met (in Athens) with are highly motivated and well educated. In addition, they were already visiting UNIC Cyprus. Upon appointment, they will undergo the same academic and administrative onboarding as the teaching staff at UNIC Cyprus.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Cannot be evaluated pending the start of any of the schools/programs.

UNIC response:

We have a faculty recruitment plan in place to extend faculty numbers in line with the roll-out of our programmes. Moreover, the number of clinical faculty will increase according to programme needs, to add to the existing pool of clinical teachers supporting UNIC clinical training in Athens.

We would like to clarify that our plan in respect to faculty is to have 22 members of Teaching & Research Faculty hired in the first year, to be on campus. Further, an additional 46 faculty, that have already been appointed as clinical faculty of the School, and that are based within the Hellenic Healthcare Group of hospitals, will be in place from the outset, totalling 68 faculty in the first academic year.

Also, and as has been the case in Cyprus, we expect an increasing number of Visiting Professors and Special Teaching Staff to join the team in due course, and once the Medical School at UNIC Athens is established.

Sub-Area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
5. Teaching staff	compliant

6. Research

Quality Indicators/Criteria Findings

6. Research: N/A

Findings

The framework for research at UNIC is identical, being the very same university. Since it was explained and laid out in detail during the visit preceding the visit to the Athens branch, it was only explained briefly.

Strengths

We have heard how the greater Athens area is more conducive to growing a rich research environment than may be the case in Nicosia - and this will benefit both campuses. Beside the MD programs, the start of a PhD program is planned. We have heard how the Athens branch already had been successful in drawing scientists into faculty positions not only from (the University of) Athens but elsewhere, including providing opportunities for Greek research-intensive faculty working overseas to return and establish themselves in Athens. Aside from its reputation, the ability to draw excellent scientists to UNIC is due to the research environment, the access to clinical material through the largest hospital group in Greece (HHG), and, finally, a brand-new building providing inspirational research labs and infrastructure.

Researchers will be provided with support central from UNIC, UNIC Health, and the medical school based on their varying needs depending on their discipline and on the respective research area/topic.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Cannot be evaluated pending start of any of the schools, but no concerns as yet.

UNIC response:

We thank the EEC for recognising the strengths of our plans for research and for finding this section compliant.

We welcome the acknowledgement of the advantages offered by the Athens research environment, our success in recruiting research-active faculty—including members of the Greek academic diaspora—and the value added by our partnership with the Hellenic Healthcare Group and our new laboratory facilities.

The publication details of faculty will be able to be published on the UNIC Athens website upon launch. This provides a valuable opportunity to showcase the new faculty not just within the Medical School but within the wider UNIC Athens and UNIC communities, and in turn, provide further prospects for research development and cross-departmental synergies to be explored. .

Sub-Area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
6. Research	compliant

7. Resources

Quality Indicators/Criteria Findings

7. Resources: N/A

Findings

The general financial relations were discussed including the financial arrangements between HHG and UNIC. The EEC was provided with a budget for the next five years, pertaining to UNIC Athens starting the MD and PhD programs - including the new building.

Strengths

The financial planning is sound. It is usual for an arrangement of this size and scope to realise profit several years into the project - and the careful risk management around this appears to be appropriate.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Cannot be evaluated pending start of any of the schools. Also dependent on the number of MD and PhD students and the faculty joining UNIC Athens.

UNIC response:

We thank the EEC for recognising the strengths of the financial plans for UNIC Athens and for noting that there is adequate consideration of risk within the arrangements.

Sub-Area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
7. Resources	compliant

B. Conclusions and Final Remarks

We would firstly like to congratulate the UNIC team and their long-term partners within Hellenic Healthcare Group in this excellent development to increase the depth and breadth of clinical academia and practise in Greece. Building on the success of years 5 and 6 of the MD programs, which started in 2018, creates a natural partnership and is to be celebrated.

The ambitious project to launch a strategic educational partnership involving six schools but focussed around the medical school has tremendous merit and has been well planned by all partners over the last year. Particular congratulations are due to Professor Charalambous for his inclusive leadership of this project; noting how he has inspired, with Prof. Ioannides, the excellent academic team at the Nicosia branch to develop a forward looking 6-year MD programme which will be implemented at both campuses alongside the 5-year programme and PhD in Medical Sciences.

UNIC took extra care to explain the transplantation of their well-functioning operations in Cyprus. Given the expertise demonstrated, we are confident that this translation of processes into the lived experience at Athens will be successful. The governance structure will ensure that UNIC Cyprus is in full control of the operations in Athens.

We have a number of commendations:

1. The transplantation of all administrative and academic services including the excellent student support and quality assurance processes to the branch.
2. The palpable enthusiasm within the clinical community is invaluable.
3. The commitment to a high-specification new medical building, integrated into the existing healthcare ecosystem will create a flagship model for the future.
4. The commitment that both UNIC and HHG have shown each other in their future commercial and governance structure.
5. We commend the university for early roll-out of a PhD programme to support the ambition of HHG clinicians and UNIC academics.

We also have a number of recommendations:

1. That the medical school gears itself for success. We would strongly suggest that the medical school starts with a maximum of about 100 MD students, rather than up to 180, which we feel would be an unnecessary risk for a new institution, despite their excellent preparation, academic and administrative staff and previous expertise at HHG. This is also to marshall the expansion in the clinical areas to support the experience of preexisting Nicosia students and to prevent sudden changes in the employment market for medical graduates in the Greek/Cypriot ecosystem.
2. It is likely that the project could be further de-risked by all 100 MD students being on the 6-year MD, with the 5-year programme being rolled out later, potentially when the campus is complete in 2028, and the 5-year model has benefitted from more of the new 6-year programme innovation. An expansion of numbers up to approximately 180 as currently stated, could be staged effectively over the next few years, accordingly.
3. That a more complete consideration of the opportunities and threats of the branch campus development is undertaken, so that the risks can be appropriately marshalled and mitigated by the newly formed academic and administrative teams. This should include planning for contingency arrangements.
4. We are very supportive of this initiative progressing across MD and PhD programmes. It may be wise for an early formal review of the facilities once the medical school building has been completed, which we would be delighted to contribute to, if appropriate.

5. The branch campus creates rich opportunities across six schools and programmes, with excellent new faculty, to maximise on interprofessional and transdisciplinary education and research – this is often easier to do “by design” than through retrospective timetable arrangements.
6. Lastly, recognising the unique capabilities and position of HHG, alongside UNIC, we would encourage HEAL and the partnership to continue to proactively and strategically engage with the government and thought leaders to develop junior medical training opportunities (residency programme) within the private healthcare system, for the benefit of healthcare in Greece.

UNIC response:

We are pleased that the EEC were impressed with the ambitious project that UNIC Athens demonstrates and could recognise the benefits that it will bring. It is the culmination of significant work, which will see the Medical School in Cyprus transposed in Athens, whilst maintaining the robust quality assurance standards.

Their commendations, including to identify the strength of having a committed existing partner, Hellenic Healthcare Group, in place, are welcomed.

We understand that the EEC would be keen to visit the new facilities when they are operational and we look forward to their return in the late November / early December, as indicated by them during their visit.

That the medical school gears itself for success. We would strongly suggest that the medical school starts with a maximum of about 100 MD students, rather than up to 180, which we feel would be an unnecessary risk for a new institution, despite their excellent preparation, academic and administrative staff and previous expertise at HHG. This is also to marshall the expansion in the clinical areas to support the experience of preexisting Nicosia students and to prevent sudden changes in the employment market for medical graduates in the Greek/Cypriot ecosystem.

We thank the EEC for recognising the quality of academic and administrative staff and UNIC’s relevant preparations. Originally, our plans for academic year 2025-26 included delivery of the 5-year Doctor of Medicine (MD) programme, hence a maximum number of 180 students (cumulative with the 6-year MD programme). Considering we will not operate the 5-year MD programme in the first year, we will aim for a maximum of 100 6-year MD programme students.

It is likely that the project could be further de-risked by all 100 MD students being on the 6-year MD, with the 5-year programme being rolled out later, potentially when the campus is complete in 2028, and the 5-year model has benefitted from more of the new 6-year programme innovation. An expansion of numbers up to approximately 180 as currently stated, could be staged effectively over the next few years, accordingly.

We agree with the EEC’s recommendation and, as indicated during the visit, we will only launch the 6-year Doctor of Medicine programme in the academic year 2025-26. Our plan is to launch the 5-year MD programme in Athens in 2026-27, which will allow us to recruit the international students that this programme applies to predominantly, since graduate-entry programmes are the norm in the US, Canada, Australia, New Zealand (and other countries worldwide).

That a more complete consideration of the opportunities and threats of the branch campus development is undertaken, so that the risks can be appropriately marshalled and mitigated by the newly formed academic and administrative teams. This should include planning for contingency arrangements.

We agree that a comprehensive appraisal of the opportunities and threats, including those that are not under our control, is essential for a credible SWOT analysis and for effective development of the Medical School at UNIC Athens.

We have already made strides towards this by enhancing sections of the School's SWOT analysis, including for example, a reference to the potential for global and/or regional instability to impact our abilities to effectively recruit students across our programmes.

We are committed to maintaining mechanisms that allow us to update and refresh SWOT analyses across our activities (e.g., at programme, department and school levels), and so that new risks are identified in a timely manner. We believe that in doing so, we will strengthen across the four pillars of our activity (teaching, research, social responsibility and internationalisation) and demonstrate transparency.

We are very supportive of this initiative progressing across MD and PhD programmes. It may be wise for an early formal review of the facilities once the medical school building has been completed, which we would be delighted to contribute to, if appropriate.

As has been conveyed, we thank the EEC for their support. As indicated during the visit, and based on their availability, we look forward to welcoming them in late November / early December to view the operations of the new campus.

The branch campus creates rich opportunities across six schools and programmes, with excellent new faculty, to maximise on interprofessional and transdisciplinary education and research – this is often easier to do “by design” than through retrospective timetable arrangements.

We thank the EEC for acknowledging the rich IPL opportunities at UNIC Athens. We agree that interprofessional education is an integral component of medical education. The MD programmes have an IPL stream that runs longitudinally throughout all years of the programme and learning objectives have systematically been embedded in the MD programmes. Guided by our IPL Strategic Plan under the leadership of the IPL Academic Lead, we have systematically covered the IPL learning objectives through educational activities across all years of the programmes. The opportunities at UNIC Athens, our detailed curricula and our extensive experience will allow us to develop and deliver IPL activities, in line with those in Cyprus by design. Moreover, the operation of the other Schools at UNIC Athens creates rich opportunities for collaborative research, such as, for example, with the School of Life and Health Sciences and the Pharmacy programme, and will actively promote such collaborations from the outset.

Lastly, recognising the unique capabilities and position of HHG, alongside UNIC, we would encourage HEAL and the partnership to continue to proactively and strategically engage with the government and thought leaders to develop junior medical training opportunities (residency programme) within the private healthcare system, for the benefit of healthcare in Greece.

We thank the EEC for their recommendation in relation to residency programmes. The hospitals of the Hellenic Healthcare Group (HHG) provide rich clinical training opportunities which would also be of benefit to residents, and the Group is also active in continuous professional development via HEAL (Healthcare Education & Advanced Learning Academy), which is the educational/ CPD arm of HHG. We will explore with our HHG partners the relevant opportunities in the context of the overall evolution of specialty training in Greece.

We thank the EEC once again for their constructive approach to the visit and to their evaluation throughout.

D. Higher Education Institution Academic Representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Prof Joseph Joseph	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; Chair of Clinical Education	
Prof Edmund Neale	Clinical Education Coordinator (UK)	
Dr Danagra Ikossi	Director of Postgraduate Medicine	
Prof Aleksandar Jovanovic	Head of Department of Basic & Clinical Sciences	
Prof Photos Hajigeorgiou	Associate Head of Department of Basic & Clinical Sciences	
Dr Eleni (Lina) Tolma	Head of Department of Primary Care & Population Health	
Dr Annalisa Quattrocchi	Associate Head of Department of Primary Care & Population Health	
Prof Paola Nicolaides	MBBS Programme Director	
Dr Persoulla Nicolaou	Associate Dean for Students; MD Programme Director	
Dr Danny Alon-Ellenbogen	MD Programme Assistant Director	
Dr Chloe Antoniou	GEMD Programme Co-Director	
Prof Louis Loizou	GEMD Programme Co-Director	
Dr Dionysios Vaidakis	MSc Family Medicine Programme Coordinator	
Dr Souzana Achilleos	MPH Programme Coordinator	



Dr Elena Critselis	MSc HSA Programme Coordinator	
Dr Nicoletta Nicolaou	PhD Programme Director	

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