

February 28, 2022

Professor Mary Koutselini Ioannidou
President, Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CY.Q.A.A.)

RE: Letter of Inquiry from Hellenic National Academic Recognition and Information Center (DOTAP), # DOTAP/4904

Dear Mrs. President,

Thank you for forwarding the letter of the Hellenic National Academic Recognition and Information Center (DOTAP) to the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CY.Q.A.A.) on 23/2/2022. We acknowledge that DOTAP because of applications from graduates of the European University Cyprus, School of Medicine for recognition of their Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) degree, requests clarifications of our educational program, so as to assess its alignment with the requirements outlined in the Law 3328/2005. We understand that the DOTAP's inquiry is focused on the Clinical Training Program, and request information regarding the aspects of practical training that may take place outside of Cyprus.

The School of Medicine at European University Cyprus was developed, based on European Union (EU) directives (EU 2005/36/EC) and international standards. Students are trained in Cyprus and teaching is conducted in English. A minimum workload of 5,500 hours of theoretical and practical training, equivalent to 360 ECTS is required to complete the Doctor of Medicine Degree over six years. The program of study provides an all-inclusive, full basic sciences and clinical training thematic units.

The Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) Program began function in the Academic Year 2013-2014, and has had three (3) graduating classes: Class of 2019, Class of 2020, and Class of 2021.

At present, over 65% of the student body of the Program are international students representing nationalities other than Cyprus or Greece, including USA, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Israel, Italy, Netherlands, Russia, Norway, Switzerland, Iceland, Iran, Canada, among others. As such, the program is globally recognized, while ensures that our students a global perspective in modern healthcare.

Accreditation

The EUC Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) Program has been fully accredited in 2013. More Specifically, the Program of Study, "Doctor of Medicine (MD)" [6 years, 360 ECTS], was granted re-accreditation by C.Y.Q.A.A. on its 50th Summit on 17-18 February 2020, through the process of the **World Federation of Medical Education (WFME)**. C.Y.Q.A.A. met the criteria for W.F.M.E. Recognition of Accreditation

Program and was awarded Accreditation Status, conferring the understanding that the quality of medical education in its accredited schools is to an appropriate and rigorous standard. It is important to note that the Department of Medicine, of the School of Medicine that offers the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) program additionally received **Departmental Accreditation by CY.Q.A.A. on July 16, 2020**, as per the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2019 [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N.35 (I)/2019].

Additionally, the Commission Delegated Decision (EU) 2019/608 of 16 January 2019 amending Annex V to Directive 2005/36/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council as regards the evidence of formal qualifications and titles of training courses through the **Internal Market Information (IMI) System**. As such, European University Cyprus, School of Medicine, Doctor of Medicine Graduates who are citizens of EU member states, following completion of the six-year course of studies can register in the Register of Medical Practitioners in EU member states. As a result of the previous, EUC, School of Medicine received **Notification from the Cyprus Medical Council** recognizing the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.), offered by EUC, School of Medicine as a degree that meets the Qualifications of the European Commission through the Internal Market Information System of May 30, 2017.

EUC School of Medicine meets the requirements established by the **Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG)**, meaning that the School’s students and graduates are able to apply freely to ECFMG for Certification and Examination in the USA via the **ECFMG Medical School Web Portal** to which EUC now has, giving students access to: 1) Status Verification, 2) ERAS, and 3) Electronic Credentials Verification. In this process, EUC School of Medicine has been able to facilitate students and graduates with USMLE exams, as well as with their residency placements in the USA.

The quality of the Doctor of Medicine Program offered at EUC, School of Medicine is underscored by the fact that in July 2021, **QS TOP UNIVERSITIES**, (QS Stars University Rating) rated the **Doctor of Medicine Program with five Stars**, the highest rating offered by QS Stars.

Overview of the EUC Doctor of Medicine Curriculum

The 6-year curriculum has undergone continuous discussion and development within a consultative framework informed by internal evaluation (Department and School Council meetings) and internal and external best practices. Through two revision cycles, one directed at the preclinical curriculum (2016) and one at the clinical training program (2019), the School designed and **integrated spiral competency-based curriculum**. These revisions were approved by the Senate and Council.

The six-year curriculum is divided in three educational phases.

Phase I:	Foundations of Medicine	(years 1-2)
Phase II:	Foundations of Clinical Practice	(year 3)
Phase III:	Clinical Medicine Core & Pre-internship	(years 4-5) (year 6)

Clinical Training via the Clinical Medicine Core comprises the last three years of study. The Clinical Medicine Core, forms the final turn of curriculum spiral, with the translation of knowledge and skills into practice, during clinical clerkships. The Clinical Medicine Core & Pre-Internship Training is divided into two stages. In years 4 and 5 the students are exposed to all clinical sub-disciplines within the primary clinical pillars (internal medicine, surgery, neuroscience/mental health, child/maternal health, and family medicine/primary care) with lectures and 3-week clinical rotations (Junior Clerkship Rotations). In concurrence with the new Association of American Medical Colleges AAMC guidelines, which require simulation training in all residency programs, the School of Medicine adheres to a simulation-based portion within the theoretical hours of the clinical curriculum. This has been designed to ensure acquisition of core competencies, including key manual skills, cognitive skills, communication skills and integrated skills. The clinical training program has been carefully designed with parallel education blocks that are intercalated with the primary pillars defined by the School of Medicine to ensure that all students complete the same material at the end of the semester. The 6th year of the Doctor of Medicine curriculum is devoted to clinical rotations (clerkships) in all disciplines. These *Senior Clerkship Rotations* take place alongside the *Junior Clerkship Rotations*. This type of parallel block rotations with teams that include Junior and Senior Clerkship Rotations assures more effective learning, competency acquisition and transition to internship preparation. The Senior Clerkship Rotations, or Pre-Internship Training has been carefully designed to ensure that students will be able to function as independent physicians during their residency training. As such, the Senior Clerkship Rotation will act as a critical transition point, when the observational apprentice becomes an active and accountable clinical practitioner. The clinical training program and clerkships is outlined throughout the *Clinical Training Manual (CTM)*.

As outlined in our Accreditation Documentation (transparently available on the CY.Q.A.A. webpage) that was reviewed and approved by the CY.Q.A.A., via the WFME External Evaluation Committee review (March 2020) and the Departmental Accreditation External Evaluation Committee review (July 2020), Clinical training takes place in pre-determined sites of the public and private sector, following appropriate planning by the Clinical Training Committee. The available training sites for EUC medical students include primary, secondary and tertiary healthcare centers provide sufficient outpatient clinics, patient wards, special departments, diagnostic departments, clinical laboratories, to allow clinical training to be organized with appropriate rotations throughout all main disciplines as defined in the EUC Medical Curriculum. Specifically, according to the collaboration scheme with clinical training sites in Cyprus, students have adequate patient access to cover the disciplines within each educational pillar, specifically:

- *Internal Medicine I*: cardiology, respiratory medicine, nephrology;
- *Surgery I*: general Surgery & anesthesiology;
- *Internal Medicine II*: hematology, oncology, gastrointestinal, internal medicine and endocrinology;
- *Surgery II*: orthopedics, general surgery, emergency department, intensive care;
- *Neuroscience/Mental Health I*: neurology and neurosurgery;
- *Maternal/Child Health I*: obstetrics, gynecology;
- *Neuroscience/Mental Health II*: psychiatry, ophthalmology, otorhinolaryngology;
- *Maternal/Child Health II*: pediatrics;
- *Family Medicine/Primary Care*.

As shared with the WFME and Departmental External Evaluation Committees, clinical training takes place at a consortium of Hospitals, Clinics and other Centers within Cyprus. The list below includes the major **clinical training sites** that collaborate with EUC School of Medicine. The hospitals amount to over 1000 beds and more than 25 clinical specialties.

Public:

- Larnaca General Hospital (including Larnaca Old Hospital)
- Ammochostos General Hospital
- Nicosia General Hospital
- Archbishop Makarios III General Hospital (Nicosia)

Private:

- Agios Therisos diagnostic center (Nicosia)
- American Gastroenterology center (Nicosia)
- American Medical Center (Nicosia)
- Apollonion private Hospital (Nicosia)
- Aretaieion private Hospital (Nicosia)
- Arodafnousa Hospice Center (Nicosia)
- Cyprus Institute of Neurology and Genetics (Nicosia)
- German Oncology Center (Limassol)
- Hippocrateon private Hospital (Nicosia)
- Ophthalmos center (Nicosia)
- Theocharides laboratory (Nicosia)

The School has 120 clinical instructors, who train the 4th through 6th year students, who are distributed across the hospitals in small teams of 3-6 students, depending upon the rotation and subject. The number of students is set separately for each specific clinical rotation, by each department in each hospital, in close collaboration with the Department Heads, based on the constraints of facilities and number of clinical instructors. The School works closely with the designated Hospital Coordinator to design the clinical rotation program.

EUC medical students could participate in **Externships** in prestigious, highly ranked institutions all over the world for **additional** practical and/or research training. *The experiences through this program is over and above their required training program hours, as specified in the accredited curriculum.* Externships at these sites greatly enrich the EUC student by providing them the opportunity to learn in a wide variety of environments. To date, 125 students have participated in our Externship Program. The program is extremely competitive where every year the School receives more than 200 applications for the open positions (about 60 posts in 10 countries per year). The School upon communication with the various possible institutes for Externships provides a list to the students, along with any restrictions (e.g. surgical externships are available only for senior students). The students submit a ranked list of their externship preferences along with a motivation letter. An Ad-hoc Externship Committee is formed by the Dean. The Committee reviews the following: Cumulative GPA, year of study and motivation letter.

The **Externship Program** was seen favorably by the WFME External Evaluation Committee who noted in their accreditation report that: *"The system of externship gives an opportunity to students to*

increase their clinical experience worldwide and therefore offers great variety and choice.” In addition, the Departmental Accreditation External Evaluation Committee wrote “There are manifold international connections. The teaching programs look admirably coherent. The setting of the Department of Medicine may allow to assume international leadership in the full implementation of the CANMEDS vision. The Department strives to achieve perfection and best national and international academic standards.”

The externships offered was shared with the External Evaluation Committees during both of our accreditations and is clearly shown in our officially submitted accreditation documentation, are shown in the table below. Among the externship placements for our graduates, included are Shriners Hospital for Children USA, John’s Hopkins Hospital USA, Hygeia Hospital Greece, Oxford University UK, Hadassah Israel, among others.

No	University/ Specialty	Country	Max. No of Students
1	University of Rome “Tor Vergata” (English Speaking) Surgery, Cardiology, Medicine, Hygiene, Medical Biochemistry, Clinical Medicine, Cosmetics / Research	Italy	6
2	University of Southampton Medical Nutrition/Research	UK	2
3	Barts and the London School of Medicine Queen Mary, University of London. Neuroscience, Neurotrauma and Neurodegeneration / Research	UK	2
4	AHEPA Thessaloniki Neurology/Neuroimmunology/ Research	GR	3
5	Shriners Hospitals for Children SHC Springfield Massachusetts (SHC Springfield can provide in hospital housing and meals at no charge) Pediatrics, orthopedics /Research	USA	2
6	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Thessaloniki Greece Obstetrics - Gynecology - Maternal Fetal Medicine	GR	3
7	AXEPA Hospital Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Internal Medicine	GR	3
8	Hippokratelion General Hospital Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Neonatology	GR	2

9	<u>Hippokraton</u> Hospital Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Pediatrics – Infectious Diseases	GR	2
10	<u>Papageorgiou</u> General Hospital Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Orthopedics	GR	3
11	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki Forensic Medicine and Toxicology	GR	2
12	Alpert Medical School and Brown University Rhode Island Hospital Molecular Microbiology and Immunology	USA	2
13	American University of Beirut,	Lebanon	2
14	<u>Golestan</u> University of Medical Sciences	IRAN	2
15	Oxford Medical Transplant Surgery	UK	2
16	Sidra Organization Pediatrics/Neonatology,	Qatar	2
17	Oxford Medical Cardiology/Research	UK	2
18	University Clinical Halle (Saale) Institute for Medical Immunology	Germany	2
19	Thrombosis and Hemostasis Center Service d'Hématologie Biologique, <u>Hopital Tenon, Group Universitaire de l'Est Parisien,</u> INSERM U938, Research Group "Cancer-Hemostasis-Angiogenesis. Faculty of Medicine Sorbonne University, Paris	France	2

20	Neuroimmunology Unit and MS Center at Hadassah and the neuroimmunology laboratory	Israel	2
21	Thessaloniki AHEPA Cardiology	GR	2
22	Univ of Thessalia, School of Medicine Orthopedics	GR	2
23	Weizman Institute of Science, Hebrew University of Jerusalem Medical Biochemistry	Jerusalem Israel	2
24	German Oncology Center Cardiology	Limassol Cyprus	6
25	NIKON-Center of Excellence; Medical University of Graz, Austria	Austria	2
26	Johns Hopkins, USA Cardiology Cardiology	USA	2
27	Henry Dunant Hospital Cardiology	GR	2
28	Humanitas Research Hospital, Cardiology	Milan Italy	2
29	Technion - Israel Institute of Technology in Haifa	Haifa Israel	2
30	Larissa University Hospital Cardiology	Larissa Greece	2
31	Naval Hospital Athens Invasive Cardiology	Athens Greece	2 1.
32	The Donald and Barbara Zucker School of Medicine at Hofstra/ Northwell in NY	USA	2

33	Anesthesiology; Apollonio Private Hospital and the American Medical Centre in Nicosia	Nicosia Cyprus	2
34	Institute of Pain Medicine, Tel Aviv Medical Centre in Israel Anesthesiology;	Tel Aviv Israel	2
35	Neuroimmunology Unit at Hadassah and the neuroimmunology laboratory	Israel	2
36	Medical College of Wisconsin Department of Anesthesiology	USA	2

Of our 96 graduates (Class of 2019, Class of 2020 and Class of 2021), 72 have done Externships. Specifically, these include:

- Class of 2019 – 18 graduates – 10 externships
- Class of 2020 – 26 graduates – 17 externships
- Class of 2021 – 52 graduates – 45 externships

In Summary, and to address the inquiries posed by DOTAP with regards to the Clinical Training Program of EUC, School of Medicine, Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) program, please note:

- While clinical skills are introduced early in the EUC, Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) accredited program, **Clinical Training (Clerkship Rotations) takes place in the last three (3) years of Study, specifically Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6.** The EUC M.D. Degree is in accordance to the Hellenic law ΥΠ' ΑΡΙΘ. 3328/2005 Article 4A section 1B. Moreover, on average each student spends approximately three (3) weeks abroad to gain professional experience from the other countries, which is done in addition to (over and above) the preclinical and clinical training done in Cyprus.
- Collectively, **Clinical Training extends across the last 6 semesters of study** (16 weeks Fall and Spring Semesters for Year 4 and Year 5, and 35 weeks extended across Year 6).
- Clinical Training takes place in a consortium of private and public hospitals in the major cities of Cyprus, specifically Nicosia, Larnaca and Limassol**, that collectively offer over 1000 beds and cover all required specialties and subspecialties.
- The School offers an **Externship Program, which provides research and/or practical experience** in a wide-range of internationally renowned institutions, including those in Greece, allowing each student to further explore and develop their clinical and research interests. This experience is supplemental to the training program offered by the School. Please note that European University Cyprus does employ practical exchanges via ERASMUS. As such, after three (3) graduation cohorts, the School intends to explore the addition of ERASMUS practical training to its armamentarium, as well. The aim is to further enrich exposure of our students.

We believe that the above demonstrates that the Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) curriculum, and particularly the clinical training of students in the EUC, School of Medicine is in accordance to the provisions of all articles of the Hellenic Constitution and the provisions of Law 3328/2005.

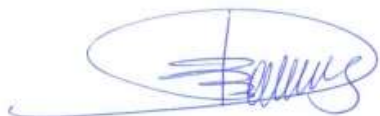
Please note that all the above have been clearly described in our Accreditation Documentation submitted to CY.Q.A.A. for both the WFME (March 2020) and Departmental Accreditation (July 2020) procedures. For transparency, CY.Q.A.A. has accordingly, made each of these documents available on their webpage.

We remain at your disposal for any additional details.

Sincerely,



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European University Cyprus



Professor Theodore Xanthos
Chair and Program Coordinator, School of Medicine
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