

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 9/4/2024

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Nicosia
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Φαρμακορρύθμιση-Κανονιστικές Υποθέσεις (1,5 έτη/ 90 ECTS,
Μάστερ, Εξ Αποστάσεως)

In English:

Drug Regulatory Affairs (1,5 years/90 ECTS, Master of Science,
E-Learning)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
 - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

We would like to thank the members of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for their professional and academic approach during the on-site evaluation of the programme and for producing a detailed evaluation report. We highly appreciate the EEC's constructive comments and recommendations for further improvement of our programme.

This evaluation adds value to our programme taking into consideration the EEC's members' expertise in the subject and/or related areas and we are very pleased that the EEC has concluded that the program is fully complaint in the areas of "Teaching staff", "Student admission, progression, recognition and certification" and "Learning resources and student support", and for most of the criteria in the areas of "Study programme and study programme's design and development" and "Student – centered learning, teaching and assessment"

Below you will find detailed responses to all recommendations

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The publicly available information of the programme, its structure and courses are outdated and should be revised in line with the documentation presented to the committee.	The Program content on the website will be updated and will include all the information as presented to the EEC as soon as the approval from the Agency is received	Choose level of compliance:
Any potential consequences of the international recognition of the new sub-track of the programme without a thesis should be clearly communicated in programme study guide and on the website.	<p>We will clearly indicate the potential consequences of selecting electives as opposed to thesis in the website, as well as in study guides. We will inform any leads and accepted students accordingly, and include the information in the informational emails sent to all interested individuals. The following will be communicated:</p> <p>"The program offers a thesis and non thesis option. In the non thesis option, two elective courses must be completed instead of the thesis. In some countries and/or institutions, a master without a thesis may not be recognized. If you choose to pursue the non thesis option it is advised that you check with your country's regulations for</p>	



	the acceptability/recognition of a master without a thesis. For further clarifications you can contact the program coordinator. “	
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2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Make sure the teaching materials are updated regularly with up-to-date information	We strive to keep all the material up to date especially regulations and articles. The course coordinator will be sending a memo one month before each semester begins to all faculty for updating their reading materials. Course leaders will follow the progress and implementation	Choose level of compliance:
Student-to-student interactions should be prioritised and enabled through the design of appropriate forum and other collaborative activities.	Interactive activities such as forum, and wikis for student-student interactions are already in place in all courses. Interactive activities have been revised and included in all courses such that there is an interactive activity almost every other week. Relevant changes have been made in the courses and study guides (see Annex 1, updated study guides).	Choose level of compliance:
Weekly activities should be interactive and graded, and as such, clearly presented in the assessment framework of study guides.	Study guides have been revised to clearly indicate the grade weight of all weekly activities and other assignments (see Annex 1, study guides)	Choose level of compliance:
Material should be embedded in Moodle in a seamless manner and without requiring students to process and access them beyond the Moodle environment	We have changed the settings in the moodle platform so that the material opens directly in a new window when selected	Choose level of compliance:
Internships should be further utilised and accredited.	We appreciate the comment and we acknowledge the importance of internships. Internships are optional and suggested to students that are not working, and did not have a RA experience before. At this time, standardization of the internships cannot be safeguarded, as they may differ in duration and topic from year to year and from company to company depending on the company's needs. In this regard, accreditation is challenging. We will however work with the companies offering the internships to see how	Choose level of compliance:



	they can be standardized, and examine a possible accreditation.	
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The EEC would recommend adapting a formal process for the peer review of teaching performance.</p>	<p>We appreciate the comment by the EEC and understand the importance for such a process. Course leaders who are full time staff, together with the program coordinator and another senior faculty member (Rank of Associate Professor or Professor) will assess the teaching performance of all faculty annually.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>As several courses (PHAR-616, PHAR-624, PHAR-625, PHAR-626, PHAR-627) are dependent solely on adjunct and visiting staff, the EEC recommends a formal monitoring process (for example inclusion of permanent members of staff on all courses) to ensure sustainability of the programme.</p>	<p>The program already employs Course leaders for each course that are full time staff and among other duties monitor each course. The course leaders for each course can be found in the Student handbook under section C “Course leaders” (Annex 2)</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The EEC recommends that the University checks the eligibility for this option for the programme assessed. Furthermore, recognition of a degree without a thesis as a Master of Science may not be the case in other countries.</p>	<p>The EEC vaguely points out here a potential problem without specifically referring to particular countries and/or their national regulations. Our programme is in line with our national educational system and the DIPAE requirements regarding Thesis. It is also in line with the rules and regulations of the University of Nicosia and a practice followed by all Universities in Cyprus which do offer Master degrees with the Thesis as optional. Finally, we have not heard so far from any of our Master degree graduates (of any discipline) who has completed his/her studies without completing a thesis (and the number of such graduates is large), that s/he had a problem in having his/her award title recognized in his/her country.</p> <p>In general, a particular programme offered by a Cypriot University may not be able to satisfy all requirements in every country in the world. What is important is to satisfy the national and European requirements and our programme does so. Let us not forget that European countries do offer 60 (not 90) ECTS Master programmes without a Thesis.</p> <p>The thesis option is offered in order to best meet the needs of students. As the RA profession is changing and new roles are assigned to RA professionals, the electives option provide a unique opportunity to students to get knowledge in specific areas that will be useful or required for their work. As</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	mentioned elsewhere, all students will be informed about the implications of selecting electives vs thesis, and their decision to follow one over the other option will be based on their individual needs	
It would be advisable to encourage all students to engage in writing a thesis and provide clear information about implications in case they choose not to pursue it.	We appreciate the comment and we understand the importance of the thesis in a master program. As stated elsewhere about the thesis option, we will inform the students accordingly and let them decide based on their career aspirations and future needs.	Choose level of compliance:
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5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
General support was provided to students; however, a formal tutor-tutee system is encouraged to be put in place.	The DL unit already has advisors that help the students throughout their studies. We will additionally implement the tutor-tutee system. Each student will be assigned to a full staff faculty that will be the point of contact for any issue he/she may face, or for any help needed. Accordingly, the relevant change has been made in the student handbook (Annex 2, section 2.8)	Choose level of compliance:
Weekly, interactive, and graded activities should be consistently presented in each course.	Changes have been made in the study guides to clearly indicate the weekly activities or other assignments (Annex 1, study guides)	Choose level of compliance:
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The publicly available information of the programme, its structure and courses are outdated and should be revised in line with the documentation presented to the committee.	See Section 1	Choose level of compliance:
Any potential consequences of the international recognition of the new sub-track of the programme without a thesis should be clearly communicated in programme study guide and on the website.	See section 1	Choose level of compliance:
Make sure the teaching materials are updated regularly with up-to-date information	See section 2	Choose level of compliance:
Student-to-student interactions should be prioritised and enabled through the design of appropriate forum and other collaborative activities.	See section 2	Choose level of compliance:
Weekly activities should be interactive and graded, and as such, clearly presented in the assessment framework of study guides.	See section 2	Choose level of compliance:
Material should be embedded in Moodle in a seamless manner and without requiring students to process and access them beyond the Moodle environment.	See section 2	Choose level of compliance:
Internships should be further utilised and accredited.	See section 2	Choose level of compliance:
The EEC would recommend adapting a formal process for the peer review of teaching performance.	See section 3	Choose level of compliance:
As several courses are dependent solely on adjunct and visiting staff, the EEC recommends a formal monitoring process to ensure sustainability of the programme.	See section 3	Choose level of compliance:
The EEC recommends that the University checks the eligibility for this option for the programme assessed. Furthermore, recognition of a degree without a thesis as a	See section 4	Choose level of compliance:

Master of Science may not be the case in other countries.		
It would be advisable to encourage all students to engage in writing a thesis and provide clear information about implications in case they choose not to pursue it.	See section 4	Choose level of compliance:
General support was provided to students; however, a formal tutor-tutee system is encouraged to be put in place.	See section 5	Choose level of compliance:
Weekly, interactive, and graded activities should be consistently presented in each course	See section 5	Choose level of compliance:



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Dr Lefteris Zacharia	Program Coordinator	
Dr Christos Petrou	Head of the Department	
Prof. Kyriacos Felekkis	Dean of the School	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
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