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HELLENIC REPUBLIC

H.Q.A.

HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
 ACCREDITATION AGENCY

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

ATEI OF CRETE

December 2013



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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Nursing Department of the High Technological Educational Institution of Crete consisted of the following three (3) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

1. Dr **Vasilios Raftopoulos (Coordinator)**

Associate Professor of Nursing, Department of Nursing, Cyprus University of Technology,
Limassol, Cyprus

2. Dr **Irena Papadopoulos**

Professor of Transcultural Health and Nursing, School of Health and Education, Middlesex
University, London, United Kingdom

3. Dr **Amalia Tsiami**

Senior Lecturer, School of Psychology, Social Work and Human Sciences ,University of West
London, London, United Kingdom

N.B. The structure of the “Template” proposed for the External Evaluation Report mirrors the requirements of Law 3374/2005 and corresponds overall to the structure of the Internal Evaluation Report submitted by the Department.

The length of text in each box is free. Questions included in each box are not exclusive nor should they always be answered separately; they are meant to provide a general outline of matters that should be addressed by the Committee when formulating its comments.

Introduction

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) welcomes the opportunity to participate in this evaluation instigated by the Ministry of Education of the Government of Greece. The EEC was warmly welcomed by the members of the Department of Nursing at ATEI of Crete (ATEICRENUR), who truly made an impressive effort to facilitate the efficient functioning of the evaluation process of the EEC considering they were informed about the visit one month prior to it. The ATEICRENUR Department contributed whole-heartedly to the evaluation process with professionalism, honesty and enthusiasm and the EEC thanks them for their positive attitude and collaboration. The EEC felt well equipped to address the tasks assigned by the H.Q.Q.A. and was able to complete the review effectively and efficiently. The conclusions described below were reached unanimously.

Description of the Nursing Department of ATEICRENUR

The ATEICRENUR Department is comprised of 1 Professor, 1 Assistant Professor, 9 Lecturers (καθηγητές εφαρμογών), 1 special technical staff (nurse), 1 administrative staff and 45 clinical mentors (εργαστηριακοί συνεργάτες). According to the Internal Evaluation Report (IER) in the 2012-2013 a total of 859 active students attend the ATEICRENUR Department. Of the elected academic staff, 10 are nurses, while one is a computer scientist. The bachelor’s program at ATEICRENUR Department is comprised of 7 semesters of theoretical and clinical work and 1 semester during which a clinical placement and a dissertation are completed.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) has visited:

- the main campus of ATEICRENUR
- the library of ATEICRENUR
- the Secretariat of ATEICRENUR
- the classrooms
- the offices of the faculty
- the laboratories (nursing skills, anatomy, computers)
- the new building (under construction)
- the kitchen and the restaurant
- the Medical center for the staff and students
- the counseling service

- the career guidance office (γραφείο διασύνδεσης)
- the Erasmus office
- the Venizelion Hospital
- the Heracleion University Hospital (ΠΙΑΓΝΗ)
- the community services office (ΚΕΦΟΙΠΠ)
- the gym
- the theatre and recreation center
- the student living quarters.

The External Evaluation Committee has met with:

- 1) the Rector and the Vice-Rector of ATEICRE
- 2) the Chair of ATEICRENUR Department
- 3) the Dean of ATEI School of Health Sciences
- 4) the Academic staff of the ATEICRENUR Department (the internal evaluation group, the elected academic staff and a group of clinical mentors some of whom were graduates of the ATEICRENUR Department)
- 5) the secretarial staff and librarian
- 6) a group of undergraduate students in the department (n=30)
- 7) a group of undergraduate students in the hospital (n=17)
- 8) a group of Erasmus students (non-nursing)
- 9) an Erasmus student from Spain (met after the presentation of the Department)
- 10) a group of nursing students in clinical placement
- 11) the Matrons and Supervisors of Nurses in the two Hospitals
- 12) the academic staff responsible for the Erasmus Program at the ATEICRENUR Department
- 13) the nurse coordinator in the community services office (ΚΕΚΟΙΦ-ΑΠΗ)
- 14) the staff responsible for the career guidance and the clinical placement of the students
- 15) the staff of the computers lab
- 16) the psychologists in the counseling service
- 17) the catering manager of ATEICRE.

The reports and the documents provided by the ATEICRENUR Department that had been reviewed by the EEC were the following:

1. The internal evaluation report of the Nursing Department (2009 and 2012-2013)
2. The curriculum of the undergraduate studies
3. The internal students satisfaction survey
4. A sample of students' dissertations
5. samples of the examination papers (from all levels of the degree as well as all range of marks)
6. the demonstration of e-class
7. students' clinical placement handbook

8. the guidelines for the writing of students dissertation
9. an updated list of faculty scientific publications
10. the list and some of the final reports of the external funded research projects
11. the checklist for the evaluation of the students in the clinical placement and in the labs
12. documentation for the assessment and for recording of students activities
13. the code of academic deontology
14. additional leaflets.

The site visit was very well organized and highly professional although the Faculty members were informed about the visit one month prior to it. The facilities visited by the External Evaluation Committee are mentioned above. Faculty members were very friendly and they facilitated the external evaluation committee's work by establishing a constructive dialogue and providing all the information and data requested. During discussions, faculty members responded to the EEC's questions with clarity and honesty. The EEC members would like to express their gratitude for the warm reception and very kind collaboration.

The Internal Evaluation Procedure

Please comment on:

- Appropriateness of sources and documentation used
- Quality and completeness of evidence reviewed and provided
- To what extent have the objectives of the internal evaluation process been met by the Department?

All the documentation provided by the ATEICRENUR Department was relevant and available to the EEC whenever asked. The quality of the documentation was excellent and the evidence was up to date and fully informative. The objectives of the internal evaluation have been met by the ATEICRENUR Department and the EEC recognizes that a great effort was put into the process.

A. Curriculum

To be filled separately for each undergraduate, graduate and doctoral programme.

APPROACH

- What are the goals and objectives of the Curriculum? What is the plan for achieving them?
- How were the objectives decided? Which factors were taken into account? Were they set against appropriate standards? Did the unit consult other stakeholders?
- Is the curriculum consistent with the objectives of the Curriculum and the requirements of the society?
- How was the curriculum decided? Were all constituents of the Department, including students and other stakeholders, consulted?
- Has the unit set a procedure for the revision of the curriculum?

The goals of the current undergraduate Curriculum are described in detail in the student guide but are summarized as follows:

1. the provision of a high level education and preparation for their nursing students with an emphasis on evidence based nursing care
2. the promotion of nursing science and knowledge by means of applied research
3. the establishment and maintenance of collaborations with external national and international organizations
4. the promotion of health and improvement of quality of life and,
5. the continuous evaluation of the quality of their services.

The Faculty has a curriculum committee which oversees the development and approval of the curriculum to meet the standards of the European Union directives for nursing education and the legal framework of the Greek Ministry of Education. The committee consists of academic staff and a student's representative. Their proposals are reviewed and approved by the departmental management committee ('sinelefsi'). The committee also consulted informally with other stakeholders including clinical staff and the senior management of local health care settings.

The objectives are clearly stated in the internal evaluation report (IER) of ATEICRENUR Department. The EEC agrees that these:

1. are adequate for a Bachelor degree in nursing
2. prepare students to become professional nurses and
3. are nursing oriented.

The ECC highly comments the Faculty for preparing a most comprehensive and user friendly study guide which includes a clearly articulated curriculum philosophy that underpins and informs the curriculum aims, learning objectives and course structure. In general the curriculum fully meets the criteria of the European Directive for nursing education. The adoption of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) makes it flexible, by resulting in the international academic and vocational recognition of the qualifications awarded by the ATEICRENUR Department. The curriculum objectives are responsive to the local social issues as well as to the wider Greek society. The revision of the curriculum is the responsibility of the appropriate committee.

IMPLEMENTATION

- How effectively is the Department's goal implemented by the curriculum?
- How does the curriculum compare with appropriate, universally accepted standards for the specific area of study?
- Is the structure of the curriculum rational and clearly articulated?
- Is the curriculum coherent and functional?
- Is the material for each course appropriate and the time offered sufficient?
- Does the Department have the necessary resources and appropriately qualified and

trained staff to implement the curriculum?

The ATEICRENUR Department's goals are implemented effectively by the curriculum in accordance with the international nursing standards. The curriculum is clearly articulated and its structure is functional, combining cutting edge knowledge and practice. The EEC welcomes the highly nursing-centric nature of the curriculum and congratulates the Faculty members for achieving such an excellent program of undergraduate studies in line with international trends for nursing education.

Overall the program is appropriate and compares well with established European University nursing programs. The EEC, would like to suggest that the areas of nursing ethics, transcultural nursing and health promotion, although present in the curriculum, could be further strengthened.

The EEC believes that human resources are not adequate. The small number of Faculty members (11 elected faculty) aided by 45 clinical mentors (which is a much smaller number than in previous years) has managed to achieve high standards in all aspects of the nursing program. Although this is due to their hard work and creativity, the EEC nevertheless believes that this cannot be sustained over a long period of time and would therefore recommend immediate action in terms of recruitment new permanent staff. The EEC would like to recognize the commitment, time and effort made by the staff which goes well beyond the call of duty.

All staff is highly competent to implement the curriculum effectively.

RESULTS

- How well is the implementation achieving the Department's predefined goals and objectives?
- If not, why is it so? How is this problem dealt with?
- Does the Department understand why and how it achieved or failed to achieve these results?

The EEC believes that the current undergraduate curriculum is sufficient in achieving the department's goals and objectives. This was verified by the students who expressed how much they are enjoying the courses and how much they are learning despite the human resource limitations outlined above. The Department formally evaluates its goals with the students and discusses issues with them in an effort to improve them. The EEC is confident that issues are appropriately identified and dealt with as much as the academic staff is able to. The quality of the student training is evident from the fact that graduates have an extremely high level of employability.

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department know how the Curriculum should be improved?
- Which improvements does the Department plan to introduce?

The current curriculum is relatively new and it is the by-product of internal evaluations and consultations with academic staff and students. The Department has an internal evaluation process which the EEC feels that it is a robust and adequate evaluation mechanism. The faculty informed the EEC that is planning to review the current curriculum by incorporating the comments of the Evaluation report (which are detailed in the recommendations section).

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

Does the Department have a defined pedagogic policy with regard to teaching approach and methodology?

Please comment on :

- Teaching methods used
- Teaching staff/ student ratio
- Teacher/student collaboration
- Adequacy of means and resources
- Use of information technologies
- Examination system

The EEC believes that there is a defined pedagogic policy with regards to teaching approach and methodology in the ATEICRENUR Department. This is evident from the IER of the ATEICRENUR Department, its formal and informal curricula activities and the discussions the EEC had with faculty members, clinical mentors in clinical placements and the students. The results of these policies culminate in the production of skillful graduates who are appropriately and adequately prepared for nursing practice.

The documentation (module study guides) provided by the department indicates that all the faculty use a mixed methods approach, such as use of lectures, group work, e-learning and laboratory exercises. The EEC has also identified community learning and volunteering work by the students i.e. informing the public about smoking, weight management, vaccinations, tele-nursing etc. Through these activities the Faculty gives an emphasis to the Primary Care.

According to the IER the ratio of permanent faculty members/student is 1:78 (859/11) which is considered to be high.

Discussions with the students, clinical staff and faculty about the clinical placements indicated that in all clinical placements this year (2013-2014) the clinical mentors to students' ratio has seen an increase from approximately 1:7 to 1:15. Despite this increase the students reported satisfaction with their clinical learning experiences due to the creative use of available resources, the clinical involvement of the faculty staff and the flexibility and good will of the hospital management and staff. The EEC wishes to congratulate all parties for

their constructive approach, excellent working relationships and teamwork.

Both teachers and students reported high levels of satisfaction with their close collaboration. For example students discussed with the EEC the easy access they have to their teachers, their inclusion in decision making bodies, their involvement in research activities and joined contributions to conferences.

The faculty uses means and resources in a very effective way. The EEC was shown the various laboratories (simulation, surgery, nursing skills, computer skills, and anatomy) well stocked library and classrooms. Overall the teaching buildings are fit for purpose with adequate classrooms, laboratory facilities and study spaces. All the classrooms have plenty of physical lighting, constructed with international standards of safety, friendly to students with disabilities, projection area, internet, whiteboards, and central heating. The EEC welcomes the construction of the new building for the Nursing department.

The faculty uses information technologies extensively (i.e. tele-nursing). In particular their use of e-class is both impressive and very comprehensive and it is fully used by the faculty and the students in a very beneficial way. Furthermore all students go through an IT course which provides a 'life-long' certification for computer knowledge (ECDL) that is accepted from the State for job applications.

The examination system determined by the Ministry of Education heavily relies on written memory exams (i.e. at the end of the semester) even though the Ministry does not stipulate the weight of marks given to the written exam. The ATEICRENUR Department fully promotes the principles of adult education and allows for critical thinking to develop. The reliance on written exams is reduced and the use of critical assignments and case studies is encouraged by the faculty. The faculty promotes the use of active learning methods, and encourages critical case reviews and reflective diaries and teaching methods that enable reflective and evidence-based learning.

A formal examination/evaluation strategy has been developed internally to improve and maintain the quality of the examination questions. The examination questions are specific with marks allocated to each question allowing transparency in marking. Additionally the range of learning taxonomy is assessed during the written exams. The student feedback is formalised (written feedback) and is given to the students in order to improve academic performance. Currently one academic marks each exam paper, which meets the European and International standards. However the final projects are reviewed by three faculty members which could be reduced to two.

IMPLEMENTATION

Please comment on:

- Quality of teaching procedures
- Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.
- Quality of course material. Is it brought up to date?
- Linking of research with teaching
- Mobility of academic staff and students

- Evaluation by the students of (a) the teaching and (b) the course content and study material/resources

The students the EEC met reported to be extremely satisfied with the quality of teaching procedures. This was in line with the IER. The Faculty seriously considers the student evaluation and implements changes in order to improve student satisfaction.

The EEC visited the ATEICRE library and found the resources to be adequate. The EEC also reviewed some nursing textbooks and teaching materials used in courses and found these to be relevant and appropriate. Overall, the students reported that they were satisfied with the use of the existing electronic literature databases. The student/staff use of VPN is welcomed by the EEC. The course modules are reviewed by the module leaders each year and their content is refreshed.

Based on the documentary evidence provided to the EEC and the discussions with the academic staff and students, there is an effective link of research with teaching. Evidence-based nursing is included in the curriculum. All the Faculty members are research active and are linking research and teaching. Students apply the linkages with research in their research projects. The ATEICRENUR Department includes both qualitative and quantitative methodology in the Research Methods module.

The ATEICRENUR Department has established links with other academic institutions in Europe and a number of ATEICRENUR students took advantage of the ERASMUS programme (45+ students between 2008-2013) while 29 ERASMUS students from other institutions have attended the clinical placement. Faculty members participate in the ERASMUS programme (between 2008-2013). In 2013, the ATEICRE ERASMUS office was awarded the silver medal for their performance amongst all ERASMUS participating institutions.

The academic teaching is evaluated by the students every year through the use of a structured questionnaire developed by the ATEICRE based on the recommendations of the HQAA. The questionnaires from each course are statistically analyzed. The EEC has been given a formal strategy regarding the dissemination of the results and subsequent action plan. The faculty gives feedback to the clinical mentors regarding the results of their evaluation by the students.

RESULTS

Please comment on:

- Efficacy of teaching.
- Discrepancies in the success/failure percentage between courses and how they are justified.
- Differences between students in (a) the time to graduation, and (b) final degree grades.
- Whether the Department understands the reasons of such positive or negative results?

As mentioned in previous sections the EEC found the efficacy of teaching to be very

satisfactory.

The EEC has identified a Departmental practice to address the success/failure percentages between modules. This involves discussions between teachers.

According to the legislation, completion time should be a minimum of 4 years and maximum of 6 years. According to the IER (2012-2013) in the last ten years the total of active students is 859. In 2012-13, 219 students were admitted. In the same year 84 students graduated whilst 70 were discontinued. According to European standards both the level of graduation and discontinuation are area for further improvement.

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?
- What initiatives does it take in this direction?

The faculty organizes meetings in which they discuss ways for the improvement of teaching.

The EEC has established that the Faculty has an on-going monitoring process for the continuous improvement of the quality of teaching. The Department has developed an electronic learning and learning support platform. This provides students greater flexibility in their learning and improves student participation in theory learning. The department has developed a checklist of skills that students experience and utilise during their placements.

C. Research

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

APPROACH

- What is the Department's policy and main objective in research?
- Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?

The EEC would like to congratulate the staff efforts to pursue research in health and nursing related areas. The EEC has reviewed the list of a significant number of publications (58 in peer review scientific journal, 21 of which with impact factors) being produced in the department in the last 5 years. This output is very good in relation to the number of academics who have produced it. The Nursing Department has a written research policy with measurable short, medium and long term goals.

The EEC has documented internal standards, described through collective agreement/action for assessing the quality of student research projects. More precisely, the faculty reviews the research protocols before the ethical assessment following international standards for conducting research. The existence of a Research Ethics Committee in the Department is crucial and very welcomed from the EEC.

IMPLEMENTATION

- How does the Department promote and support research?
- Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

The ATEICRENUR Department promotes and supports research among students through offering research methods classes (combining quantitative and qualitative research methodology). Students are also required to complete a dissertation during their final semester. The EEC was positively surprised from the quality of dissertations, some of which are at postgraduate level. Additionally, the Faculty provides detailed instructions, feedback and a structured checklist for the evaluation of the dissertation, a good practice that meets international standards for nursing education.

According to TEI mandates, there is no protected time for the faculty of the ATEICRENUR Department for research activities. This is compounded by financial constraints and heavy workloads including teaching, clinical supervision, dissertation supervision, administrative work, translation etc. In spite of limited infrastructure and support for research, faculty manage to produce high impact factor scientific publications and attract satisfactory funding from research projects.

Generally, the quantity and the quality of publications is comparable to other institutions abroad. The publication rate in books, journals and conference proceedings is adequate. It is also impressive that the Department pursues external funding for research in collaboration with other institutions. The Faculty has also been successful in securing internal funds for research (e.g. Archimedes call).

RESULTS

- How successfully were the Department's research objectives implemented?
- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.
- Efficacy of research work. Applied results. Patents etc.
- Is the Department's research acknowledged and visible outside the Department?
Rewards and awards.

Staff members encourage undergraduate students to publish their work in scientific journals or present their work in scientific congresses. The EEC reviewed samples of undergraduate dissertations and is of the opinion that their quality is high, with interesting and publishable results. The members of the Faculty attend regularly scientific national and international congresses and workshops. Externally funded research is satisfactory (i.e. coordination of three ARCHIMEDES projects and participation in 8 other research projects). Although the EEC recognises the wider funding constraints and staff time limitations to put forward grant proposals, the EEC is generally impressed.

The collaborations within the Department are common and successful. The overall positive outward profile of the Nursing Department is commendable.

An external award was noted for distinctions in nursing-related research (in a nursing conference last year).

IMPROVEMENT

- Improvements in research proposed by the Department, if necessary.
- Initiatives in this direction undertaken by the Department.

Both the EEC and the Department recognized the existence of a strategic research plan with short-, medium- and long-term goals that includes external research funding, the setting up of well-equipped research labs, and the contribution of academic staff in research across the Department, and their planning to set up a joint postgraduate programme. The familiarization of students with research methodologies from as early as possible in the curriculum through to postgraduate level education is a priority of the Department's research education strategy. The postgraduate program will be a significant asset for the promotion and maintenance of research activity within the Department and should be encouraged by the Ministry of Health.

D. All Other Services

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate levels, if necessary.

APPROACH

- How does the Department view the various services provided to the members of the academic community (teaching staff, students).
- Does the Department have a policy to simplify administrative procedures? Are most procedures processed electronically?
- Does the Department have a policy to increase student presence on Campus?

The ATEICRENUR Department uses all the available institutional resources in a very effective and efficient way. According to the IER, the EEC's observations and the comments of the students and the academic staff, the facilities of ATEICRENUR Department (e.g. offices, classrooms, laboratories, meeting rooms) are adequate. The elected academic staff as well as the clinical mentors lack of private office space and share the same space with many other persons. The EEC has seen a reading room in the area of the Nursing Department and a counselling and debriefing space for the student that is manned by student placement of other ATEI departments. In the new building that will be available soon the facilities will be more adequate. The EEC acknowledges the initiative and congratulates for the use of its own resources.

Many of the administrative procedures have been simplified recently and now include electronic processing but there is still room for continuous improvement. The ECC welcomes

the very well-structured website and the e-class of the Department that is continuously supported and updated by all the members of the academic staff. The continuous feedback of the students through the electronic platform is impressive.

Attendance at clinical placements is exemplary. The staff of the ATEICRENUR Department recognizes that student attendance at theory classes and clinical placement is very high due to the motivation by the faculty members.

IMPLEMENTATION

- Organization and infrastructure of the Department's administration (e.g. secretariat of the Department).
- Form and function of academic services and infrastructure for students (e.g. library, PCs and free internet access, student counseling, athletic- cultural activity etc.).

The Secretariat of the ATEICRENUR Department is staffed by one person who has to provide administrative services to 11 faculty members, 45 clinical instructors and 859 active students. The Secretariat is making a great effort to cover the needs of all the members of the ATEICRENUR Department. The EEC concluded that secretariat support in the ATEICRENUR Department is excellent although there is an urgent need for recruitment of new staff.

PC labs, library, medical office, Erasmus exchange services, the athletic facilities, theatre, counseling services and dining facilities of the ATEICRENUR Department are adequate although The EEC has been given assurances that those facilities which are lacking such as the medical and counseling rooms, will be improved when the Department moves into its new building in the summer of 2014. Both the athletic and cultural spaces appear to be excellent with numerous functions (concerts) and competitions (e.g basket ball) taking place in them.

The EEC considers that the library facilities are adequately established. Student access to the library, PCs and free internet access is considered to be very satisfactory. The ECC welcomes the use of Wi-Fi and VPN technology for the free internet/intranet access by the students. The staff of the library is exemplary and very supportive to the students and to all the academics.

RESULTS

- Are administrative and other services adequate and functional?
- How does the Department view the particular results?

Based on both the Faculty's and students' comments the administrative and other services are adequate and functional.

IMPROVEMENTS

- Has the Department identified ways and methods to improve the services provided?
- Initiatives undertaken in this direction.

Overall the EEC is impressed with the professionalism and the “customer friendly” attitude of the Secretariat of the ATEICRENUR Department. Despite the efforts of the academic staff and effective support from the existing administrative staff there is an urgent need for further electronic automation of all the administrative processes. The administrative staff is self-motivated and is making efforts to improve all the processes under the financial and law restrictions and the existence of only one person to provide services.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Please, comment on quality, originality and significance of the Department’s initiatives.

Overall the EEC is impressed with the quality, originality and significance of the ATEICRENUR Department’s external initiatives. The passion and commitment of the Faculty members are commendable. Among the most significant of the ATEICRENUR Department’s initiatives is its commitment to promoting evidence based nursing care which is in line with international trends including the delivery of transcultural and community care. The EEC was impressed by the Departmental external profile of the modern nurse. Many faculty members are engaging with the local and the national Greek and local community. Initiatives include public lectures, appearances in the local media, organization of voluntary activities and on-going collaboration with many Greek agencies (e.g municipalities, hospitals, and schools). Relationships with local hospitals and health centres are excellent. Students are encouraged to organize and participate in several health education activities (lectures, leaflets, screening activities). This contributes to the promotion of health and well-being of the wider community and enhances the social profile of nurses in the community. The social responsibility of the ATEICRENUR Department is enhanced with the above activities.

E. Strategic Planning, Perspectives for Improvement and Dealing with Potential Inhibiting Factors

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Please, comment on the Department’s:

- Potential inhibiting factors at State, Institutional and Departmental level, and proposals on ways to overcome them.
- Short-, medium- and long-term goals.
- Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit
- Long-term actions proposed by the Department.

A number of other rigid regulations further constrain innovation and development in

the department as outlined in the following:

At State level:

1. Absence of self-reliant postgraduate and doctoral programs in Nursing in ATEICRENUR Department
2. Very small numbers of permanent faculty nursing staff
3. Excessive number of visiting staff in relation to the permanent staff
3. Constantly changing legislature (attendance, assessment)
4. Unbalanced allocation of educational funding in relation to the special needs of the department.

At Institutional and Departmental level:

1. Inadequate number of administrative staff
2. Lack of allocated dedicated time for research
3. Level of bureaucracy imposed by the institutional framework
4. Administrative and secretarial tasks carried out by the faculty members
5. Insufficient number of technical and assistant staff to support the learning process and research activities.

- Proposals on ways to overcome the above inhibiting factors.
- Short-, medium- and long-term goals.
- Plan and actions for improvement by the Department/Academic Unit
- Long-term actions proposed by the Department.

The ATEICRENUR Nursing Department has already provided a list of desired actions that would enhance the quality of the current program.

- Short-term proposed actions include:

-Immediate recruitment to academic positions lost due to staff retirement and new staff appointments.

-Curriculum review and further enhancement

-Development of self-reliant postgraduate courses or courses with other universities where the Nursing Department will be the leading institution.

- Medium-term proposed actions include:

-Completion of the new building

-Approval by the Ministry of Education of research laboratories

-More administrative support.

The EEC believes that the ATEICRENUR Department has already met all the prerequisites for changing/transferring the department to University of International

standards. The EEC strongly supports this 'change' at University level.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, if necessary.

Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC on:

- the development of the Department to this date and its present situation, including explicit comments on good practices and weaknesses identified through the External Evaluation process and recommendations for improvement
- the Department's readiness and capability to change/improve
- the Department's quality assurance.

The EEC has been very impressed with the excellent calibre and motivation of the ATEICRENUR Department staff's performance, enthusiasm and commitment across teaching and learning, and continuous professional development. Equally the EEC was impressed with the passionate and dedicated nursing students.

The ATEICRENUR Department has a clear and determined focus on achieving the highest possible international standards in nursing education in Greece. Furthermore the research profile of the Department is excellent considering the low human resources available.

In particular, the EEC would like to highlight the following positive aspects:

1. the enthusiastic and dedicated staff provides a nurse-centred education of the highest possible standards in Greece;
2. positive staff-student relationships based on trust, professionalism and respect, support and nurturance, cooperation, loyalty, enthusiasm and determination, despite the current financial economic climate and low staffing level;
3. the dedicated academic staff, which is one of the greatest assets of the department;
4. the recognition and appreciation of the students towards the efforts made by their teachers in spite of the limited resources and support in general;
5. the development of e-class that enables students to access e-resources;
6. the excellent outward external profile of the Department;
7. the high standard of clinical education at clinical placements;
8. active participation of the students in research activities;
9. continuous monitoring of students performance in theory classes and in clinical areas;
10. the appropriate leadership.

The EEC found an excellent consistency between the IER, the ATEICRENUR discussions, the various visits and other ATEICRENUR Department meetings, as well as the meetings with the nursing students, over the time of the evaluation period.

The ATEICRENUR Department's readiness and capability to change/improve demonstrates their resilience and veracity. The IER has been an informative and detailed narrative of their functioning, quality improvement and aspirations. The ATEICRENUR Department is working extremely hard to progress the discipline of nursing and influence nursing care provision in Greece. The EEC was impressed by the fact that the ATEICRENUR Department has a written nursing philosophy and a focused research strategy that meets the European and International standards of academic excellence.

We would like to thank the ATEICRENUR Department for their excellent contribution to this evaluation and wish them well in their future development as a nursing discipline.

Accordingly, having completed this review and given due consideration to the findings, the EEC recommends the following for the attention and action of the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Health (where relevant).

It is recommended that;

- 1. Immediate recruitment of full-time faculty staff members alongside an immediate decrease in the annual intake of students.**
- 2. Budget constraints on staffing are addressed as a matter of urgency.**
 - 2.1 Academic staff and student teaching ratios must be set at safe quality teaching provision levels as a minimum of 1:20 and nursing academics must be employed to achieve this, with a PhD or registered to a PhD program as a minimum qualification.
 - 2.2 A workload model needs to be developed to ensure equal appreciation of research and teaching activity.
 - 2.3 The number of administrative staff must be increased.
 - 2.4 Clinical mentors should have longer contracts with the ATEI to ensure continuation of teaching.
- 3. If external clinical mentors will continue to be a significant staffing part of the Department, their ongoing support and attention to their needs is of paramount importance.**
- 4. Support of lifelong learning and personal development plan for the Faculty members**
- 5. Approval by the Ministry of Education of research laboratories**
- 6. Immediate development and acceptance of a postgraduate nursing program according to the proposal of the department.**

The Members of the Committee

**TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL
INSTITUTE OF CRETE
DEPARTMENT OF NURSING**

Name and Surname

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