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ΑΝΩΤΑΤΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ	FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

TEI OF LARISA

Version 1.0
December 2011

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External Evaluation Committee

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

1. Professor Alex Molassiotis (President)
Professor of Cancer & Supportive Care
School of Nursing, Midwifery & Social Work, University of Manchester, UK

2. Dr Vasilios Raftopoulos
Assistant Professor of Nursing
Cyprus University of Technology, Nursing Department

3. Professor Thanos Karatzias
Professor of Mental Health
Edinburgh Napier University, Faculty of Health, Life & Social Sciences, UK

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 TEI of Larisa (TEIL) Department of Nursing who went out of their way to facilitate the efficient functioning of the EEC. The TEIL 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 TEI Larissa

The TEIL Department of Nursing is comprised of 3 professors and 5 lecturers. Of the 3 professors 2 are medical doctors and one is a nurse. All the lecturers are nurses. The bachelor’s program at TEIL Nursing Department of Larisa is comprised of 7 semesters of theoretical and clinical work and 1 semester in which a clinical placement and a dissertation are completed. The Department enrolls approximately 300 students into its undergraduate program each year and has approximately 1200 students enrolled across the 8 semesters of the program. At the end of this course a graduate is eligible to apply to the Hellenic Nursing Association for accreditation in order to be able to practice as a licensed nurse in clinical, community and other healthcare settings.

Since the 2005-06 academic year the Department has also collaborated with the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Thessaly to offer a multiprofessional postgraduate studies program entitled “Primary Health Care”. For this multidisciplinary master’s degree, student applicants are drawn from nursing, medicine, psychology and other health related professionals. At the end of this course, students are equipped to conduct further research projects and are subsequently eligible to apply for doctoral studies at a University. The evaluation of this postgraduate program was not within the remit of the current evaluation.

I. The External Evaluation Procedure

- Dates and brief account of the site visit.
- Whom did the Committee meet?

- List of Reports, documents, other data examined by the Committee.
- Groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed
- Facilities visited by the External Evaluation Committee.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) has visited:

1. the main campus of TEIL
2. the library of TEIL
3. the cafeteria and restaurant of the TEIL
4. the Medical School of University of Thessaly
5. the University Hospital of Larissa.

The External Evaluation Committee has met:

- 1) the Vice President of TEIL
- 2) the Rector of the University of Thessaly and Director of the postgraduate program
- 3) the Academic staff of the TEIL Nursing Department (the internal evaluation group, the elected academic and scientific staff)
- 4) a group of undergraduate students from TEIL Nursing Department
- 5) a group of clinical tutors in the Larissa University Hospital
- 6) the Director of the School of Health Sciences of TEIL
- 7) the secretary of the Nursing Department
- 8) the Supervisor of Nurses in the Larissa University Hospital
- 9) the representative of Erasmus Program in the TEIL

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

1. The internal evaluation reports of the Nursing Department (2008-2010)
2. The internal students satisfaction survey (years 2008-2011)
3. Copies of the presentations given by the lecturers
4. The TEIL Nursing student handbook
5. The Dissertation handbook of the undergraduate students
6. The Guide of the clinical practice
7. The Handbook/evaluation of TEIL Nursing Students' clinical practice in the hospital setting (8th semester)
8. Samples of dissertations of undergraduate students
9. Samples of dissertations from the postgraduate program
10. The curriculum of the undergraduate studies
11. The curriculum of the postgraduate studies
12. Internal evaluation of all the departments of TEIL
13. External evaluation of the postgraduate program (2009)
14. Report summarizing the profile of admitted students for the academic years 2010-2011
15. The newsletter of the Department
16. The electronic journal of the Department.

The groups of teaching and administrative staff and students interviewed by the EEC comprised the following:

- 1) The Academic staff of the TEIL Nursing Department (the internal evaluation group, the elected academic staff, scientific)
- 2) laboratory associates from TEIL,
- 3) special technical staff members,
- 4) academic staff from the Medical School of the University of Thessaly
- 5) a group of undergraduate nursing students of TEIL (10 students)
- 6) a group of Erasmus students (2 students),
- 7) a group of nursing students in clinical practice (8 students)
- 8) a group of nursing students in clinical placement (12 students)
- 9) the Director of the School of Health Sciences of TEIL

The facilities visited by the External Evaluation Committee are mentioned above.

The site visit was very well organized and highly professional. Faculty members were very friendly and they facilitated the external evaluation committee's work by establishing a constructive dialogue and providing information and data, wherever possible. Faculty members provided all the necessary information and answered all our questions with openness, respect and honesty.

The faculty members appeared interested in our feedback in relation to improving their program. In conclusion the attitude and behaviour of the staff was professional, respectful and above all seemed entirely genuine making EEC feel that their demanding job and time invested in the external evaluation was valuable. In general, the EEC notes that the department should be congratulated for its eagerness to fully participate in the process of the external evaluation by offering unrestricted access to people, locations and documents as well as making necessary arrangements to ensure the EEC's hospitality which impressed the committee.

II. 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 TEIL Nursing Department was relevant. Quality of the documentation was adequate and the evidence was up to date and fully informative. The objectives of the internal evaluation have been met by the Nursing Department of TEIL and the EEC recognizes that a great effort was put into the process. Although the EEC was initially provided with the 2008 evaluation report the faculty offered subsequent internal evaluations from years 2009-2010.

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?

Undergraduate curriculum

The goals of the current undergraduate Curriculum as mentioned in the report are two-fold:

1. the education of general nurses who will be confident to produce, protect, maintain and care for individuals/groups with the highest quality standards possible.
2. the promotion of nursing science and knowledge by means of applied research.

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 TEIL Nursing Department. The EEC agrees that these:

1. Are adequate for a Bachelor degree in nursing
2. Prepare students to become professional nurses
3. Are nursing oriented

In general the curriculum 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 TEIL Nursing Department.

The curriculum objectives are responsive to the local social issues (e.g. engagement with Roma population) 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 TEIL Nursing 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 well theory 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 studies in line with international trends for nursing education.

While overall the program is appropriate, the EEC has identified few areas in the curriculum that may require improvement. In specific the research methods module does not incorporate qualitative methods, and while it provides basic knowledge on quantitative methods, the link with the nursing practice remains unclear; this was evident from the discussion with the students. The relevance of modules such as biostatistics and health informatics within nursing was also questioned by the students. The EEC believes that these modules are highly important for nursing education and appropriate action should be taken by the Faculty in relation to its links and relevance with nursing practice.

EEC believes that resources are not adequate. The small number of Faculty members (6 elected nurses and 2 medical doctors) of the TEIL Nursing Department combined with the need to employ 60-120 external collaborators in any given time who are not involved in the management of the program and the Department, heavily impacts on the delivery and quality of the program. However EEC would like to recognize and commend on the commitment, time and effort made by the staff which goes well beyond the call of duty which partly compensates for the above.

All staff are qualified to implement the curriculum effectively. However, there are 5 members with PhD and the remaining three are PhD candidates who hold a master's qualification. This indicates their commitment to the advancement of nursing education and practice. The current PhD candidates in the Department should be encouraged to complete their dissertations at the earliest opportunity and any new appointments, in line with legislation, should have a PhD as a minimum qualification.

The EEC has briefly reviewed the external evaluation report of the postgraduate program (2009) which is a nursing faculty initiative in collaboration with the School of Medicine of the University of Thessaly. This provision of a multi-professional postgraduate program is commendable and very important for the advancement of nursing, and is highly evaluated by the external review panel of 2009.

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 course and how much they are learning despite the 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 are 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 Nursing Department has an annual internal evaluation process which the EEC feels that it is a robust and adequate evaluation mechanism.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

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

The EEC believes that there is a defined pedagogic policy with regards to teaching

approach and methodology in the TEIL Nursing Department. This is evident from the IER of the TEIL Nursing Department, its formal and informal curricula activities and the discussions the EEC had with faculty members, nurses 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.

Please comment on :

- Teaching methods used

The EEC believes that there are various methods of teaching including lectures, discussions, and interactive skills workshops. This varied methodology covers learning objectives in all domains (cognitive, psychomotor and affective). There is, however, an over-reliance on face -to- face lectures. The significantly high number of student intake prohibits the regular use of more interactive teaching methods. The Faculty is currently considering the use of e-learning methods and already provides some e-class support. It is noted with concern that student attendance is not compulsory due to the legislation enacted.

- Teaching staff/student ratio

According to the IER the elected staff/student ratio is 1:153 although this significantly changes if the external collaborators are being taken into account. This number fluctuates significantly depending on how many external collaborators are employed each year (there was a compulsory reduction of external staff in 2011 by the Ministry of Education), some of whom have full-time hours. The ratio of faculty staff and external collaborators is 1:2.7, for example, in the spring semester of 2011-12 or 1:3.6 in the autumn semester of 2011-12. While there will always be a need to bring in a taught program specialists for teaching, the ratios presented in the previous sentence are unacceptably high and clearly show the inadequacy of elected staff members in the Department.

Discussions with the students and our own observation of clinical placements indicated that some clinical placements are oversubscribed and this needs to be attended to appropriately. The ratio of 1:10 for the clinical practice is excellent with all students well supported by both a nursing mentor within the TEIL Nursing Department and the hospital nurses.

The ideal classroom ratio is 1:20 for quality teaching and learning in a program of the nature of nursing.

A particular mention needs to be directed towards the significant number of external collaborators, a significant but under-resourced asset of the Department. This group of external staff provides much of the teaching within the Department. However, their needs are not always supported adequately. Through discussions with representatives of this group

of hourly-paid staff (some of whom have full-time hours) the EEC came to understand problems with support when they start their teaching year, their working conditions, problems with remuneration and long delays in salary payments, lack of adequate and dedicate office space, regular changes in module allocations, lack of coordination and a number of other work pressures.

- Teacher/student collaboration

EEC's observations and discussions with staff and students in clinical practice indicated the availability of clinical mentors which is an excellent resource linking academic work and clinical practice. Students confirmed that the faculty staff are very supportive in their learning and were very praiseworthy of their commitment to teaching nursing and their passion for nursing education overall. It was evident in meetings that staff-students' relationships are respectful, promoting a professional and effective learning environment.

- Adequacy of means and resources

The EEC believes that resources are particularly inadequate. Overall the teaching buildings are not fit for purpose with undersized classrooms, inflexible seating arrangements which do not enable small group discussion work effectively. There is access for disabled individuals. Office accommodation is basic but adequate. The toilet facilities are inadequate and in urgent need for repair and improvement. The prospect of the new teaching building for SEYP estimated to be in operation within 3 to 4 years will provide some relief. In clinical practice areas where large numbers of students are trained there is a need for dedicated student space to study and appropriate locker rooms; this has been communicated to us by several students.

- Use of information technologies

As stated earlier there is an electronic/digital platform for learning and study skills support. Students need to be able to have reliable regular access to the World Wide Web, to enhance their information literacy skills and extend their learning through important resources. The e-class support needs to be further expanded.

- System of written exams

The examination system determined by the Ministry of Education across the board heavily relies on written memory exams (i.e. at the end of the semester). The view of the EEC is that this does not fully promote the principles of adult education and does not allow for critical thinking to develop. The over-reliance on written exams should be reduced and the

use of critical assignments and case studies should be encouraged more. Other, less passive learning methods, need to be embraced and encouraged (e.g. critical case reviews or reflective diaries and teaching methods that enable reflective and evidence-based learning).

IMPLEMENTATION

- Quality of teaching procedures

Internal evaluations indicate that students are satisfied with the teaching procedures.

- Quality and adequacy of teaching materials and resources.

The EEC visited the TEIL library and found the resources to be adequate. The EEC also reviewed textbooks and teaching materials used in courses and found these to be relevant and appropriate. However, there was a limited number of titles in hard copies. Nevertheless, the library provides a limited number of electronic nursing journals; these need to be enhanced. Overall, the students reported that they were satisfied with the use of the existing electronic literature databases.

- Linking of research with teaching

The TEIL Nursing Department invariably applies research findings in nursing care to teaching and affirms the importance of this link to effective nursing care. Students make an effort to apply these linkages in their dissertations although in the dissertation samples that EEC has reviewed as part of the evaluation process this is not always evident. There is a need for more emphasis on evidence-based nursing and linking research and practice more effectively in teaching.

- Mobility of academic staff and students

EEC believes that the TEIL Nursing Department has an impressive external profile. The TEIL Nursing Department values and takes part in European exchange programmes such as ERASMUS, which provide important learning and development opportunities for both staff and students. Students reported rewarding exchange visits to Cyprus and the Czech Republic. Staff encourage the students to participate to these activities. Developing a module in a foreign language for the needs of foreign Erasmus students coming to TEIL Nursing Department is an excellent pilot project that will enhance the ERASMUS program mobility and quality.

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

The academic teaching is evaluated by the students every year through the use of a structured questionnaire developed by the TEIL. The questionnaires from each course are coded by the person in charge who enters the data in a statistical analysis program and analyzed by a member of the academic staff. Results of this analysis indicated that students are overall satisfied with the teaching, course content and study materials. Results from this exercise are being communicated to the students and action taken as necessary.

RESULTS

- Efficacy of teaching

The EEC concluded that the TEIL Nursing Department academic staff and clinical mentors are very effective teachers of nursing theory and practice. This was documented statistically in the IER-based evaluative surveys of courses and staff, and was emphatically confirmed by the nursing students. The goals and objectives of the curriculum are met effectively and efficiently.

- Discrepancies in the success/failure percentages between courses and how they are justified

Careful efforts have been undertaken to document student progress. Minor discrepancies in the success/failure percentages between modules were evident. However the Faculty is currently exploring ways to improve success rates across all modules.

- Differences between students and the time to graduation and final degree grades

Completion time should be a minimum of 4 years and most students graduate from the course within this time frame.

- Whether the TEIL Nursing Department understands the reasons of such positive and negative results

The TEIL Nursing Department have discussed their concerns regarding legislation constraints and curriculum influences and the effects on student progress and completion. They have worked hard to improve student success and retention rates.

IMPROVEMENT

- Does the Department propose methods and ways for improvement?

EEC has established that the Faculty has an ongoing monitoring process for the continuous improvement of the quality of education. The TEIL Nursing Department acknowledges the need to progress an electronic learning and learning support platform. This will provide students with greater flexibility in their learning and could improve student participation in theory learning. Attention is also needed in the training of clinical placement students, in particular in relation to students have an opportunity to learn and improve on nursing skills rather than used inappropriately (in terms of learning) within the given clinical placements. Potentially the development of a checklist of skills that students need to experience and utilise during their placements may be useful.

- What initiatives does it take in this direction?

The Faculty is in the process of developing an integrated electronic learning platform.

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?

The EEC would like to congratulate the staff efforts to pursue research in health related areas. Despite a significant number of publications being produced on a yearly basis TEIL Nursing Department's policy and main objectives for research seem to be highly individualized and externally led. The Nursing Department does not currently have a written research policy but it recognizes the need to develop one and they are in the process of establishing a research strategy.

- Has the Department set internal standards for assessing research?

The EEC did not document any internal standards, described through collective agreement/action for assessing either the quality of research projects or their alignment with nursing and other disciplines.

IMPLEMENTATION

- How does the Department promote and support research?
- Quality and adequacy of research infrastructure and support.

- Scientific publications.
- Research projects.
- Research collaborations.

The TEIL Nursing Department promotes and supports research among students through offering research methods classes (highly biased towards quantitative research). Students are also required to complete a dissertation during their final semester. According to TEI mandates, there is no protected time for the TEIL Department for research activities. This is compounded by inadequate funding and an inappropriately heavy workload including teaching, clinical supervision, dissertation supervision, administrative work, translation. Overall there is limited infrastructure and support for research and high impact scientific publications. Generally, while the quantity of publications is adequate, the quality is not comparable to other institutions abroad, and this is an area that needs careful planning and attention in the department. The over-reliance in publishing work from the Nursing Department in their own journal should be reconsidered. Consequently, primary data research lacks focus and esteem. However the publication rate in books, journals and conference proceedings is adequate, although quality should prevail over quantity. Staff need to publish their research in international competitive journals more actively, through nursing-relevant research. The impact of research carried out by the Department should also be monitored and highlighted within the wider community.

It is also impressive that the Department pursues external funding for research in collaboration with other Universities. The Faculty has been successful in securing internal funds for research.

‘Primary Care’ is the strong theme of research for the Department and the EEC feels that it provides a good focus for the staff and the Department’s future research strategy.

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.

Most research projects are linked to postgraduate programmes or staff’s PhD research work. Staff members encourage postgraduate students to publish their work in scientific journals or present their work in scientific congresses. The EEC reviewed samples of postgraduate 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 minimal but the EEC recognises the wider funding constraints and staff time limitations to put forward grant proposals. It is also commendable that the Department is publishing a scientific journal that it is indexed in CINAHL.

While collaborations within the Department are common and successful, there is limited evidence of research leadership and wider external research collaborations. The overall positive outward profile of the Nursing Department, while commendable, needs to extend beyond conferences and study days, and strategically develop more external and active research alliances and multi-disciplinary collaborations and seek more research funding.

No external awards were noted for distinctions in nursing-related research.

IMPROVEMENT

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

Both the EEC and the Department recognize the urgent need to develop a strategic research plan with short-, medium- and long-term goals. Desired outcomes include external research funding, the setting up of well equipped research labs, the contribution of academic staff in research across the Department, setting up PhD programmes and independent postgraduate programmes and establishing a Departmental Research and Ethics Committee. The familiarization of students with research methodologies from as early as possible in the curriculum through to postgraduate level education should be a priority of the Department's research education strategy. The postgraduate program is a significant asset for the promotion and maintenance of research activity within the Department and should be further encouraged.

D. All Other Services

For each particular matter, please distinguish between under- and post-graduate level, 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 TEIL Nursing Department uses the available institutional resources in an 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 TEIL Nursing Department (e.g. offices, classrooms, laboratories, meeting rooms) are inadequate. The TEIL Nursing Department is very concerned about the lack of space for students, staff and the infrastructure, and the EEC shares this concern. The permanent academic staff as well as external collaborators lack of private office space and share the same space with many other persons. The EEC acknowledges the need for private office space for staff to meet the students.

Administrative procedures have been simplified recently and now include electronic processing but there is still room for continuous quality improvement.

Attendance at clinical placements is exemplary. The staff of the TEIL Nursing Department recognize that low student attendance at theory classes is due to several reasons (legislation, lack of space). The TEIL Nursing Department and the EEC are highly concerned about student non-attendance in theory classes. Non compulsory attendance supported by the current legislation prohibits regular attendance of lectures.

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 EEC concluded that secretariat support in the TEIL Nursing Department is inadequate as it is staffed by 2 persons who have to provide administrative services to 8 faculty members, 60-120 external collaborators and 1,200 students across the four years of study. However, there is an effort to delegate many of the administrative/secretariat tasks to the central administrative support system of the TEIL.

Athletic/leisure facilities, PC labs, student' counseling services and dining facilities of the TEIL are adequate.

RESULTS

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

It is the view of the EEC based on observations and the faculty and students' comments that administrative and other services are functional but not adequate.

IMPROVEMENTS

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

The work of the administrative staff is vital for the effective functioning of the TEIL Nursing Department. Despite the efforts of the academic staff and support from the existing administrative staff there is an urgent need for increasing the number of administrative staff. The Faculty also acknowledges the need to delegate further administrative tasks to the central administrative support system of the TEIL.

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 TEIL Nursing Department's external initiatives. The passion and commitment of the Faculty members are commendable. Among the most significant of the TEIL Nursing Department's initiatives is its commitment to promoting 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 members are engaging with the local and the national Greek community. Initiatives include public lectures, appearances in the local media and ongoing collaboration with many Greek agencies (e.g municipalities, hospitals, schools, church). Relationships with local hospitals and health centres are excellent. Students are encouraged to organize and participate in several health education activities (lectures, leaflets). This contributes to the promotion of health and well-being to the wider community and enhances the social profile of nurses in the community. The social responsibility of the TEIL Nursing Department is enhanced with the above activities, although a more concrete and formal strategy for social responsibility within the Department will enhance the Department's profile further.

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 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 EEC concludes that the rigid rules governing TEI education in Greece do not contribute to high quality education and limit the creativity, enthusiasm and outcomes of the TEI. For example, the right for unlimited study time creates significant organisational and resource problems for 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 programmes in Nursing in TEI
2. Very small numbers of permanent faculty nursing TEIL departmental staff
3. Excessive number of visiting staff in relation to the permanent staff
4. Inadequate facilities and premises (lecture rooms and faculty offices)
3. Lack of research infrastructure
4. Lack of external research funding
5. Constantly changing legislature (attendance, assessment)
6. Inefficient allocation of educational funding (unlimited time for the completion of a degree, unlimited number of times a student can repeat a course)

At Institutional and Departmental level:

1. Inadequate number of administrative staff
2. Lack of structured Research strategic Plan and dedicated time for research
3. Lack of an electronic platform for teaching and learning
4. Increased bureaucracy imposed by the institutional framework
5. Administrative and secretarial tasks carried out by the faculty members
6. Insufficient number of technical and assistant staff to support the learning process and research activities (research laboratories, clinical areas, auxiliary areas)
7. Absence of direct entry into postgraduate and doctoral studies.

- 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 TEIL Nursing Department has already provided a list of desired action 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

-Development of autonomous 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 SEYP building
- Change of the TEI Department to a University Department
- Approval by the Ministry of Education of research laboratories
- More administrative support.

The EEC strongly supports one-level nursing education at Universities only, in line with international nursing education. The EEC agrees with the above mentioned actions, although it believes that further action should be taken prior to changing/transferring the department to a University. More specifically, increasing the number of faculty members with PhDs, significantly enhancing the research profile of the department, involving staff with experience in supervising doctoral students to completion and a stronger national and international departmental nursing profile are essential prerequisites for 'change' at University level.

The EEC considers that the library facilities are adequately established but there is a need to enrich the catalogue with nursing books and other educational electronic materials. Student access to the library, PCs and free internet access is considered to be satisfactory with some improvements necessary.

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 TEIL Nursing 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 TEIL Nursing Department has a clear and determined focus on achieving the highest possible standards in nursing education in Greece.

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;
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 steps and the progress made thus far to develop e-class and enable students to access e-resources;
6. the development of an international electronic journal;
7. the outward external profile of the Department;
8. maintaining a high standard of clinical education at placements.

The EEC found a high level of consistency between the IER, the TEIL discussions, the various visits and other TEIL Department meetings, as well as the meetings with the nursing students, over the time of the evaluation period.

The TEIL Nursing 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 TEIL Nursing Department is working extremely hard to progress the discipline of nursing and influence nursing care provision in Greece.

We would like to thank the TEIL Nursing Department for their 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. The inadequate facilities should be addressed as a matter of urgency.**
- 3. Develop consistent education legislation that does not impinge on students' attendance and assessment.**
- 4. Budget constraints on staffing are addressed as a matter of urgency.**
 - 4.1 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 as a minimum qualification.

4.2 A workload model needs to be developed to ensure the TEIL Nursing Department staff are able to work equitably and simultaneously complete their PhDs. Equal appreciation of research and teaching activity should be fundamental.

4.3 The number of administrative staff must be increased by appropriately qualified and skilled persons.

4.4 The Administration of TEIL must support the Secretariat staff in personal career development so that they can fulfill their mission to provide high quality services to the students and the academic staff.

4.5 The external collaborators are decreased as the number of faculty staff members increases.

5. Minor amendments in the Curriculum be made to ensure the following suggestions are addressed;

5.1 Qualitative research methodologies must be included within all research modules as well as mixed method approaches;

5.2 Advanced first aid modules or incorporation of first aid knowledge within existing modules;

5.3 Cancer nursing is briefly taught in Pathology module but not in Pathological Nursing, this needs attention;

5.4 Combine modules of Pathology and Pathological Nursing or Surgery & Surgical Nursing;

5.5 Care of the elderly people (and the changing demographics), although taught in a variety of modules, may need a focused module;

5.6 Module 767 (Nursing care of chronically ill patients/palliative care) should be a compulsory and not an elective module

5.7 Last year seminars need to be enhanced and their aims and structure to be reconsidered;

5.8 Evidence-based practice needs to be a framework across nursing modules and be taught sufficiently;

5.9 It appears there is no formal process of consultation with other stakeholders, although such discussions may have taken place on an informal basis due to the excellent relations the department has demonstrated with the various stakeholders, including clinical staff and students. This needs to be formalised.

6. An electronic/digital platform for learning and study skills support be developed.

Students need to be able to have reliable regular access to the World Wide Web, to enhance their information literacy skills and extend their learning through important resources. They need to achieve interactive group learning experiences and develop their individual theory learning via online teaching strategies and resources.

- 7. Develop a departmental research strategy and improve the quality of the research output.**
- 8. Make better use of existing and new collaborations with national and international institutions, focussing on joint research and scholarly activities.**
- 9. The TEIL Nursing Department should establish a Human Research Ethics Committee as a priority for the oversight and decision-making of all research in the Department.**
- 10. If external collaborators will continue to be a significant staffing part of the Department, their ongoing support and attention to their needs is of paramount importance.**