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HELLENIC QUALITY ASSURANCE AND
ACCREDITATION AGENCY
FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

EXTERNAL EVALUATION REPORT

DEPARTMENT OF NURSING

ATEI OF WESTERN GREECE (TEIWG)

October 2013



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External Evaluation Committee

The Committee responsible for the External Evaluation of the Nursing Department of the High Technological Institution of Patras consisted of the following four (4) expert evaluators drawn from the Registry constituted by the HQAA in accordance with Law 3374/2005:

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

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

2. **Dr Andreas Pavlakis**

Assistant Professor, Open University of Cyprus, Nicosia, Cyprus

3. **Dr Rena Papadopoulos**

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

4. **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 Greek Ministry of Education. The EEC was welcomed by the President and Vice-Presidents of ATEI of Western Greece (ATEIWG), the President of Nursing Department and the ATEIWG Dean of School of Health Sciences who presented the activities of the ATEIWG and the strategy of the ATEIWG to the EEC. The conclusions described below were reached unanimously.

Description of the Nursing Department of ATEI Western Greece (ATEIWG)

The ATEIWG Department of Nursing is comprised of 2 Professors, 1 Associate Professor, 3 Assistant Professors and 2 permanent teacher faculty members. Of the 2 professors one is a medical doctor and one is a nurse/medical doctor. The Associate Professor is a qualified nurse as well as all the Assistant Professors. All the permanent teacher faculty members are also qualified nurses (not holding a PhD degree). The bachelor’s program at ATEIWG Nursing 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 Department enrolls approximately 200-250 students into its undergraduate program each year and has approximately 1,315 active students enrolled across the 8 semesters of the program.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) has visited:

1. the main campus of ATEIWG
2. the library of ATEIWG
3. the cafeteria and restaurant of the ATEIWG
4. the University Hospital of Patras (Rio)
5. the new Nursing Department building in the campus of ATEIWG
6. a laboratory of nursing skills development
7. the Secretariat of ATEIWG Nursing Department

The External Evaluation Committee has met:

- 1) the President and Vice-Presidents of ATEIWG
- 2) the Academic staff of the ATEIWG Nursing Department (the internal evaluation group, the elected academic and one member of the scientific collaborators)
- 3) a group of undergraduate students from ATEIWG Nursing Department

- 4) a group of undergraduate students at the “Rio” University Hospital (clinical placement)
- 5) a group of graduates of the ATEIWG Nursing Department
- 6) a group of clinical mentors (εργαστηριακοί συνεργάτες) in the “Rio” University Hospital
- 7) the Dean of the School of Health Sciences of ATEIWG
- 8) the Secretariat of the Nursing Department
- 9) the Assistant Supervisor of Nurses in the Rio University Hospital
- 10) the nurse responsible for the continuous education of the nursing staff in the “Rio” University Hospital
- 11) the academic staff responsible for the Erasmus Program at the ATEIWG Nursing Department
- 12) The Vice Mayor and a representative of the Municipality of Patras
- 13) The national Director of ATLS, PHTLS in Greece and Cyprus
- 14) A certified program organizer by the European Resuscitation Council for Bls-Aed, ILS. ALS, who is also program director for BLS and certified program director by NAEMPT for PHTLS and TFR and
- 15) Vice Chairman of the National Western Greece Health Administration Agency

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

1. the internal evaluation report of the Nursing Department (2004-2008)
2. the internal students’ satisfaction survey (years 2004-2008)
3. samples of dissertations of undergraduate students
4. the curriculum guide of the undergraduate studies (2011-2012)
5. the recruitment leaflet of the Nursing Department
6. samples of the examination papers (from all levels of the degree as well as all range of marks) and
7. the demonstration of e-class.

Following the evaluation visit, the EEC was emailed a number of documents which were requested during the visit:

1. the video demonstration of students’ clinical placement handbook
2. a video that contains a database of the graduates follow up, an example of the research protocol for the dissertations and the url of the bilingual website of the department and
3. the CVs of only three academics (3 Assistant Professors). The EEC requested the updated CVs of all the permanent faculty members.

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

- 1) the Academic staff of the ATEIWG Nursing Department (the internal evaluation group, the elected academic staff, a scientific collaborator)
- 2) a clinical mentor from ATEIWG,
- 3) a group of undergraduate nursing students of ATEIWG (10 students)

- 5) an Erasmus student,
- 6) a group of graduates (4 nurses)
- 7) a group of nursing students in clinical placement (7 students) and
- 8) the Secretariat.

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

The site visit was not very well organized. The EEC had requested some changes in the visit schedule that had been prepared by the faculty members. These changes had included the visit of the EEC to the University hospital. Faculty members facilitated the external evaluation committee's work by establishing a dialogue and providing information and some data. The President of the ATEIWG Nursing Department informed the EEC that the documents that had been sent to them were not up to date and some had been updated since. This created a challenge for the EEC who needed to operate between what they had read and reviewed prior to their visit and the oral information being given during the meetings. The EEC informed the faculty members that they would endeavour to include as much of the oral evidence they were given in their report, although they would also base their report on the written evidence in their possession.

The EEC has no clear evidence as reported by the ATEIWG Nursing Department on whether the objectives and the conclusions of the internal evaluation had been met and the EEC recognizes that a great effort should be put into the process.

A. Curriculum

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

The goals of the current Curriculum as mentioned in the internal audit 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 and,
2. the promotion of nursing science and knowledge by means of applied research.

The Faculty has a three member curriculum committee -without students' and community representatives- 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. Their proposals are reviewed and approved by the departmental (now the ATEIWG) management committee ('sinelefsi'). However, the curriculum committee consulted informally with other stakeholders including clinical staff and the senior management of local healthcare settings.

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

1. be adequate for a Bachelor degree in nursing according to the international standards

2. prepare students to become professional nurses and
3. be nursing oriented.

The documentation shows the adoption of the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) that makes it flexible, by resulting in the international academic and vocational recognition of the qualifications awarded by the ATEIWG Nursing Department, although it is not clear from the documentation how the credits are weighted with the learning hours.

The ATEIWG Nursing Department's goals are moderately implemented by the curriculum with relative concordance with the required international nursing standards. The curriculum is clearly articulated, combining theory and practice. In most cases there are difficulties in implementing the practical elements and more emphasis is given to the theoretical elements. The EEC is of the view that the curriculum needs to become more nursing centred.

While overall the program is appropriate, the EEC has identified a few areas in the curriculum that may require improvement. For example, there is not a clearly documented strategy to identify areas of subject overlaps. In addition according to the 77/452/EU the subject of biochemistry/biophysics should be included in the curriculum. The EEC committee has also identified weaknesses in the area of nursing and research ethics, communication in nursing and health promotion.

According to the documents the ratio of theory/practice is currently 60:40. During the discussions the EEC was informed by the faculty that they plan to increase this ratio to 67:33. However this is not in line with the 77/452/EU Directive and the EEC recommends that this should not be implemented.

The documentation that was submitted to the EEC indicates a level of theoretical coherence, whereas the coherence of the link between theory and clinical practice was less evident. Despite the recent efforts of the faculty staff, as discussed during our meetings, the practical element of the programme remains dysfunctional due to the lack of clinical mentors as well as the lack of clear and measurable learning objectives for students and clinical mentors. This was also articulated by the staff and strongly evidenced by the nursing students. Further, the EEC committee identified a lack of effective communication between the clinical mentors, faculty members and healthcare stakeholders.

Although the documentation which the EEC had in its disposal was outdated, our discussion with faculty staff and students seemed to indicate that the courses and the material were appropriate and time offered was sufficient. The EEC acknowledges that the bibliographical sources have recently been updated but believes that further improvements could be made.

The EEC believes that current resources are not adequate. The small number of permanent

faculty, eight in total, of the ATEIWG Nursing Department combined with the need to employ 76 external collaborators (hourly paid clinical mentors), 10 hourly paid scientific 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.

All faculty staff are qualified to implement the curriculum effectively. However, there are 6 members with PhD and the remaining two do not have a PhD qualification. The documentation does not provide details on Clinical Professional Development (CPD), in particular those that relate to the clinical skills. The EEC omitted to discuss this aspect (CPD) with the faculty members, but feedback from students seems to indicate the need for a serious consideration to this matter.

The EEC believes that the current curriculum is partially achieving the department's goals and objectives. This is primarily due to the severe shortcomings in clinical practice (clinical placement and learning) which was strongly verified by the students, faculty and clinical staff and the IER. The Department is fully aware of its shortcomings, and they have tried to address these despite the lack of a formal strategy. The EEC was given results of students' evaluations which clearly indicated numerous weaknesses and lack of students' satisfaction. The faculty informed the EEC that until now the students' feedback has not been acted upon, although they intend to rectify this. A lack of strategic plan in implementation for the feedback was also identified by the EEC. Students have confirmed they were not provided with feedback regarding the results of their evaluations and the actions the faculty staff would take to address them.

Despite the fact that the EEC was provided with outdated documents, the faculty informed the EEC that the curriculum has been updated. Evidence of this can be found in the e-class where the new outlines of modules and new learning material have been deposited and are freely and easily available to all students. This is a very positive development that EEC wishes to congratulate.

The nursing department is in the process of moving to the new building which provides improved facilities for the laboratory activities, student study areas as well as increase access to computer facilities.

B. Teaching

APPROACH:

The EEC did not identify a defined pedagogic policy with regards to teaching approach. However the documentation (module study guides) provided by the department indicates that most faculty use a mixed method approach, such as use of lectures, group work, e-learning and laboratory exercises.

The EEC has also identified informal community learning and volunteering work by the students i.e. informing the public about smoking, weight management, vaccinations etc.

The EEC was pleased to learn during the meeting with the community (external) collaborators that volunteering was encouraged and welcomed by the local authorities and the public. The EEC considers this a positive development.

According to the IER the ratio of permanent faculty members/student is 1:165 (1,315/8); when the hourly staff [permanent FT (full time) staff 8+ 10 FT clinical collaborators +16 FTE (FT equivalent) clinical mentors] = 34 will be calculated, then the ratio changes to 1:39 (1,315/34).

Discussions with the students, clinical staff and faculty about the clinical placements indicated that all clinical placements are oversubscribed and this needs to be urgently attended to. The ratio of 1:10 (maximum) for the clinical practice is recommended to provide worthwhile and safe clinical experience and supervision to all students.

The faculty did not arrange specific meetings with the representatives of the hourly-paid clinical collaborators to discuss their views and therefore this needs to be taken into consideration, when reading the EEC comments. The EEC met only one member of the hourly-paid scientific collaborators (the psychologist).

During EEC's discussions about the theoretical and laboratory classes, the students reported a good level of communication, support and accessibility to the faculty. However this was not reported with regards to their clinical practice placements, possibly due to lack of clinical personnel and interest by both students and clinical supervisors.

As discussed below, the library contains adequate number of books and provides basic services; however there is room for improvement such as the adoption of software to detect plagiarism, which both students and staff could use.

Overall the teaching buildings are fit for purpose with adequate classrooms, laboratory facilities and study spaces. All the classrooms are new, with plenty of physical lighting, constructed with international standards of safety, friendly to students with disabilities, fully equipped with video projectors, projection area internet, whiteboards, central heating. However the EEC found the campus to be on the whole disability unfriendly and lacking adequate and correct signage.

The new building for the Nursing department has allocated space for the student study area and IT lab, although the area is currently under development. The library provides IT and study areas, and electronic access to HEAL-link and access to the World Wide Web.

As stated earlier there is an electronic/digital platform for learning. The e-class support could be

further expanded if an ATEIWG web server were to be provided.

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) even though the Ministry does not stipulate the weight of marks given to the written exam. The ATEIWG practice is to award a between 80% and 100% of marks to the written memory exams. 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).

A formal strategy should be developed internally to improve and maintain the quality of the examination questions. The examination questions should be more specific and typical answers should be provided in order to maintain quality and transparency in marking. Relevant information should also appear on the exam question papers, i.e. the name of the subject, name of the department, the marks allocated to each question and duration of the examination. It is desirable that the range of learning taxonomy should be assessed during the written exams. The student feedback should be formalised (written feedback) and it should be given to the students in order to improve academic performance.

Currently one academic marks each exam paper, which does not meet the European and International standards, particularly as there is a lack of an external examining system. It is normally required to sample exam papers by second marker and exam results are normally presented and discussed at examination board meetings. It is desirable to consider how examiners are prepared and kept up-to-date.

IMPLEMENTATION

The students the EEC met, reported to be generally satisfied with the quality of teaching procedures, whereas their evaluation data which the EEC had access to, indicates numerous areas of dissatisfaction (late delivery of the books, the examination system in the theoretical lessons as well as in the clinical practice, the management of clinical practice and placement etc).

The EEC visited the ATEIWG 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. However, in some cases there were limited numbers of titles in hard copies. Overall, the students reported that they were satisfied with the use of the existing electronic literature databases.

Based on the documentary evidence provided to the EEC and the discussions with the academic staff and students, the linking of research with teaching can be improved. Evidence-based nursing does not appear to be included in the curriculum, although a research methodology module is being delivered. Only a very small minority of faculty members are research active and the linking with research and teaching will only be improved when more faculty become research active.

Students make an effort to apply the linkages with research in their research projects although in the dissertations sampled by the EEC as part of the evaluation process this was not always evident. There is a need for more emphasis on evidence-based nursing and linking research and practice more effectively in teaching.

The EEC believes that the ATEIWG Nursing Department has established some links with other academic institutions in Europe (10 academic institutions), although limited number of ATEIWG students took an advantage of the ERASMUS programme (27 students between 2008-2013). Five faculty members participated in the ERASMUS programme (between 2008-2013).

The academic teaching is evaluated by the students every year through the use of a structured questionnaire developed by the ATEIWG. The questionnaires from each course are coded by a student who enters the data in a statistical analysis program and analyzed by a member of the academic staff. The EEC has not been given a formal strategy regarding the dissemination of the results and subsequent action plan.

RESULTS

As mentioned in previous sections there is a contradiction between the written evaluations of the students and the feedback the EEC received during the visit. A large proportion (88%) of the students achieves very high academic results (average marks 7-8.4) whilst nobody achieves marks between 0-6.99. According to the faculty who were present during the discussions this phenomenon is due to the fact that hardly anyone of the students attains less than 9 marks for their clinical assessment. This curious finding was discussed at length with the faculty and the students and solutions/improvements were suggested. This is particularly important because the students expressed their dissatisfaction from the inequalities that result between the students who make a strong effort to attend all their classes and practice placements and those who do not.

The EEC has not identified any Departmental written strategy to address the success/failure percentages between modules. However the EEC has discussed this matter with the faculty and recommended that a plan to address this issue should be developed as soon as possible.

According to the legislation, completion time should be a minimum of 4 years and maximum of 6 years. The ATEIWG achieved according to the documents provided (IER 2004-2008) the following completions in four years:

- in 2004-2005: 47.10%,
- in 2005-2006: 22.34% ,
- in 2006-2007: 0%,
- in 2007-2008: 0% and
- in 2008-2009: 0%.

The EEC has no documented statistics for the following years. The EEC finds the completion rates a matter of concern which needs to be addressed as soon as possible in order to reverse the downward trend. The EEC believes that the faculty needs to work hard to improve students' success and completion rates.

IMPROVEMENT

Please see above

C. Research

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

The EEC was surprised by the absence of a written research strategy something that is also mentioned in the IER (2004-2008) of the Department. The EEC has not identified evidence of satisfactory research progress amongst the Faculty members. The research tends to be highly individualized and externally led. The EEC was not provided with evidence about the efficacy and impact of the research. Although the Nursing Department does not currently have a written research policy it has recognized this weakness in the IER (2004-2008) but there is little evidence that this has been prioritized or that this has been addressed adequately since. The EEC has requested the updated list of research publications of the academic staff of the Department but evidence has only been sent for three members (Dr Stefanopoulos N, Dr Bakalis N, Kiekkas P). According to the internal audit report and the evidence sent, the following Table shows the limited research activity in the Department:

Name	N of research publications (last 5 years) [commentaries excluded]	First or last author (N)
Prof Papadimitriou M(*)	0	0
Prof Kitrou M(*)	0	0
Assoc Prof Batsolaki M(*)	4	0
Assist Prof Stefanopoulos N	4	0
Assist Prof Bakalis N	3	0

Assist Prof Kiekkas P	26	20
Georgousi P ^(*)	0	0
Salata A ^(*)	0	0

^(*) According to the search of the EEC in PubMed and Scopus

The EEC was not provided with evidence about the impact and visibility of the department's research in the wider community. However the EEC was verbally informed of a small number of recognitions awarded to the faculty and students at local conferences. Additionally some members of the staff have no clear understanding of the research necessity. The EEC has reviewed some dissertations and has concluded that the quality of many of these research projects/dissertations (with some exceptions) is questionable given that they do not follow the international standards for conducting research i.e. using validated questionnaires. The absence of a Research Ethics Committee within the Department is a major omission particularly because a large proportion of research projects do not involve patients. In many cases (based on the sample of dissertation that the EEC has reviewed) the research conducted by the students is not nursing centred.

IMPLEMENTATION

In the IER of the ATEIWG Nursing Department it is mentioned that the Department promotes and supports research among students through offering research methods class (mostly focused on quantitative research) and participation to research projects but the EEC has not a strong evidence of that considering the publication list of the faculty. Students are required to complete a dissertation during their final semester. The students are encouraged to present their work in seminars and congresses.

The heavy workload including teaching, clinical supervision, dissertation supervision, administrative work, is considered by the academic staff as a barrier for conducting research although a member of the staff has an impressive research profile.

Based on the limited evidence provided the EEC believes that the standard and quality of research may compare reasonably with some of the other nursing departments in similar institutions. This is an area that needs an urgent and careful planning and attention in the department.

Academic staff needs to conduct research and publish their research in international peer review 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 was mentioned that the Department does not pursue external funding for research in collaboration with other Institutions and Organizations. The faculty has not been successful in

securing internal funds for research.

The EEC had no access to the Dissertation Handbook of the ATEIWG Nursing Department in order to assess whether there are clear standards and guidelines for students about the research processes.

RESULTS

The EEC has no documented evidence on the Department's research objectives.

Staff members encourage undergraduate students to present their work in scientific congresses. As mentioned above, the EEC reviewed some very good examples of undergraduate dissertations although the quality in some cases is questionable. The members of the faculty attend regularly national and international scientific congresses and workshops. Although the EEC recognises the wider funding constraints and staff time limitations to put forward grant proposals they were not provided with any evidence of staff efforts to participate in research calls.

While collaborations within the Department are in some cases common and successful, there is limited evidence of research leadership and wider external research collaborations. The overall research profile of the Nursing Department needs to extend beyond conferences and study days, and strategically develop external and active research alliances and multi-disciplinary collaborations and seek more research funding. The research should become a priority of the Department engaging all the Staff and the stakeholders. The Department's research is partially acknowledged by the other scientists (through citations).

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

IMPROVEMENT

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 multidisciplinary collaborations between the departments of ATEIWG, external collaborations and research funding, the contribution of academic staff in research across the Department and establishing a Departmental Research and Ethics Committee. The EEC believes that under the current conditions the research dissertations should not include empirical research.

D. All Other Services

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

APPROACH

The ATEIWG Nursing Department seems to use the available institutional resources in an effective way. According to the IER, the EEC's observations and the comments of the students and the academic staff, the new facilities of the Department (e.g. offices, classrooms, laboratories, meeting rooms) are adequate and well equipped. The EEC highlights the absence of air condition systems in the classrooms. The Secretariat supports efficiently the academic staff and facilitates all the administrative processes for the students.

The library is located close to the Nursing Department and has an adequate number of books and material for the nursing students.

The EEC points out the lack of disability friendly buildings and of a disability office for the students according to the international standards. The out of order elevator in the library building is a major barrier not only for the students with a disability but also for the other users. The electronic secretariat is truly welcomed by the EEC.

The ATEIWG Nursing Department uses the web technology in a very effective way and the EEC would like to congratulate the staff for that. Some members of the academic staff use systematically the e-class. The EEC welcomes the innovative web-based version of students' handbook/evaluation of practice in the hospital.

The external clinical collaborators lack of office space (in the hospital) leading to their inaccessibility by the students. This aspect should be addressed. Furthermore, the academic staff has emphasized the lack of changing rooms in the hospital for the students. The financial constrains in the Greek hospitals make it difficult for the students to use consumables (gloves etc) for their training, which compromises teaching quality and adequate clinical experience.

Administrative procedures have been simplified recently and now include electronic services but there is still room for continuous quality improvement. Attendance at clinical practice (ergastiria) is very good. The students whom the EEC met in the hospital were very concerned about the effectiveness of the attendance system for the students in the clinical practice.

The staff of the ATEIWG Nursing Department recognizes that low student attendance at some theory classes is due to several reasons (legislation, skills of the clinical collaborators and the faculty etc). The ATEIWG Nursing Department and the EEC are highly concerned about student non-attendance in theory classes. Non compulsory attendance, supported by the current legislation, may be a barrier to regular attendance of lectures. On the other hand the Department has not a formal documented policy for increasing the student presence on Campus.

IMPLEMENTATION

The EEC concluded that currently, secretariat support in the ATEIWG Nursing Department is adequate as it is staffed by 3 persons who have to provide administrative services to 8 faculty members, 76 (which is 16 FTE) external collaborators, 10 scientific collaborators and 1,315 active students across their studies.

IT labs and dining facilities of the ATEIWG are adequate.

The students have not a Wi-Fi access to the Internet in the building of the Department of Nursing.

The EEC had not visited the athletic facilities, cultural activities and student counseling services of the Department.

RESULTS

It is the view of the EEC based on its observations, the faculty and the students' comments that administrative and other services are functional and adequate.

IMPROVEMENTS

The work of the administrative staff is vital for the effective functioning of the ATEIWG Nursing Department. Despite the efforts of the academic staff and support from the existing administrative staff, there is an urgent need for decreasing the amount of administrative tasks that is delegated to the academic staff. This may require an increase in the administration staff.

Collaboration with social, cultural and production organizations

Overall the EEC is satisfied with the quality, originality and significance of the ATEIWG Nursing Department's external social initiatives. Among the most significant of the ATEIWG Nursing Department's initiatives is that many members are engaging with the local community. Initiatives include public lectures and ongoing collaboration with the municipality of Patras, the elderly care agencies (KAPH), the church, NGOs, schools and the ATLS training centre. Relationships with local hospitals and health centres are good. Students are encouraged to organize and participate in several health education 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.

A number of factors (included in the IER and through discussion with the academic staff) constrain innovation and development in the department as outlined in the following:

At State level:

1. absence of a postgraduate program in Nursing in the Department although the EEC believes that the faculty is not yet ready to run such a program
2. small number of permanent faculty nursing staff and
3. lack of external research funding

At Institutional and Departmental level:

1. lack of research infrastructure and structured research strategic plan and dedicated time for research
2. heavy load of administrative and secretarial tasks carried out by the faculty members
3. lack of clinical research laboratories (with the exception of a research methodology office) and
4. excessive number of external collaborators in relation to the permanent staff
5. problematic and inadequate clinical placements and supervision

The ATEIWG Nursing Department has provided a list of desired actions that would enhance the quality of the current program. The EEC lists the most relevant:

- Short-term proposed actions include:
 - Enhancement of collaboration with other private hospitals for the training of the students
- Medium-term proposed actions include:
 - Augmentation of the nursing books in the library
 - Organization of seminars

The ATEIWG Nursing Department has not yet all the prerequisites for developing and running a Master's Program.

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 PCs and free internet access is considered to be satisfactory with some improvements necessary. The ATEIWG could consider providing Wi-Fi access to the whole campus

Educational visits are considered to be interesting activities but should be research oriented. The EEC would welcome the allocation of the funding currently provided for educational excursions to

other research activities which will increase the body of nursing research knowledge.

F. Final Conclusions and recommendations of the EEC

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

The EEC was impressed with the passionate and dedicated nursing students. In particular, the EEC would like to highlight the following positive aspects:

1. the staff made some progress in order to provide a nurse-centred education;
2. there were positive staff-student relationships;
3. the recognition of some students towards the efforts made by their teachers in spite of the limited resources and support in general;
4. the steps and the progress made thus far to develop e-class and enable students to access e-resources;

The EEC would like to mention that there was a high level of inconsistency between the IER, the ATEIWG Nursing Department discussions, the various visits and other ATEIWG Nursing Department meetings, as well as the meetings with the nursing students, over the time of the evaluation period.

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

The followings are highly recommended:

- 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**
- 3. Minor amendments in the Curriculum be made to ensure the following suggestions are addressed:**
 - 3.1 Qualitative research methodologies must be included within the research module as well as mixed method approaches;
 - 3.2 Combine modules of Pathology and Pathological Nursing or Surgery & Surgical Nursing;
 - 3.3 Evidence-based practice needs to be a framework across nursing modules and be taught sufficiently;
 - 3.4 It appears there is no formal process of consultation with other stakeholders (in the reengineering of the curriculum etc) 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.

- 4. Develop a departmental research strategy and improve the number and quality of the research output.**
- 5. Make better use of existing and new collaborations with national and international institutions, focussing on joint research and scholarly activities.**
- 6. The ATEIWG Nursing Department should establish a Research Ethics Committee as a priority for the oversight and decision-making of all research in the Department.**
- 7. If clinical collaborators will continue to be a significant staffing part of the Department, their ongoing support, training and attention to their needs is of paramount importance.**
- 8. The ATEIWG Nursing Department should establish a strategy for the continuous professional development of the Faculty and the other staff.**
- 9. Increase of students' learning and satisfaction with the clinical placement and clinical training that should be well organized with specific aims and deliverables. The Department should urgently set a high standard of clinical education at placements.**
- 10. Improvement of nursing students' moral as it is very low due to several reasons (low quality of clinical training, lack of clinical areas space, auxiliary areas, big number of students, the lack of a justified system for students' assessment during their clinical practice, the low recognition and appreciation by the clinical teachers of the students efforts).**
- 11. The staff should provide a more nurse-centred education of the highest possible standards.**
- 12. Clear objectives should be stipulated at each clinical element of the subject. The method of the evaluation of each objective should be stipulated.**
- 13. Implement a strategy to identify possible extensive duplication of content.**
- 14. The Ratio theory/practice to remain 60:40 and ideally to decrease to 50:50**

The Members of the Committee

**TECHNOLOGICAL EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTE
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