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Accreditation Report

for the New Postgraduate Study Programme of:

M.Sc. in Family Medicine

Department: **School of Medicine**

Institution: **University of Patras**

Date: **May 2025**

Με τη συγχρηματοδότηση της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης
ΕΣΠΑ 2021-2027
Πρόγραμμα
Ανθρώπινο Δυναμικό και Κοινωνική Συνοχή
enqa.

Report of the Panel appointed by the HAHE to undertake the review of the New Postgraduate Study Programme of **MSc in Family Medicine** of the **University of Patras (UoP)** for the purposes of granting accreditation.

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PART A: BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT OF THE REVIEW

I. The External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

The Panel responsible for the Accreditation Review of the new postgraduate study programme of **Family Medicine** of the **University of Patras (UoP)** comprised the following five (5) members, drawn from the HAHE Register, in accordance with Laws 4009/2011 & 4653/2020:

1. **Professor Thimios Mitsiadis** (Chair)
   University of Zurich, Switzerland

2. **Dr Nicholas Ktistakis**
   Babraham Institute, Cambridge UK

3. **Professor Agapios Sachinidis**
   Uiversity of Cologne, Cologne, Germany

4. **Dr Andreas A. Roussakis**
   Imperial College London, United Kingdom

5. **Panagiota Kyriakidou**, PhD Candidate
   Democritus University of Thrace, Alexandroupoli, Greece

II. Review Procedure and Documentation

In accordance with the requirements of Quality Assurance in Higher Education (laws 4009/2011 and 4653/2020), the Hellenic Authority for Higher Education (HAHE), upon individual invitation and after official acceptance, established an independent External Evaluation and Accreditation Committee (EEAP), with the mission of assessing the compliance of the Postgraduate Studies Program (PSP) in "Family Medicine" of the Medical School of the University of Patras (UoP), in collaboration with the University of Nicosia (UNIC) which is scheduled for for April, 28 and 29th, 2025. The established EEAP consists of four experts from Universities and Institutes abroad, and one student representative from Greece.

The evaluation was carried out through document reviews and online interviews with the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs & Finance of the UoP, the Vice-Rector of the UNIC, the heads of departments, the Director of the PSP, the scientific director, the Dean of the Medical School of the UNIC, the teaching staff, the administrative staff and external stakeholders.

All information and documents provided by the PSP were considered by the EEAP to be objectively correct. The EEAP received all supporting documents through the HAHE Panel-Accreditations online information platform. The content of the provided material is as follows:

Department Material:

A0. _new Table of Contents of the File
A1. _new Academic Accreditation Proposal
A2. _new Senate Decision for the establishment of PSP
A3. MODIP Introductory Report
A4. PSP Development Strategy
A5. Feasibility Studies
A6. _new Quality Policy
A7. _new Quality Targeting
A8. Study Guide
A9. _new Course Outlines
A10. _new Nominal List of Academic Staff
A11. _new Internal Regulations
A12. _new Study Regulations
A13. Complaints and Objections Regulations
A14. Academic Advisor Regulations
A15. Research Ethics Regulations
A16. Diploma and Diploma Supplement Template
A17. Summary Performance Report
A18. _new E-learning Implementation Regulations
A19. Tuition Exploitation Plan

HAHE Material:

Acronyms, European Qualifications Framework, M1 Standards PSP En., Accreditation Management System - expert manual, MN1 Standards NEW PSP EN, M12 PSP Mapping Grid, M13 PSP Accreditation Report Template, M6 PSP-Guidelines for the EEAP, Guidelines of Accreditation, M9 Postgraduate information letter and guidelines of Accreditation of Undergraduate Programs of Study.

The assessment/accreditation process was carried out exclusively remotely using the Zoom platforms. The assessments and accreditation assessments were scheduled and carried out in

Athens time.

The EEAP received the accreditation support material regarding the new PSP in Family Medicine approximately two weeks before the accreditation visit. The assessment was organised by HAHE and the Medical School of the UoP. Most of the documents were well written and designed. The meetings were conducted online using Zoom video conferencing capabilities. During the Zoom meetings, staff members from both Universities were prompt in providing us with the necessary information. Additional information concerning the evaluation of the new PSP realised for the UNIC and the UNIC teaching staff, upon EEAP's request, was provided at later stages. All meetings were conducted in a very friendly, collegial and collaborative spirit.

The scheduled agenda of the certification review was as follows:

On Monday, 28/05/2025, the EEAP members had a short meeting to organise the certification review and assign the various tasks.

The next day (29/05/2025), the meeting started with a delay of 19 minutes because the Zoom link provided by the UoP to the EEAP was not working. The technical support team of the UoP did not respond to 3 emails from the EEAP chair concerning the non-functioning of their Zoom link. Similarly, the technical support of UoP did not answer his 2 phone calls during that period (the EEAP chair contacted the HAHE organizing committee and obtained the contact phone number).

The scheduled discussion was held with the members of the EEAP and the Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs & Finance of the UoP, the Vice-Rector of the UNIC, the Heads of Departments of the two Universities, the Director of the PSP, and the scientific officers of the two Universities. The discussions focused on the main features of the PSP and the collaborative nature of the development, implementation and management of the PSP. The meeting concluded with a discussion on the strengths and potential areas of concern, as well as the degree of compliance of the PSP with other PSPs in Greece, according to the standards of the Hellenic Quality Assurance authority. A discussion with the teaching staff from both Universities followed. The EEAP discussed their workload, professional development opportunities and student assessment methods, teaching and research activities. On the same day, the program included an online tour of the facilities. This was not held as scheduled upon EEAP's request due to the significant delay in the previous discussions with staff members of both Universities. The EEAP unanimously decided to watch the informative videos on the adequacy of the facilities and equipment in person, to have more time for discussion with the teaching staff.

Thereafter, the EEAP met with professionals and social partners related to the speciality of the PSP. The comments from the stakeholders were very positive for the creation of the PSP and the proposed common academic effort. After the end of this meeting, the EEAP members met in a separate meeting via Zoom to discuss and reflect on their first impressions and to prepare a short oral presentation of their findings.

The EEAP had the last meeting of the day with the Vice-Rector for academic affairs & finance of the UoP, the Vice-Rector of the UNIC, the heads of departments of the two Universities and the director of PSP, and the director of MODIP, and the scientific coordinators of the two Universities, during which the EEAP gave its impressions and key findings on this new PSP. The EEAP members would like to thank the staff members of the UoP and the UNIC for their positive spirit and their cooperation with the EEAP during the whole online accreditation procedure.

III. Postgraduate Study Programme Profile

The UoP is a well-established University in Greece, offering several PSP, establishing a good infrastructure for research and long-term international collaboration. The UoP was established in 1964 and comprises 7 Schools: the School of Natural Sciences, the School of Economics and Business, the School of Engineering, the School of Agricultural Sciences, the School of Health Sciences, the School of Health Rehabilitation Sciences and the School of Humanities and Social Sciences. The School of Medicine was founded in 1977 and is organized as a department under the School of Health Sciences. The School of Medicine is located at the Rio University campus near Patras. The School of Medicine is internally organised into preclinical and clinical departments (Τομείς): Basic Sciences I and II, Clinical Laboratory, Internal Medicine I and II, Paediatrics, Gynaecology and Obstetrics. At the time of the evaluation, the school employed 119 faculty members, 9 members of Specialised Laboratory Teaching Staff (ETEP) and 14 members of Special Teaching Staff (EDIP) to support one traditional 6-year Undergraduate program taught in Greek and a new Undergraduate program taught in English. The school runs 6 PSPs in: Biomedical Science, Biomedical Engineering, Public Health, Medical Physics – Radiation Physics, Life Sciences Informatics and Disease of the nose, maxillofacial area and cranial base.

The UNIC is a leading private University in Cyprus, offering a range of undergraduate and postgraduate programs. Unfortunately, the EEAP did not originally receive any A documents, and therefore, it was unable to obtain a comprehensive overview of the University's profile. The common PSP between both universities was decided by the senate meeting on 18.05.2023 (Subject: Ref. no. 36673/18.5.202)3). The program was decided unanimously for the establishment of a Joint PSP between the UoP and the UNIC, with the title "Family Medicine", from the academic year 2023-2024. According to the available documents, the PSP meets the recommendations of local and international accrediting bodies and is mapped against the core competencies of a Family Physician, as defined by WONCA. It is taught by experienced faculty members with clinical and research expertise.

To establish PSP at the UoP, both Universities will collaborate by sharing their expertise and resources. This partnership will enable the exchange of knowledge and best practices in Family Medicine, leveraging the strengths of both faculties and universities to provide a comprehensive and high-quality educational experience. The PSP in Family Medicine will be delivered in online mode. The objectives of the PSP are to provide high-quality education and training in Family Medicine and to develop critical thinking, problem-solving, and communication skills, to produce high-quality research and promote innovation, as well as to strengthen internationalisation and promote the department's reputation. Finally, the PSP intends to enhance the connection of physicians with the labour market and scientific organisations.

The PSP operates with relative tuition fees (8,100 €) structured based on the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS). The duration of the program is 3 semesters (30 ECTCs each semester) of study, equivalent to a total of 90 ECTS, leading to a Master of Science in Family Medicine. The official language of the PSP is Greek. The PSP intends to attract physicians (medical doctors). The study guide for the PSP for the academic year 2023-2024 is described in detail in the appendices supplied by the UoP. However, a detailed and informative PSP website is not yet available.

The same PSP has been running by the UNIC for several years in the English language without the participation of the UoP. The allocation of the program's formal requirements and responsibilities for this new PSP to the UNIC raises significant concerns about the EEAP's ability to evaluate a program from a foreign country. Specifically, it is unclear whether the EEAP can effectively assess a program without access to documentation on how the program

was evaluated in its country of origin, which may have different evaluation criteria and processes compared to the HAHE.

PART B: COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES

PRINCIPLE 1: STRATEGY, QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY AND QUALITY GOAL SETTING FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD INCLUDE IN THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT THE DEVELOPMENT, ORGANISATION, AND IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES (PSP) IN SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC FIELDS AFTER INVESTIGATING THEIR FEASIBILITY AND SUSTAINABILITY. INSTITUTIONS SHOULD APPLY A QUALITY ASSURANCE POLICY FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES AS PART OF THEIR STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT.
THIS POLICY SHOULD EXPAND AND BE AIMED (WITH THE COLLABORATION OF EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS) AT THE PSP OF THE INSTITUTION AND THE ACADEMIC UNIT. THIS POLICY SHOULD BE PUBLISHED AND IMPLEMENTED BY ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.

By decision/s of the Institutional Senate, the Institutions should adapt their strategy to allow for the provision of postgraduate study programmes, in addition to attending to the profile, vision, mission and strategic objectives of the Institution. In this strategy, the Institutions should anticipate the potential benefits, difficulties or risks from the implementation of new postgraduate study programmes and plan all the necessary actions to achieve their goals. The Institution's strategic choices should be documented through specific feasibility and sustainability studies, especially for new postgraduate study programmes.

In the case of PSP delivered by distance methods, the Institution prepares and applies an e-learning strategy. The Institution's e-learning strategy is integrated into its overall strategy and identifies educational goals while keeping up to the rapid technological changes and to the developments in pedagogical models. The Institution should include in its strategy the justification and feasibility as to why e-learning has been selected as the appropriate learning strategy for the particular programmes of study where it is applied.

In the context of e-learning, innovation strategies, the possibility of programme revision, the linking between learning and research (requiring knowledge of the latest innovations in order to select the most appropriate means to achieve the learning outcomes) should be taken into account.

The quality assurance policy of the academic unit for postgraduate study programmes should be in line with the Institution's strategy and must be formulated in the form of a public statement, which is implemented by all stakeholders. It focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the postgraduate study programmes offered by the academic unit. Indicatively, the quality policy statement of the academic unit includes its commitment to implement a quality policy that will promote the academic profile and orientation of the postgraduate study programme (PSP), its purpose and field of study; it will realise the programme's goals and it will determine the means and ways for attaining them; it will implement appropriate quality procedures, aiming at the programme's continuous improvement.

In particular, in order to implement this policy, the academic unit commits itself to put into practice quality procedures that will demonstrate:

a. *the suitability of the structure and organisation of postgraduate study programmes*
b. *the pursuit of learning outcomes and qualifications in accordance with the European and National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education - level 7*
c. *the promotion of the quality and effectiveness of teaching at the PSP*

d. *the appropriateness of the qualifications and the availability of the teaching staff for the PSP*

e. *the drafting, implementation, and review of specific annual quality goals for the improvement of the PSP*

f. *the level of demand for the graduates' qualifications in the labour market*

g. *the quality of support services, such as administrative services, the libraries, and the student welfare office for the PSP*

h. *the efficient utilisation of the financial resources of the PSP that may be drawn from tuition fees*

i. *the conduct of an annual internal review and audit of the quality assurance system for the PSP through the cooperation of the Internal Evaluation Group (IEG) with the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU)*

Documentation

- *The Institutional strategy for postgraduate studies, which includes a special strategy for e-learning, as long as it is applied to the Institution's PSP*
- *Feasibility and sustainability studies for the new PSP*
- *Quality Policy of the academic unit for the development and improvement of PSP*
- *Quality Targeting of the academic unit for the PSP*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP was established with decision 219/25.5.2023 by the UoP and was from the beginning designed to run in parallel with the UNIC Medical School. Although not in the original list of documents, the panel was given a document created by both UoP and UNIC outlining how the two institutions will co-operate in running this new PSP. According to this document, this PSP is in the Greek language and is designed along similar lines to a PSP with the same title and academic aims, already running by the UNIC in English. The main responsibility for running the PSP will be with the University of Nicosia, although a steering committee is composed of representatives from both institutions. Overall, the contribution of the UoP to this PSP is the teaching of three courses providing 25 ECTs (out of a total of 90 for the whole PSP). The PSP as a whole offers 9 mandatory courses and 5 elective ones from which the students select 2.

Of the total amount of tuition and fees collected, the department at the UoP will get 17%. Tuition is set at 8,100 € total. A budget was presented assuming an annual intake of 240 students, but upon questioning, the panel was told that 20-30 students is a more appropriate estimate.

Eligible students for this PSP are medical graduates, including those specialising in: general practice, pathology, gynaecology, paediatrics. In addition, newly qualified doctors who are employed in rural areas as part of their obligatory training (αγροτικοι ιατροι) are part of the catchment group.

The PSP is offered entirely online with a combination of live teaching as well as pre-recorded course sections. For this remote teaching aspect, both Universities involved have a long and successful expertise.

In broad outline, the subject area and aims of this PSP are in agreement with the

academic philosophy of both participating institutions.

II. Analysis

The EEAP discussed at length the procedure for establishing this PSP and the special challenges faced when two institutions have to work together, but with very unequal contributions to the overall running of the program. In the case of the current PSP, the UoP has a contribution which does not exceed 20% of the overall workload, and it has no contribution to the student services. On the other hand, the UNIC already has experience running such a PSP in English, and in this sense, it can be understood why they would take the lead here. Overall, in the opinion of the EEAP this PSP can only be seen as a work in progress likely to require some alterations before it starts (as will be described in subsequent sections) and periodic assessments of progress and potential problems arising along the way.

Further complicating the current evaluation is the fact that this PSP has already been evaluated (with an onsite visit to the UNIC at the end of 2024) by an outside panel with broad expertise in the subject area. Although that evaluation was done from the point of view of the UNIC, it nevertheless addressed the whole PSP and those findings (which were shared with our panel upon request) are fully noted here.

Coordinating two unequal contributions is likely to be a tricky endeavour, even assuming (which the panel does) excellent cooperation between the two institutions. It is also a potential danger that the contribution from Patras may tend to diminish in time since the tangible benefits from their involvement are not massive. Measures that allow close interaction between the two institutions (such as combining faculty from the UNIC and the UoP for the teaching of some courses, or joint meetings at the two institutions once per year) would ensure that cooperation is maintained.

The PSP will always have to balance the needs of medical professionals wanting to enrol in the course with the academic requirements for awarding a master ‘s-level degree. In this sense, the PSP must have a robust academic orientation, be very economical with offering self-taught videos as opposed to proper live courses and introduce policies that bring students together for academic discussions. Special care must also be paid to those doctors working in remote areas with bad internet access.

III. Conclusions

The PSP covers a very important area of postgraduate education for medical professionals, and it is only one of a small number of such PSPs nationally and internationally. The expertise from the UNIC, which already teaches an English version of this program, is very valuable. The coordination between the two institutions involved will always need careful consideration and nourishment - in this proposal, the EEAP did not see strong efforts along those lines.

Panel Judgement

Principle 1: Strategy, Quality Assurance Policy and Quality Goal Setting for the New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

Integrate faculty from both institutions in the teaching of some courses thus fostering cooperation and crosstalk among the faculty.

Institute yearly meetings between the faculty of the two institutions to discuss progress and matters arising.

Depending on geographic origin and numbers involved, some onsite meetings of the students may be possible.

PRINCIPLE 2: DESIGN AND APPROVAL OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP THEIR POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES FOLLOWING A DEFINED WRITTEN PROCESS WHICH WILL INVOLVE THE PARTICIPANTS, INFORMATION SOURCES AND THE APPROVAL COMMITTEES FOR THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THE OBJECTIVES, THE SPECIFIC SCIENTIFIC SUBJECT AND THE STREAMS OR SPECIALISATIONS, THE EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES AND THE EMPLOYMENT PROSPECTS ARE SET OUT IN THE PROGRAMME DESIGN. DURING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES, THE DEGREE OF ACHIEVEMENT OF THE LEARNING OUTCOMES SHOULD BE ASSESSED. THE ABOVE DETAILS, AS WELL AS INFORMATION ON THE PROGRAMME'S STRUCTURE ARE PUBLISHED IN THE STUDENT GUIDE.

The academic units develop their postgraduate study programmes following a well-defined procedure. The academic profile and orientation of the programme, the research character, the scientific objectives, the specific subject areas, the specialisations, the expected learning outcomes, the structure, the courses, the teaching and assessment modes, the teaching staff and the necessary resources are described at this stage.

The structure, content and organisation of courses and teaching methods should be oriented towards deepening knowledge and acquiring the corresponding skills to apply the said knowledge (e.g. course on research methodology, participation in research projects, thesis with a research component).

The expected learning outcomes must be determined based on the European and National Qualifications Framework (EQF, NQF), and the Dublin Descriptors for level 7. During the implementation of the programme, the degree of achievement of the expected learning outcomes and the feedback of the learning process must be assessed with the appropriate tools. In particular, for each expected learning outcome that is designed and made public, it is necessary that its evaluation criteria are also designed and made public.

In addition, the design of PSP must consider:

- *the Institutional strategy*
- *the active involvement of students*
- *the experience of external stakeholders from the labour market*
- *the anticipated student workload according to the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) for level 7*
- *the option of providing work experience to students*
- *the linking of teaching and research*
- *the relevant regulatory framework and the official procedure for the approval of the PSP by the Institution*

The procedure for the approval or revision of the programmes provides for the verification of compliance with the basic requirements of the Standards by the Institution's Quality Assurance Unit (QAU).

Documentation

- *Senate decision for the establishment of the PSP*
- *PSP curriculum structure: courses, course categories, ECTS awarded, expected learning outcomes according to the NQF, internship, mobility opportunities*
- *Labour market data regarding the employment of graduates, international experience in a relevant scientific field*
- *PSP Student Guide*

- *Course and thesis outlines*
- *Teaching staff: teaching assignments per subject area and per course*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The EEAP reviewed the submitted documentation in line with HAHE guidance for EEAP reviews. The document set for the review was complete and well-presented. The EEAP discussed details of the PSP with the course director, the MODIP members, the UoP and UNIC senior managers, associate academics and fellow teaching staff. Feedback was sought from external stakeholders. Preliminary conclusions were discussed with the Course Director, MODIP and the UoP and UNIC senior officers at the close-out meeting.

The Senate decided on the establishment of the PSP on 25 May 2023. The PSP is delivered by both the UoP and the UNIC. In its current form, the PSP design adheres to HAHE principles, the European standards for quality assurance within the EHEA, and the strategic development plans of both academic institutions.

The PSP maintains a high standard through a comprehensive curriculum structure, which effectively integrates a wide range of educational activities. The learning objectives are well-defined and focused, helping students to meet, in principle, their educational and professional needs.

The expected volume of work follows the standards of the EU ECTS system (level 7). The total number of ECSTs is 90, with a course layout that spans over 3 academic semesters. Each ECST credit translates to approximately 25-30 hours. The workload breakdown is included in Appendices A.8 and A.9.

Prospective students are required to attend all classes, tutorials. There are no laboratory practicals; the course is taught exclusively remotely. The “Master of Science in Family Medicine” qualification is awarded following successful participation in lectures and tutorials and upon completion of projects (as individuals, half-term) (20% of the overall mark), interactive projects (20% over the overall mark), and success in exams (written and/or oreal) including (or not) a written dissertation (60% of the overall mark).

In this PSP, marking ranges are not specified. The advancement grade is not specified. The PSP is taught in Greek. It is implied that the dissertation must be written in Greek. It is not specified what the process is to be followed in the event of failure (e.g., if at a course examination, those students have the right to a single repeat examination).

The course outline given by staff members from the UoP is comprehensive and well-structured. Together with the courses given by staff members from the UNIC it provides a clear understanding of the curriculum and its requirements. The student guide is clear and detailed. It is written in Greek. The guidance document serves as an introduction to new students/applicants and as a navigation tool for prospective students. The modules are presented in detail in the relevant document.

The course subject is family medicine, aiming to promote applied knowledge in primary care for individuals primarily interested in medical practice in the community and away from the hospital environment. The classes are designed to form a dynamic learning environment for individuals who wish to develop their knowledge, skills and competencies further.

Active involvement of students is incorporated. Prospective students have the option to consider a research project in the area each individual is interested. Assisted by teaching staff, the

students may choose a topic to focus on and agree to work collaboratively to complete their project and dissertation on time.

The PSP has set up an interactive feedback mechanism in which students are encouraged to express their needs freely. Combined with outcome-heavy metrics (attendance rates, success rates in exams, and successful employment outcomes beyond the end of the studies), the course director-students interaction evolves in a constructive and informative way for the benefit of all parties involved.

In response to the students' professional needs, the PSP encourages students to gain work experience and familiarise themselves with the job market landscape. External stakeholders have shown a significant interest in the PSP. This includes the possibility for third parties to support academically-led research, and the possibility to indirectly support students.

The course director feels confident that communication between the teaching staff, administrators, and students is most effective.

II. Analysis

The course guide is well-structured and comprehensive. There is scope for further development given that this is a new PSP. The course leads would need to consider and perhaps make changes on *how* they assist students understand: [i] the difference between what is taught and learnt (i.e. emphasis on the teaching process from an educational point of view), [ii] where PSP outputs can be useful in the "big picture" for graduates including areas for novel research in primary care, and on how to apply acquired knowledge into practice in Greece (rural areas in the mainland, medium-sized and small islands).

At the end of the studies, graduates need to have a sound understanding of how to conduct and original research and how to interpret literature review articles and published work in peer-reviewed journals. Although the key resources to support students are included, further work is needed on providing the context to students in a clearer way, and by improving the student-facing documentation (see comments below in areas for improvement).

III. Conclusions

Overall, although this new PSP is an interesting program based on the already provided by the UNIC English PSP, it could be better designed and structured to cover the Greek peculiarities and the HAHE quality standards. Several changes are highly recommended to develop certain neglected, but very important, areas concerning family medicine. The aim is to implement the courses and promote research activities, to support students in understanding what is required by the course leads, to support teaching staff and administrators, and to optimise the overall student clinical and academic experience.

Panel Judgement

Principle 2: Design and Approval of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	**X**
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends expansion of the research component of the PSP. Stakeholders encouraged the promotion of a research development strategy for students that is not resource-intensive for staff, yet appropriate for the students' educational and professional needs and adjusted to the primary care environment. The EEAP recommends modification in the program to create room for small-scale research projects in primary care themed in hot- for-local-communities problems (e.g. the conduct of prevalence epidemiology studies and research focused on health inequalities)

Teaching material need minor modifications, to include in a structured way, if not already available, the principles of ICH Good Clinical Practice, the Greek, Cypriot and EU law for human use of medicines and medical devices, the role of the Greek and Cypriot competent authority (ΕΟΦ and ΦΑΡΜΑΚΕΥΤΙΚΕΣ ΥΠΗΡΕΣΙΕΣ) and the role of the European Medicines Agency, relevant to clinical research, as well as that of the WHO, FDA, MHRA and from other major jurisdictions, in leading change in global medical affairs. Combined with basic knowledge in the regulations for research tissue banks, and research databases, students are expected to know the basics in data protection and information governance, including EU GDPR, Greek and Cypriot law

The EEAP recommends changes in the content of teaching material to include:

[a]. the principles of care for elderly medicine and the role of geriatrics as a distinct medical speciality that is still in development in Greece;

[b]. the role of genomic medicine in the primary clinical setting focused on:

(i). identifying families with or at risk of genetic conditions, including common disorders

(ii). identifying individuals who would benefit from being referred to appropriate specialist services for genetic counselling, and

(iii). coordinating care across services with other specialists;

[c]. the basics about rare diseases, taking into account the various definitions of what is considered a rare disease (regionally, nationally, globally), and the associated challenges for quality diagnostic, therapeutic, and research services in primary care.

The EEAP recommends a series of changes in the handbook to better support the students:

[a]. the uniqueness of the PSP in the field and the Greek ecosystem needs to get clearer;

[b]. some aspects, such as the course, e.g. rules on deadlines and absences (especially as this is a course that istaught remotely), could benefit from better organisation;

[c]. a table with clarity on boundaries between the two institutions so that students are aware why they contact whomever they do/who is responsible for what is important;

[d]. editorial changes to improve the text stylistically (several missing blank spaces and typos, even in the cover page, communicate to the reader a lack of professionalism) – the document needs to be cross-checked for typos, punctuation errors etc.;

[e]. changes to remove promotional language (all) need to be made – the course guide content needs to stay factual e.g. the authors mention a proprietary telecommunications application (the name of the product needs to be removed as it does not enhance the content); the authors claim that the "Nicosia University is the largest university in Southern Europe" - this is a general statement that is not appropriately referenced/the definition of Southern Europe is vague, hence this should be removed.

(This is an example, the course guide has a few more. The EEAP recommends revision.)
The EEAP recommends the inclusion of:

[a]. a frequently asked questions (FAQ) section to be included in the handbook;

[b]. additional information with dates and timelines of fixed teaching activities (e.g. on DD-MMM-YYYY students are having a lecture on X and Y – the table with the public holidays in Greece can be replaced with a link, e.g. https://www.mfa.gr/uk/argies.html;

[c]. summary description of each module, including all key learning objectives, the type of exams and other relevant requirements;

[d]. checklists to help students plan their work whilst familiarising themselves with processes from the Cypriot academic ecosystem, they may not be familiar with.

The EEAP would like to state that the recommendations above are offered in the merit of improving the course guide and not as criticism.

PRINCIPLE 3: REGULATIONS FOR STUDENT ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, RECOGNITION OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AND CERTIFICATION

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD DEVELOP AND APPLY PUBLISHED REGULATIONS COVERING ALL ASPECTS AND PHASES OF STUDIES (ADMISSION, PROGRESSION, THESIS DRAFTING, RECOGNITION AND CERTIFICATION).

The Institution should develop and publish the internal regulations prescribed by law which, among other things, should regulate all issues of postgraduate studies from the beginning to the end of the studies.

Indicatively:

- *The students' admission procedures and the required supporting documents*
- *Student rights and obligations, and monitoring of student progression*
- *Internship issues, if applicable, and granting of scholarships*
- *The procedures and terms for the drafting of assignments and the thesis*
- *The procedure of award and recognition of degrees, the duration of studies, the conditions for progression and for the assurance of the progress of students in their studies*
- *The terms and conditions for enhancing student mobility*

In case that the PSP is offered through distance learning methods, the Institution should have in place a regulation for e-learning, including in particular the following issues:

- *Services of the Institution to support e-learning*
- *Methodology for the development and implementation of courses*
- *Ways of providing teaching and variety of teaching and assessment modes*
- *General standard of course structure*
- *Student support system*
- *Support of faculty/teachers with mandatory e-learning training for new staff members*
- *Technological infrastructures made available by the Institution*
- *Student identity confirmation system (student identity check, assignment and exam writing process, security and certification issues).*
- *The Institution should establish rules for the provision of appropriate access and for the assurance of the participation of students affected by disability, illness, and other special circumstances.*
- *Ethical issues, such as those concerning data protection, intellectual property rights and rules for protection against fraud are governed by the e-learning regulation.*

All the above must be made public within the context of the Student Guide.

Documentation

- *Internal regulation for the operation of the postgraduate study programme*
- *Special regulation for the implementation of e-learning if the PSP is delivered through distance methods*
- *Research Ethics Regulation*
- *Regulation of studies, internship, mobility, and student assignments*
- *Degree certificate template and Diploma Supplement template*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The UoP has developed and published internal regulations as required by law, which cover all stages of postgraduate studies from admission to graduation. These regulations include procedures for student admission, progress monitoring, thesis writing, degree recognition and certification, ensuring transparency and fairness throughout the academic career of students. Internal regulation documents, such as the "Regulations on Studies, Internships, Student Mobility and Thesis", provide comprehensive guidelines on the operational aspects of the PSP. The "Research Ethics Regulation" ensures ethical standards in research, while the "Degree Certificate Model and Diploma Supplement Model" describe the certification process. In the PSPs offered by distance learning, there is a "Special Regulation for the Implementation of E-Learning" that concerns support services, course development, teaching methodologies and technological infrastructure. The distance learning Family Medicine PSP is a collaborative program offered by the UoP and the UNIC. It has been accredited by the Cyprus Quality Assurance and Accreditation Agency in Higher Education (CYQAA), reflecting its compliance with international standards of quality and excellence.

This new PSP will be conducted entirely through distance learning. This approach was chosen to address the geographical dispersion of students and to provide the flexibility necessary for adult education. The program is structured over three semesters and offers a comprehensive curriculum that includes an optional final thesis and internship. Student progress will be assessed by the UNIC through assessments and monitored by professors, in compliance with legal obligations. Student performance is assessed on a scale of one to ten, with a base score of five. Mobility is supported through participation in the Erasmus+ program.

The PSP's use of Moodle for communication, assignments, grading and course revision ensures an effective and structured learning environment. The PSP has a code of ethics and a student guide that provides general guidelines. Students who complete the PSP are awarded a Certificate Supplement.

II. Analysis

Newly admitted students will be welcomed by the scientific director of the PSP and the academic and administrative staff of the PSP and will be supported with informative meetings. The study guide is posted on the website of the PSP. The PSP provides a large number of scholarships. The scholarship costs are granted by the UNIC, which is responsible for the financial management. The UNIC has adopted the regulatory and legislative framework applicable to Cyprus and has taken the relevant care. Specifically, it grants scholarships PSP academic certification proposal Family Medicine - UoP A. of 25% for doctors who provide rural services (rural doctors) 20 B. to the remaining students with the following social and academic criteria: 1. 20% for students with a degree with an EXCELLENT grade 2. 15% for students with a degree with a VERY GOOD grade 3. 10% for students with special criteria (financial, social and social contribution). The above scholarships (A and B) are not offset.

The Erasmus+ program subsidises student mobility both for studies in higher education Institutions and for internships. Students can move for a total of up to 12 months during their PSP studies, receiving an amount as a monthly grant depending on the host country. Although of interest, this is a very difficult concept to be materialised for this precise PSP. Students from socially vulnerable groups are entitled to a supplementary grant. The terms and conditions, as well as the detailed application, awarding and selection procedures, are also listed on the ERASMUS+ website of the foundation (www.upatras.gr/international-

relations/erasmus/programmaerasmus/) as well as on the website of the Erasmus+ department of the UNIC (https://www.unic.ac.cy/erasmus/).
As can be seen in the relevant annexe describing the course outline, as well as in the study regulations included in the decision to establish the program, the PSP is fully harmonised with the credit transfer system (ECTS). The program in total corresponds to 90 ECTS, 30 per academic semester. The diploma supplement will be in English and issued automatically and free of charge for PSP graduates.
Within the framework of the DPMS, students can carry out an optional Master's thesis in Family Medicine through the eponymous elective course FMED-591G, which is offered in the 3rd semester and corresponds to 20 ECTS. Before starting the Master's thesis, students must complete the mandatory course in research methodology (FMED-590G), which forms the basis for the research project progression leading to the Master's thesis.
Students must select a supervisor from the School of Medicine of the UNIC. Although the research project is not a taught course, a series of learning activities have been designed to support students in the planning, conducting, analysing and writing of their research paper. Some of these activities will be synchronous (e.g. webinars and advisory meetings with a supervising professor), while others will be asynchronous (e.g. question and answer forums and quizzes). Each teaching module contains relevant bibliography (relevant textbooks and designated modules) as well as relevant online resources. All relevant material and activities are located on the e-learning platform (Moodle) page of the specific course module. Students must follow the specific study guide in conjunction with the course Moodle page to effectively organise their learning time and make full use of the educational material offered. The research-based dissertation should meet specific writing and presentation standards outlined in the course handbook. Research proposals, papers and presentations will be checked for plagiarism using the Turnitin plagiarism software. Document submissions via Moodle are processed through Turnitin so that students have the opportunity to check the similarity index of their paper (i.e., the proportion of text that comes directly from other sources). It is recommended that they keep this percentage below 20% (excluding bibliographic references). Plagiarism leads to automatic failure of the dissertation. Details regarding the preparation of the dissertation are available in the study guide and the course handbook.
There is no provision for practical training and work experience in the PSP of the UoP. The PSP of the UoP is aimed at working doctors, and candidates must demonstrate that they maintain clinical work and contact with patients throughout the first year of study. The UoP and the UNIC will not be involved in the placement of students in clinical positions, which is under the responsibility of the students.
The PSP courses are provided by the distance learning method, or through internet-supported training methods or by any combination of training methods to facilitate the study of professionals and executives of family medicine, who face great time constraints. PSP utilises all innovative teaching methods and fully implements new educational technologies (synchronous, asynchronous education, distance learning methodologies), by the relevant legislation, taking into account exceptional situations for the utilisation and use of distance learning. The teaching material of the program includes powerpoint presentations, interactive presentations, interactive course with extensive descriptions and explanations, asynchronous video presentations, additional readings (journal articles and e-books), access to additional videos and advertisements related to each module, synchronous meetings (WebEx), forums, conversations, quizzes, case studies and other formative and summative assessments.
The PSP adheres to the quality assurance policy of the UoP, while at the same time aligning itself with the quality standards of the UNIC. The quality policy is actively disseminated and communicated by both Universities.

The preparation of the Master's thesis follows the research ethics regulation, and the final grade is determined by the evaluation committee based on the written text and the oral presentation. All students who complete the PSP and pass the exams are awarded a Diploma Supplement.

III. Conclusions

The procedures concerning student admission, student mobility and the preparation of the thesis are presented clearly and follow the required European standards. The PSP has taken important measures for the participation of students in the evaluation process, enhancing the quality of decision-making and the overall improvement of the PSP. The educational process is assessed through examinations and the master's thesis for those who choose it, with an emphasis on student-centred learning and evaluation.

Panel Judgement

Principle 3: Regulations for Student Admission, Progression, Recognition of Postgraduate Studies, and certification	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends that support services be driven by UoP to ensure effective communication and bridge any gap between students based in Greece and PSP leads based in Cyprus, since the vast majority of students are expected to be practising/living in Greece.

Additional information for the ERASMUS+ program will have to be provided to student-facing documentation and the website, so that the right expectations are set, i.e. students and third parties are given the right context/details about feasible ERASMUS+ placements for a remote PSP.

The EEAP recommends the introduction of a fourth semester (additional term) to support students opting in for original research to complete their research and writing-up on track and in time.

PRINCIPLE 4: TEACHING STAFF OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD ASSURE THEMSELVES OF THE LEVEL OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS OF THEIR TEACHING STAFF, AND APPLY FAIR AND TRANSPARENT PROCESSES FOR THEIR RECRUITMENT, TRAINING, AND FURTHER DEVELOPMENT.

The Institution should attend to the adequacy and scientific competence of the teaching staff at the PSP, the appropriate staff-student ratio, the proper staff categories, the appropriate subject areas, the fair and objective recruitment process, the high research performance, the training, the staff development policy (including participation in mobility schemes, conferences, and educational leaves-as mandated by law).

More specifically, the academic unit should set up and follow clear, transparent, and fair processes for the recruitment of properly qualified staff for the PSP and offer them conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching and research; offer opportunities and promote the professional development of the teaching staff; encourage scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research; encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies; promote the increase of the volume and quality of the research output within the academic unit; follow quality assurance processes for all staff (with respect to attendance requirements, performance, self-assessment, training, etc.); develop policies to attract highly qualified academic staff.

Documentation

- *Procedures and criteria for teaching staff recruitment, policy for attracting highly qualified staff, and PSP Obligation Regulation*
- *List of the intended for recruitment teaching staff including subject areas, employment relationship, Institution of origin, Department of origin and relevant individual achievements*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP staff from the UoP is composed of dedicated academics with teaching and research capabilities. The PSP staff from the UoP consists of 12 to 13 members, while 20 staff members belong to the UNIC. A list of the PSP staff from the UoP and their department of origin is provided. Although information concerning teaching staff accomplishments and performances is available, information concerning the extramural funding is missing. The academic performances (publications, H-index, etc) of the 20 teaching staff members from the UNIC were missing, but a list has finally been provided for only 14 of the 20 staff members. On the PSP's web page of the UoP there is no information available about the teaching staff. Employment regulations and obligations of the PSP staff from the UoP are also provided and described in the corresponding official documents. A policy for the faculty's support and development is also in place at the UoP. It is not obvious how the staff members from the UNIC are supported.

The School of Medicine of the UoP adheres to transparent procedures for the selection and recruitment of the PSP faculty (APELLA national platform). This recruitment is based on covering PSP teaching needs and specific research directions. There is a curriculum committee that ensures transparency and meritocracy regarding the selection of the teaching staff. The majority of the staff are recognised for their research qualities, and they are experienced in delivering academic courses. Research activities and the attraction of external funding by the PSP staff are monitored for all PSP faculty of the UoP via universally accessible tools (e.g., Google Scholar, Scopus, etc.). Detailed information concerning 14 of

the 20 teaching staff members of the UNIC has been provided upon request of the EEAP. Staff's teaching excellence will be assessed using student evaluations (anonymous PSP student surveys) conducted by the UNIC. This is a very important function that can help improve the PSP in the future. The evaluation questionnaires should ensure a 100% participation of all students. The PSP curriculum committee should potentially attend certain lectures to provide additional feedback to individual teaching faculty. Overall, the research productivity and teaching experience of the staff from the UoP can be estimated as satisfactory. The teaching load is acceptable. The medical school of the UoP can provide continuous education and training to the PSP faculty to improve their teaching capabilities and performance.

II. Analysis

This new PSP is designed to accomplish the stated goals of the program. The faculty from the UoP involved in the program are experienced and recognised in the field. However, the majority of the PSP faculty originates from the UNIC. Increasing the number of certain faculty members from other departments of the UoP (e.g., the biology department) could further enrich the program. The PSP staff covers various aspects of the family medicine field. There is a core group that administers the PSP (from the UNIC), as well as an advisory/consultative board (from both Universities). It is unclear if it is planned that the teaching faculty meet once per year to discuss the entire program and receive expert consultation for new teaching methodologies that involve the active participation of students and stakeholders. The faculty of medicine of the UoP has a formal policy for the faculty's continuous support and development concerning their teaching activities.

III. Conclusions

This is an important PSP serving the health care system. This PSP offers specialised education but does not direct PSP students towards further academic studies (PhD). The PSP can be further enhanced by adding some lectures and seminars in gerontology, genetics etc. Academic performances, extramural funding, etc., by the faculty members of the UoP and the UNIC should be presented on the web page (in both Greek and English versions).

Panel Judgement

Principle 4: Teaching Staff of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	**X**
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends that the PSP committee of faculty members shall meet at least once per year to discuss progress, problems, and reorganisation of the PSP. It is recommended to involve students and stakeholders during the PSP content review to get their opinion on additional courses that need to supplement the curriculum based on their experience.

The EEAP recommends an active mobility of PSP faculty throughout Erasmus+ and other similar exchange platforms.

Identify mechanisms to encourage students to fill out surveys and questionnaires related to the PSP and evaluation of each module, lecturer, instructor, or supervisor.

Information about the teaching, research, and all other achievements of the faculty members should be easily accessible on the PSP's webpage.

PRINCIPLE 5: LEARNING RESOURCES AND STUDENT SUPPORT

INSTITUTIONS SHOULD HAVE ADEQUATE FUNDING TO COVER THE TEACHING AND LEARNING NEEDS OF THE POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES. THEY SHOULD -ON THE ONE HAND- PROVIDE SATISFACTORY INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES FOR LEARNING AND STUDENT SUPPORT, AND- ON THE OTHER HAND- FACILITATE DIRECT ACCESS TO THEM BY ESTABLISHING INTERNAL RULES TO THIS END (E.G. LECTURE ROOMS, LABORATORIES, LIBRARIES, NETWORKS, CAREER AND SOCIAL POLICY SERVICES ETC.).

Institutions and their academic units must have sufficient resources and means, on a planned and long-term basis, to support learning and academic activity in general, so as to offer PSP students the best possible level of studies. The above means include facilities such as the necessary general and more specialised libraries and possibilities for access to electronic databases, study rooms, educational and scientific equipment, IT and communication services, support, and counselling services.

When allocating the available resources, the needs of all students must be taken into consideration (e.g., whether they are full-time or part-time students, employed and foreign students, students with disabilities), in addition to the shift towards student-centered learning and the adoption of flexible modes of learning and teaching. Support activities and facilities may be organised in various ways, depending on the Institutional context. However, the internal quality assurance proves -on the one hand- the quantity and quality of the available facilities and services, and -on the other hand- that students are aware of all available services.

In delivering support services, the role of support and administration staff is crucial and therefore this segment of staff needs to be qualified and have opportunities to develop its competences.

Documentation

- *Detailed description of the infrastructure and services made available by the Institution to the academic unit for the PSP, to support learning and academic activity (human resources, infrastructure, services, etc.) and the corresponding firm commitment of the Institution to financially cover these infrastructure-services from state or other resources*
- *Administrative support staff of the PSP (job descriptions, qualifications, and responsibilities)*
- *Informative / promotional material given to students with reference to the available services*
- *Tuition utilisation plan (if applicable)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

The PSP accepts graduates of medicine (active medical doctors) from accredited institutions. The maximum number of students is 20 to 30, according to the vice-rector's information, and not 240 as described in the documents distributed by HAHE. The tuition fee is calculated at 8,100 € per student per 3 semesters. All students in the Family Medicine PSP are enrolled simultaneously at both Universities and have all the privileges and rights of students at both Universities regarding academic resources and access to them. A brief diagram follows outlining the main services provided to students in the program.

The courses will be taught in Greek. The PSP environment integrates modern online teaching infrastructure at both Universities. The departments of both Universities are equipped with modern classrooms, computing, and a secretarial administration. However, only the secretarial administration located in UNIC is dedicated to this PSP. The program offers e-learning and in-

person components, with a focus on flexible and effective teaching methods. Enhancing the program's infrastructure, including digital tools, remains a priority for the program. In addition, it includes a modern library located at both Universities, with electronic access to scientific journals, books and databases. Furthermore, the PSP offers services in Computer Science, Economic Cases, Academic Support, Administrative Support for Students, and Occupational Health Professional Career & Graduation. All these services are located at UNIC. Although the UoP has established modern laboratories and research facilities that can be utilised to enhance the PSP and cover its essential components, it is not obvious if these services will be in use for this PSP. The use of these facilities requires the integration of research activities that will provide PSP's students with hands-on experience and opportunities to develop their research skills. The financial office of the UNIC is responsible for all financial matters related to the program. Students experiencing financial difficulties can apply for a needs-based scholarship. To be considered, they must submit documentary evidence of financial hardship. Those who are approved will be supported throughout their studies. The academic advisor system is mandatory for all PSP students, and it is run exclusively by the UNIC. Each student will be assigned an academic advisor, a member of the academic staff, who will assist in drafting their study plan and monitor their academic progress. Students can also communicate with them as needed. The academic advisor serves as a point of reference for academic or personal issues and difficulties.

II. Analysis

The classes are designed to form an online learning environment for individuals who wish to develop their knowledge, skills and competencies further in Family Medicine. Overall, the learning resources and student support are adequate. However, all students' provider services are located in UNIC.

The EEAP has raised several significant concerns regarding the placement of student support responsibilities within UNIC, rather than at UoP, which it believes may negatively affect student outcomes. The EEAP firmly believes that it is essential that all these services run concurrently at both Universities. This will enable students to physically interact with service personnel and academic advisors, thereby facilitating more effective learning and resolving any learning or personal issues that may arise.

The EEAP also raised significant concerns about the practice of students getting skills in Family Medicine. Indeed, the PSP has designed theoretical courses that are offered in an online distance mode. The EEAP agrees with the PSP representatives that disease case simulation by actors is an excellent tool for the education of the students on this topic. Nevertheless, a practical exercise in different specialised hospitals and medical care institutions may significantly support the students to get practical skills in Family Medicine.

The EEAP has some concerns about the way students are being trained in Family Medicine. The EEAP think that the PSP's online theoretical courses might not be enough to give students the practical skills they need. The EEAP agrees that disease case simulation by actors is a great way to teach students about Family Medicine, but they also think that students need to get hands-on experience in real-world medical settings, such as hospitals and medical care institutions. This would allow them to practice their skills more realistically and practically.

The EEAP has also expressed significant concerns regarding the similarities between the PSP offered by UNIC, which has been delivered in English for several years, and the PSP proposed by the UoP. The EEAP believes that cooperation with the UoP gives the chance to the students

to practice basic research, which will promote their scientific curiosity. The UoP offers excellent infrastructure for basic research too (e.g., in genetics, genomics, geriatrics, and biological sciences). The involvement of basic research courses and a diploma thesis gives a significant chance to the PSP to optimise the synergies of both Universities to create an excellent PSP that will be distinguished from the PSP in the present form that it is similar to the UNIC (even the courses were translated from English to Greek language).

The EEAP also noticed the very weak research components of the PSP including seminars on critical thinking, journal clubs, and structured research projects related to Family Medicine. The EEAP believes that collaboration with the UoP presents a unique opportunity for students to engage in basic research, thereby enhancing their scientific expertise. The UoP boasts an excellent infrastructure for basic research in fields such as genetics, genomics, and biological sciences, which would be a valuable asset for the PSP. Furthermore, the incorporation of basic research courses and a diploma thesis (Master Thesis or dissertation) would enable the PSP to capitalize on the synergies between the two Universities, ultimately creating an exceptional PSP that would differentiate itself from the existing PSP, which, despite being translated from English to Greek, bears a striking resemblance to the UNIC version.

EEAP believes that the tuition fee of 8,100 € is excessively high since there is no need for heavy equipment or research-oriented consumables. In its view, the EEAP advocates that a portion of the tuition fee be dedicated to enhancing the academic environment of the PSP, enabling students to participate in national and international conferences and meetings. The organisation of a weekly summer school per year will also help the creation of strong links between participants and broaden the academic horizons of the PSP's students. This would also provide students with valuable opportunities for networking and knowledge-sharing. Additionally, the EEAP suggests that a portion of the tuition fee be utilised to facilitate student participation in seminars and workshops, where they can engage in discussions on the PSP's progress and address the challenges they face. This would foster a sense of community and collaboration among students, while also promoting a culture of academic inquiry and problem-solving. Therefore, the EEAP strongly suggest the use of 20-25% of the budget for promoting meetings, summer schools, research activities etc., to further foster this new PSP.

III. Conclusions

The EEAP is concerned that student support services are located in UNIC, rather than UoP, which may negatively impact student outcomes PSP's online theoretical courses may not be enough to give students the practical skills they need in Family Medicine. The research component of the program is e Wea. The tuition fee of 8,100 € is excessively high, and although there is provision for scholarships, this is not reflected in the budget. A portion of the fee should be utilised towards research, summer schools and seminars for enhancing the academic stature of the PSP. Improvement of the PSP using the scientific excellent environment of the UoP would give students the chance to practice basic research and promote their scientific expertise.

Panel Judgement

Principle 5: Learning Resources and Student Support	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	**X**
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

All student support services should operate under the guidance of the UoP and not exclusively by the UNIC.

Improve the research part of the PSP by exploiting the excellent scientific research infrastructure of the UoP.

Include practical internships, allowing the students to get hands-on experience in real-world medical settings.

Allocate a portion of the fee towards research, summer schools, and seminars that will enhance the academic and international environment of the PSP.

PRINCIPLE 6: INITIAL INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION AND MONITORING OF NEW POSTGRADUATE STUDY PROGRAMMES

INSTITUTIONS AND ACADEMIC UNITS SHOULD HAVE IN PLACE AN INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE SYSTEM, FOR THE AUDIT, INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL EVALUATION OF THE NEW POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES, THUS ENSURING COMPLIANCE WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF THE PRESENT STANDARDS. ANY ACTIONS TAKEN IN THE ABOVE CONTEXT SHOULD BE COMMUNICATED TO ALL PARTIES CONCERNED.

The internal evaluation of the new PSP includes the assessment of the accreditation proposal, as well as the documentation in accordance with the Principles of the present Standards and the quality procedures of the Institution's Internal Quality Assurance System (IQAS). The internal evaluation of new postgraduate study programmes also aims at maintaining the level of educational provision and creating a supportive and effective learning environment for students. The Institution, through its Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) and the corresponding academic units, organise and support the external evaluation procedures of the new PSP, according to the specific guidelines and directions provided by HAHE.

The above comprise the assessment of:

- *the objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum, the knowledge offered and the level of science and technology in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the PSP is up to date, according to the relevant documentation listed in the decisions of the pertinent bodies*
- *the entailed students' workload for the progression and completion of postgraduate studies*
- *the satisfaction of the students' expectations and needs in relation to the programme*
- *the learning environment, support services, and their fitness for purpose for the PSP in question*

Postgraduate study programmes are designed and established in accordance with the provisions of the Institution's internal regulations, involving students and other stakeholders.

Documentation

- *The Quality Assurance Unit (QAU) procedure for verifying whether the requirements of the Standards for Quality Accreditation of New PSP are met, as well as the procedure for organising and supporting their external evaluation procedures*
- *Assessment and feedback mechanisms of the PSP strategy and quality targeting, and relevant decision-making processes (students, external stakeholders)*

Study Programme Compliance

I. Findings

This PSP is addressed to medical doctors already working. It aims to deepen their understanding of the role of family medicine and its use in private and public healthcare. The objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum are clearly described in the received documents and the MODIP evaluation of the proposal for this PSP has also been positive.

As mentioned previously, this PSP will be based in the UNIC Medical School, with the UoP providing some courses for the students. Importantly, the component of the PSP based in Cyprus has already been evaluated by an external panel and received a positive report.

To evaluate this PSP in its proper context, the panel requested and received the evaluation of this PSP originating from Cyprus and which was conducted a few months ago. This evaluation has been noted in the deliberations of our panel.

The content of this PSP is up to date, however, some important topics (e.g., gerontology, genetic diagnostics, AI in therapeutic approaches, etc.) are neglected. Similarly, the research-oriented activities and the ethical aspects (apart from some courses concerning the initiation of research) are absent from this new PSP. It is unclear if a periodic internal evaluation and monitoring will be carried out annually by the MODIP of the UoP or by an equivalent organisation from the UNIC. Quality data, such as the structure and organisation of courses, teaching methods, degree of student satisfaction, etc., will be collected and evaluated by the Cypriot component and not by MODIP of the UoP. It is expected that all the above information will be made public to be easily accessible to all interested participants. The learning environment is very good, and the support services – primarily in Cyprus – are in place for the successful realisation of this PSP. The PSP has a duration of one and a half years (3 semesters).

II. Analysis

All courses in this PSP address current developments in family medicine. PSP students can potentially obtain the necessary knowledge and training in this important field linked to healthcare, although some additional elements should be added (see above). It is uncertain whether the 3-semester period allows the development of a strong and competitive PSP, especially with regards to the research component. The addition of a fourth semester will significantly strengthen this PSP. Collaboration with other major departments (e.g., the department of biology) and institutions nationally or abroad will ensure that students will be provided with specific research experience covering the actual and future needs of family medicine. The services provided, all online, appear to be of good quality. The internal evaluation is not organised by the MODIP in Patras but by the Cypriot institution. The panel was informed by the vice-rector of the UNIC that the internal evaluation is satisfactory and aims at providing high-quality studies, improving the benefits and services, and the efficiency of the faculty. Monitoring the structure and organisation of the curriculum, as well as evaluating student satisfaction, will contribute to the quality of this PSP. There is no information concerning the mobility of teachers and PSP students (using the Erasmus+ platform). The better use of the financial resources (research-oriented budget, organisation of national or international meetings and summer schools, etc.) and the qualifications of invited teachers for this PSP will also contribute to its improvement.

III. Conclusions

The organisation of this PSP is satisfactory. Although the curriculum is well-organised, including courses on current topics linked to family medicine to ensure high-quality education, it does not provide practical and research experience. The structure and organisation of the internal evaluation are performed by the UNIC. Certainly, the 3-semester period of this PSP is not adequate for a solid and competitive PSP, especially regarding the research component.

Panel Judgement

Principle 6: Initial Internal and External Evaluation and Monitoring of New Postgraduate Study Programmes	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	**X**
Partially compliant	
Non-compliant	

Panel Recommendations

The EEAP recommends the addition of a fourth semester, as well as the addition of a mandatory Master's Thesis (dissertation), for further strengthening this new PSP.

The EEAP recommends a closer interaction between the UoP and the UNIC participants to make this PSP better integrated with the two institutions.

PART C: CONCLUSIONS

I. Features of Good Practice

The PSP covers a very important area of postgraduate education for medical professionals, and it is only one of a small number of such PSPs nationally and internationally.

UNIC already has a good expertise in running a similar course in Family Medicine in English.

The course guide is well-structured and comprehensive, although there is scope for further development given that this is a new PSP.

The procedures concerning student admission, student mobility and the preparation of the thesis are presented clearly and follow the required European standards.

The PSP faculty from the UoP is composed of dedicated academics with teaching and research capabilities.

The PSP environment integrates modern online teaching infrastructure at both Universities, and the departments of both Universities are equipped with modern classrooms, computing, and a secretarial administration.

The objectives, content, and structure of the curriculum are clearly described in the received documents, and the MODIP evaluation of the proposal for this PSP has also been positive.

Having the English version of this PSP already in operation in Cyprus can help provide useful experience regarding positive and problematic areas likely to be relevant for this PSP as well.

II. Areas of Weakness

The coordination between the two institutions involved will always need careful consideration and nourishment of this proposal, the panel did not see strong efforts along those lines.

Although this new PSP is an interesting program based on the one already provided by the UNIC English PSP, it could be better designed and structured to cover the Greek peculiarities and the HAHE quality standards.

The research component of the PSP needs to be substantially expanded.

The course descriptions in the student handbook need to be expanded and further explained.

The course content of this PSP can be further enhanced by adding some lectures and seminars in gerontology, genetics, AI, medtech, etc.

The placement of student support responsibilities lies solely with the UNIC.

The tuition fee of 8,100 € is excessively high for what is on offer- in any case, a portion of the fee should be utilised towards research, summer schools and seminars for enhancing the academic stature of the PSP.

The 3-semester length of this PSP is not adequate for a solid and competitive PSP, especially regarding the research component.

Limited possibilities to conduct academic research within the PSP.

III. Recommendations for Follow-up Actions

The EEAP recommends changes to student-facing documentation, including information on the PSP website, to set more clearly the boundaries between the two institutions. The aim is to clarify roles and responsibilities and to achieve, with time, higher transparency and balance for all parties involved.

The EEAP recommends that support services be also driven by the UoP, taking into consideration that the vast majority of students are expected to be practising/living in Greece. This will ensure effective communication and bridge any gap between students based in Greece and PSP leads based abroad.

It is recognised that modifications are needed in the course program to promote the conduct of original research by PSP students with tangible and relevant research projects appropriate for the MSc level. The EEAP recommends the development of student-led research for topics in primary care (family medicine), in response to unmet clinical needs that are of great interest also for academic staff. The EEAP recommends connection with other departments within UoP, e.g. with prolific researchers from the UoP department of Biology.

The EEAP recommends the introduction of a fourth semester (additional term) to support students opting in for original research to complete their research and writing-up on track and in time.

The EEAP recommends content updates in the teaching material and modules to cover: (a) basics about care for the elderly (geriatrics), (b) genomic medicine applied in primary care, (c) telemedicine, and (d) rare diseases.

Teaching materials to be reviewed to include details (if these are not provided already) regarding clinical research regulations (European and national), the roles of key regulatory bodies for medicines and medical devices (globally), and basics on data protection principles and information governance.

Additional information for the ERASMUS+ program will have to be provided to student-facing documentation and the website, so that the right expectations are set, i.e. students and third parties are given the right context/details about feasible ERASMUS+ placements for a remote PSP like this.

The EEAP recommends the course director to revisit the PSP's approach to tuition fees, noting that the current figure is exceptionally high (for the Greek system) and arguably disproportionate to what is being offered/the resources needed by UoP and UNIC to deliver the PSP remotely.

The developers of the PSP's website are to provide an updated version of it, with both Greek and English content, addressed to prospective students, future candidates, as well as third parties (e.g. external institutions, stakeholders, possible employees of future graduates/future alumni and others).

The student handbook needs proofreading and editorial changes aiming to improve clarity, structure, and factual content and to remove minor errors (e.g. typos to be removed/blank spaces to be introduced). In addition, the EEAP feels that the course guide can be improved with support tools such as the introduction of a new FAQ section, the inclusion of an annual schedule of events and planning checklists, details on absence management policy, and most importantly summaries for each module (content, learning objectives, and methods of examination).

IV. Summary & Overall Assessment

The Principles where full compliance has been achieved are: **3, 4**

The Principles where substantial compliance has been achieved are: **1, 6**

The Principles where partial compliance has been achieved are: **2, 5**

The Principles where failure of compliance was identified are: **None**

Overall Judgement	
Fully compliant	
Substantially compliant	
Partially compliant	**X**
Non-compliant	

The members of the External Evaluation & Accreditation Panel

Name and Surname

1. **Prof. Thimios Mitsiadis**
2. **Dr Nikolaos Ktistakis**
3. **Prof. Agapios Sachinidis**
4. **Dr Andreas A. Roussakis**
5. **Ms Panagiota Kyriakidou**