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External Evaluation Report (Programmatic)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

CYPRUS UNIVERSITY OF TECHNOLOGY

- **Town:** Limassol

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Faculty of Health Sciences

- **Department/ Sector:** Department of Rehabilitation Sciences

- **Program of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)
In Greek:**

Μεταπτυχιακό στις Επιστήμες Αναπτυξιακών Διαταραχών
Επικοινωνίας (πλήρης φοίτηση: τέσσερα εξάμηνα (24 μήνες) ή
μερική φοίτηση: οκτώ εξάμηνα (48 μήνες) / 110 ECTS

- In English:**

Master (MSc) in Sciences in Developmental
Communication Disorders (SDCD) (full-time: four
semesters (24 months) or part-time: eight semesters
(48 months) / 110 ECTS)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek, English

- **Program's status
New program:** Yes



Currently operating: No

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws of 2015 to 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].



A. Introduction

The external examination committee (from now on EEC) was asked by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education to evaluate the plans for a new MSc program in Developmental Communication Disorders (SDCD) at the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT). The evaluation included a thorough analysis of the accreditation report prepared by the institution, including an evaluation of the Internal Evaluation Committee, and a site visit.

The site visit was planned for May 2020, but due to the corona virus crisis, it was postponed. In June it was decided that a remote site visit would be planned, which took place on the 27th of July. The ECC had online meetings with the Rector of the Institution, with members of the Internal Evaluation Committee, with the dean of the Faculty and the program coordinator, with the teachers and prospective students and with administrative staff. As the EEC could not visit the premises of the institution physically, two videos were made available to the EEC, one of the University of Technology and one on the rehabilitation clinic.

The MSc program in Developmental Communication Disorders will consist of thirteen courses corresponding to 6 or 8 ECTS depending on the course, and including a postgraduate dissertation or the independent study which is credited with 30 ECTS. The training and specialization of the students will be achieved through lectures, research methods, seminars / workshops, specialized clinical case studies of pathological patients as well as through the postgraduate dissertation in which current cognitive theories within the field DCD will be closely discussed.

After reading the accreditation report, the EEC had some questions on the various aspects that they needed to be evaluated in this report. Most of these questions were answered satisfactorily and the meetings led to insightful extra information. On the basis of this, the EEC can conclude that all standards are met. Below we will give a more elaborate description of how these standards are met and in some cases we give some suggestions for improvement. The EEC wants to add that not all standards could be evaluated yet, as this is a new program. This is true of standards relating to assessments, student progression, recognition and certification, which could only be reviewed considering the future plans on these aspects and current practice elsewhere within the university. The EEC saw in the admission report that the program itself will have an internal evaluation after three years. If this is not already planned by the Quality Assurance Agency, the EEC feels that it may be helpful to have another external evaluation of the program after it has been running for about five years.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Janet Beck (Chair)	Professor	Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh, UK
Kristiane Van Lierde	Professor	Ghent University, Belgium
Roel Jonkers	Associate Professor	University of Groningen, NL
Antoniou Prokopis	BA student Sociology	University of Cyprus

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

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance
- 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
- 1.3 Public information
- 1.4 Information management

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the program of study:*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The program of study:*
 - *is designed with overall program objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation*

for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)

- *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
- *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the program and the number of ECTS*
- *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
- *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the program is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the program*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the program of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the program of study is collected, monitored and analyzed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*

- *students' satisfaction with their programs*
- *learning resources and student support available*
- *career paths of graduates*

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

Findings

1.1. Policy for quality assurance

The policy described for quality assurance meets the standard. The program was approved by the Rehabilitation Sciences Department and the Board of the Faculty of Health Sciences. The Internal Evaluation Committee of the University evaluated the plans for the new program and concluded that this program met all quality standards and indicators and constituted good practice. Both the quality assurance committee for the university and for the department take responsibility for quality assurance for this program. The curriculum quality of this program (content and teaching) will be evaluated by the students at the end of each semester through questionnaires. The outcomes will be discussed by the Program Coordination Committee, and inform any short term adjustments that are needed. In the accreditation report, it is stated that the Department of Rehabilitation Board will revise the content of postgraduate study programs periodically (every 3 years).

The services are evaluated at university level both by students and staff and the department is informed about the outcomes. The CUT has appropriate mechanisms to deal with complaints from students and staff.

1.2. Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

The design, approval, monitoring and review of the program meet the standard. In the preparation of the curriculum experts have been involved, especially in preparation of the content of the program and the description of the learning outcomes. The EEC spoke to a member with expertise in this field, who is also a member of the quality assurance committee, focusing especially on the step from BA to MA. The workload that is described for every course seems feasible and is in line with the workload expressed in ECTS for other MSc programs. The program will prepare students for the labour market, provide them with high-level scientific knowledge on developmental communication disorders, and prepare them to become independent scientists. The program is structured in such a way that students should be able to show the required progress. The process of approval and monitoring has been described in 1.1.

1.3. Public information

The public information on this program meets the standard. On the website information on selection criteria is clearly stated. From the meetings the EEC had with students and teachers it is concluded that other information on the qualifications awarded, teaching and assessment procedures and pass rates are available for students as well. This information was not yet available for the EEC. There are possibilities for international students to participate in this program, helped by the fact that some of the courses are taught in English.

1.4. Information management

As far as it is possible to evaluate at present the information management concerning this program meets the standard. Several of the aspects that are mentioned under this heading can only be analyzed fully after the start of the program; however, on the basis of our meetings with students and staff and the procedures that are in place, the EEC expects that this will be in order. The program, for example, will have a Program Coordination Committee that discusses students' performance and progress at least once a year. This committee will also provide suggestions on how to improve and resolve eventual problems. Furthermore, they will seek their students' views on the program's effectiveness via interviews and questionnaires. Systems that will be used for the new program, like Moodle, are already being used effectively in other MSc programs. For example, it is standard practice for courses to be uploaded online and processes ensure that the basic information for each course (including the materials and the basic literature) is accessible to everyone.

Strengths

A very positive aspect of the program is that it has been developed and will be taught and assessed by a very enthusiastic and cooperative team of high quality teachers and researchers, with both scientific and clinical experience. This was evident both from the written documentation and from our interviews. It is clear that in preparing the program, the developers listened to the needs of the students and graduates from the BA Speech Therapy program and also considered the needs of the labour market. This has resulted in a new program that will be an important addition to existing MSc programs in Health Sciences. It will help students in Speech Therapy, as well as students from related disciplines, to prepare for an advanced level of professional practice or to prepare for a Phd. There are various quality assurance processes in place, both at course and program level. Students the EEC spoke with are happy with the way they are treated and with the opportunities they receive.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Two aspects of improvement follow from the above-mentioned strengths. Although the EEC saw how thoroughly the Master Program was planned, certain aspects of 'mastersness' were missing from the learning outcomes; for example there was no explicit expectation that students should be able to synthesise complex information, to learn and work independently, and to show a critical, scientific way of thinking. As they stand, the overall learning outcomes of the program and the course descriptions focus primarily on knowledge and skills, but they should also include reference to development of higher level academic skills. In the meetings it was clear that the staff team does have an expectation of masters level performance and we strongly recommend that more reference to this should be added to the course descriptions and the learning outcomes.

A second recommendation deals with access to information about quality assurance. The EEC were given information about many committees and groups that are concerned with quality assurance (Quality Assurance University Committee, Quality Assurance Department Committee,

Department of Rehabilitation Board, Internal Evaluation Committee, Program Coordination Committee), but the responsibilities of each group were not fully clear. In discussion with staff, the EEC were told that there is also an Examination Board, which plays a major role in quality assurance, but no information could be found about this board. Teaching and Examination regulations were not available to the EEC, although they were mentioned in the documentation. This made it difficult for the EEC to gain a good over view of quality assurance processes. We felt that we had sufficient evidence to agree that the programme will comply with standards but we recommend that program documentation should include a summary of the various committees and boards involved in quality assurance, with a brief description of their roles and responsibilities.

A final recommendation for the future is to do everything possible to maintain good contact with graduates of this MSc program and to involve alumni in future quality assurance.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Sub-areas

- 2.2 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology
- 2.3 Practical training
- 2.4 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*

- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for and method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study program? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*

- *Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

2.1. The process of teaching and learning.

The MSc program in Developmental Communication Disorders will consist of thirteen courses corresponding to 6 or 8 ECTS depending on the course, and including a postgraduate dissertation or the independent study which is credited with 30 ECTS. The training and specialization of the students will be achieved through several different teaching methods, such as problem based learning exercises, lectures/tutorials, individual and/or group presentations, individual meetings, seminars and/or workshops, discussions, specialized clinical case studies of patients as well as through the postgraduate dissertation in which current cognitive theories within the field DCD will be closely discussed. Each compulsory and elective course has clearly described modes of delivery including student-centred teaching methods. Also visiting professors teach specialized topics within the field of DCD. The academic staff is well trained and is able to encourage the proposed idea of Life Long Learning by using a variety of academic teaching methods. During the online discussions with the academic teaching staff it became clear that the students will be encouraged to take an active role in the learning process to achieve the intended learning outcomes.

2.2. Practical training

Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected and several practical training methods are included in the program, including computer/software workshops, laboratory practice, learning to use practical applications, exercises, learning to use rating scales, role-play and field trips. The incorporation of an internship (master level) for students who already have a SLP certificate is not present in the master program.

Strengths

A variety of teaching methods are described in the compulsory and elective courses.

The recommendations of the teaching expert Prof. Nicos Soulelos are implemented in the teaching methodology of the MSc program, and his guidance has informed design of the courses.

Special teaching staff and experts (with specialized teaching qualifications) are connected with the master program and should be able to help staff enhance their skills in delivery of masters level education.

The academic teaching personnel are very well qualified and research-teaching synergies are clearly present and developed.

The students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.

A variety of practical training methods is present.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Some areas of evaluation are tentative at this stage (e.g. whether the planned practical training techniques meet the academic standards) and we recommend that further evaluation of the different teaching methods should take place after the first and second year of the running program. This should include feedback from both staff and students.

The use of didactic face-to-face teaching should be used sparingly, with a greater emphasis on more active, student-directed approaches to learning. Although discussion with staff suggested that this would be the case, this is not the impression given by some of the course descriptions. For example, the program team could consider the use of peer tutoring whereby second year students teach students in their first year, thus encouraging the development of the skills required in higher level professional and academic practice .

A more detailed description of the learning involved in the master's thesis or independent study in DCD sciences is recommended, in order to demonstrate more clearly how the learning outcomes will be achieved and evaluated. For example, if these are not already envisaged we suggest the inclusion of teaching and learning methods such as masters thesis seminars, the use of reflective learning, self-evaluation (or peer-evaluation) reports and practical exercises relating to ethical approval.

We also encourage the team to consider the incorporation of a specialized DCD internship (+ 10 ECTS) for those students who already have a SLP certificate. Students are undertaking an academic educational program which is very focused on professional issues and their learning may be greatly enhanced by the opportunity to apply their new knowledge and insight to clinical practice. Students who participated in the online evaluation event were in favour of such a possibility. Two of them were intending to continue clinical work alongside full time study on the MSc programme and so would be able to maintain clinical skills and implement new insights, but this will not be possible for many students and short-term or part-time internships might be a more manageable approach to integration of academic and clinical skills.

It may be sensible to encourage students who already have a SLP certificate, and are therefore already familiar with clinical case material, to do a master's thesis in order to maximise development of new skills.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Not applicable

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

- 3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development
- 3.2 Teaching staff number and status
- 3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study program, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*

- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study program.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the program of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality program of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*
- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the program's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*

- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analyzed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The Teaching staff qualifications (including visiting professors) are excellent and the number of the teaching staff is adequate to run the master program. The teaching staff is absolutely able (1) to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the master program, (2) to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning and (3) to implement new educational principles and research technologies.

The EEC would like to congratulate the teaching staff on their qualifications regarding teaching and research. Moreover the EEC congratulates Prof. Kakia Petinou, the program coordinator, for her motivation and excellent entrepreneurship. It was obvious that each professor has his own expertise (educational expertise, research expertise and expertise regarding societal outreach) and that the professors are working together effectively to develop and evaluate the content and the quality of the master program. The courses are provided by experts in the field of DCD. Congratulations.

Strengths

Excellent researchers and teachers

The program coordinator Prof. Petinou is highly motivated and talented, and is well placed to coordinate and evaluate the program and to manage the teaching staff.

Financial sources are available for teaching- research synergies

Both the Rector, Prof. Zaphiris, and the Dean of the School of Health Sciences, Professor Nico Middleton, support the program coordinator and the teaching staff by providing financial sources.

Financial and other support is available for staff to undertake research and to secure external research funding, which strengthens the synergies on teaching and research

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC encourages the university to ensure that staff receive opportunities for development in the area of teaching and learning that are equivalent to the support provided for development of research skills. It was clear that very good support had been provided to the team by Prof Nicos Souleles during the development

of the program, but it will be important to provide ongoing staff development opportunities to ensure that teaching and learning approaches are appropriate for the level of study.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2 Student progression
- 4.3 Student recognition
- 4.4 Student certification

4.1 Student admission

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are*

essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.

- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study program appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

4.1: Information provided in the program documentation, during meetings at the evaluation event and from the website provided evidence that standards 4.1 and 4.2 are fully met. Information about admissions policies, processes and criteria are available on the CUT website, and discussion with the programme team and administrative staff indicated that policies are applied consistently. Admissions criteria seem appropriate for a

program of this kind, and allow some flexibility so that the program can be accessed by students from a range of backgrounds.

4.2: The EEC was not able to access assessment regulations, which would have explained processes for student progression, but discussion with academic and administrative staff reassured us that clear policies are in place, that information is collated and monitored in a systematic manner and that both staff and students know where to find relevant information.

4.3 and 4.4: At this stage it is difficult to judge whether processes for student recognition and certification are fully implemented, but the EEC was satisfied that processes and regulations are in place that should ensure that standards are met. The judgment of compliance is therefore made in the basis of information that does not relate directly to this programme.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

The admissions process appears to be rigorous and takes into account and special student needs.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

It would be helpful to direct future EECs to the regulations on assessment, progression and recognition.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4	student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	student recognition	Compliant

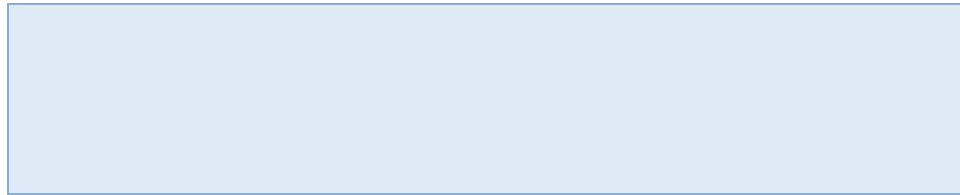


4.4	udent certification	Compliant
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5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

- 5.1 Teaching and Learning resources
- 5.2 Physical resources
- 5.3 Human support resources
- 5.4 Student support



5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study program.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study program.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study program.*

- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study program and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study program, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

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5.1	Teaching and Learning resources
5.2	Physical resources
5.3	Human support resources
5.4	Student support

Information provided in documents, the virtual tour and other video material and discussion with the program team, support staff indicate that all relevant standards are met, and this impression was confirmed by students with experience of related programmes.

5.1 Teaching and Learning Resources

Teaching and learning resources are available to students via a very well resourced library, and the virtual learning environment (Moodle) provides a convenient mechanism by which students can access resources relevant to each course. The librarian who is most closely involved with the program works closely with the academic staff to ensure that resources are allocated and made accessible to students in a way that meets current and future learning needs of the programme and provides very good support for students. Access to teaching and learning resources is also facilitated by appropriate technical and IT support.

5.2. Physical resources

Although it was not possible for the EEC to observe the physical resources in person, the video material provided shows that the physical resources required by the program are of a very high standard and should be capable of supporting expected student numbers. The university has a clear commitment to meeting the current and future needs of student learners, as indicated by a willingness to recruit new staff and expand resources if student numbers increase. Information about available resources appears to be clearly communicated to students through various channels, including course information, library staff and the website.

The presence of a rehabilitation centre embedded within the subject area ensures that staff and students are able to see at first hand how the curriculum of program relates directly to clinical practice. It will also provide opportunities for some students to undertake clinically relevant research for their dissertations.

5.3. and 5.4 Human support resources and Student Support

There is considerable overlap between these two sections so they are taken together.

The staff resources for student support include an appropriate range of tutors, well-qualified administrative staff and students have access to a range of support including psychological support, support for use of library resources and support for development of research.

Both academic and support staff interviewed showed a good level of awareness of the importance of flexibility in adapting to the learning and assessment needs of a diverse population and students with individual needs. There is specific support for students with disabilities, ensuring that appropriate adjustments can be made when these are needed.

The program is not limited to applicants from a specific professional route, and the MSc is viewed as a potential step on the pathway to PhD study as well as supporting advanced professional practice. This is in line with the general approach that encourages mobility within and across higher education systems.

The students who met with the EEC were very positive about the support available to them and all indications are that staffing levels adjusted to meet student needs as required.

Strengths

- The presence of an in-house rehabilitation centre provides enhanced opportunities for student learning and facilitates integration of academic and clinical knowledge and skill.
- Student support is seen as a particular strength at CUT and we expect that this will be the case for the new programme as it begins.
- The EEC was especially impressed by the unusual level of research support offered to students by the Research and Program Office.
- The allocation of a specific subject librarian facilitates an excellent level of support for students and facilitates access to the necessary literature and study resources.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC did not identify any obvious shortcomings in the learning resources and student support.

The previously mentioned support for students undertaking research could be further enhanced by involving students in the process of applying for ethical approval. Our understanding is that students are not currently involved in applications for ethical approval, but this is a key research skill so this seems to be a missed opportunity for learning. We recommend that the program team and university should consider the feasibility of involving students in this process in order to ensure that they develop an understanding of the processes and policies relating to ethical research practices.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



C. Conclusions and final remarks

The EEC is happy to recommend the establishment of the MSc program in Sciences in Developmental Communication Disorders. We do so on the basis of our evaluation of the accreditation report of the program and on interviews that took place during the remote site visit on the 27th of July 2020. We have made some recommendations for potential enhancement of the program and hope that the program team will find these suggestions constructive will consider them carefully.

The EEC concludes that the MSc program in Sciences in Developmental Communication Disorders will form an important addition to existing programs, as a sister program to the MSc in Cognitive Neurorehabilitation that is already established. The need for speech therapists educated at masters level in the field of developmental speech and language disorders was reflected in our discussions with the students, and can also be concluded from the description of the labour market. Furthermore, this masters program may lead to an increase in the number of post graduate PhD students in this field, which is viewed as highly beneficial by the EEC members.

The EEC concludes that this program will be delivered by teachers of very high quality. It commends the opportunities for staff to undertake research, and especially the availability of support in applying for research funding. The description of the courses provided in the documentation, in particular the information about teaching methodology and assessment, prompted the committee to seek more information about the expected Masters level aspects of the program. The discussions with the program coordinator and the academic staff team reassured the EEC that these masters level attributes will be integrated within the courses, but this was less clearly articulated in the documentation. We are confident that the premises and facilities (library, computer labs, teaching rooms, research facilities, clinic) are good. Quality assurance is in place, but might be presented a little better to ensure that information is readily accessible. Student support appears to be excellent. These considerations lead to the final positive recommendation by the EEC that the MSc Program in Sciences in Developmental Communication Disorders should be accredited and start operation as soon as possible. We hope that the programme will flourish and make a positive contribution to society in Cyprus and further afield.



D. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Janet Beck	
Kristiane Van Lierde	
Roel Jonkers	
Antoniou Prokopsis	

Date: 3-8-2020