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Date: 24/10/2020

External Evaluation Report (E-learning program of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
European University Cyprus (EUC)
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School of Humanities,
Social and Educational Sciences
- **Department/ Sector:** Department of Social and
Behavioral Sciences
- **Program of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Ψυχολογία, 4 Έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο, Εξ Αποστάσεως

In English:

Psychology, 4 years, 240 ECTS, B.Sc., Distance
Learning

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek (operating) and
English (new)
- **Program's status:** Currently Operating



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





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

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

On 20/10/2020, a preliminary meeting of the EEC took place, in which first observations and comments on the application were exchanged and a briefing by the CYQAA officer was received.

The site visit took place on 21/10/2020. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the visit was run remotely, following this schedule:

10:00 – 10:10

- A brief introduction of the members of the External Evaluation Committee

10:10 – 10:40

- A meeting with the Rector - Head of the Institution and the Vice Rector of Academic Affairs: short presentation of the Institution
- A meeting with the members of the Internal Evaluation Committee

10:40 – 10:50

- A meeting with the Head of the department and the program's Coordinator.
Short presentation of the School's / Department's structure

10:50 – 11:50

- The program's standards, admission criteria for prospective students, the learning outcomes and ECTS, the content and the persons involved in the program's design and development

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12:00 – 13:00

- A meeting with members of the teaching staff on each course for all the years of study (QA session).
 - Discussion on the CVs (i.e. academic qualifications, publications, research interests, research activity, compliance with Staff ESG), on any other duties in the institution and teaching obligations in other programs.
 - Discussion on the content of each course and its implementation (i.e., methodologies, selected bibliography, students' workload, compliance with Teaching ESG).
 - Discussion on the learning outcomes, the content and the assessment of each course and their compliance with the level of the program according to the EQF.
 - Discussion on assessment criteria, samples of final exams or other teaching material and resources.
 - Distance learning component of the program.

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14:00 – 14:40

- A meeting with students and graduates only

14:40 – 15:00

- A meeting with members of the administrative staff.

15:10 – 15:25

- Discussion on the virtual visit of the premises of the institution (i.e. library, computer labs, teaching rooms, research facilities).

15:25 – 15:50

- A meeting with the Head of the department and the program's Coordinator - exit discussion (questions, clarifications).

15:50 – 16:20

- Live streaming of courses.

The EEC studied the following **materials**:

1. Document: 200.1 -APPLICATION FOR EVALUATION – ACCREDITATION – English
 2. Document: 200.1 -APPLICATION FOR EVALUATION – ACCREDITATION – Greek
 3. DETAILED BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES - Forms 500.1.03 – English
 4. DETAILED BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES - Forms 500.1.03 – Greek
 5. STUDY GUIDES – 200.1.3 – English
 6. STUDY GUIDES – 200.1.3 – Greek
 7. Cover letter
 8. Payment receipt
- + document on the EUC Library
- + virtual tour
- + recorded live streaming session
- + access to two digital courses (one in Greek and one in English)
- + presentations made available on the day of the visit

Evaluation of the EEC process:

The process was very well prepared by the institution and the CYQAA officer did an excellent job in supporting the committee. The documentation received in advance was of good quality and sufficient detail. During the site visit,



staff members gave informative presentations that were well timed, providing the information needed without getting lost in details. The committee also got the opportunity to talk with students as well as administrative staff.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Patricia BIJTTEBIER	academic member + chair	KU Leuven
Lamprini PSYCHOGIOU	academic member	University of Exeter
Teresa GUASCH PASCUAL	academic member	Universitat Oberta de Catalunya
Myrto DEMETRIOU	student representative	University of Cyprus
Chloe YIANNAKOU CONSTANTINIDOU	psychologist	Council of Registration of Psychologists
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
 - (a) sub-areas*
 - (b) standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - (c) some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

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.

Strengths

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

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.

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the program of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the program of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

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 analysed:*
 - *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.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the program and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study program's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study program remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study program are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the program correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study program ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study program?*
- *How does the study program support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study program (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study program analogous to other European programs with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study program (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the program of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study program on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

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.

1.1. (Policy of Quality Assurance)

EUC has formal and publicly available Program Evaluation Review (PER) procedures, in order to ensure that its mission is met through the delivery of its programs, that EUC programs of study comply, on institutional level, with Standards and Guidelines in the European Higher Education Area, and that EUC's programs' structure, content and delivery mode meet stakeholders expectations and needs. The procedures involves collecting input from different stakeholders: (a) students (through Course Evaluation Questionnaires and representation in the Program Committee), (b) alumni (through Alumni Questionnaires, representation in the Advisory Board, and Graduate Employment Reports), (c) administrative staff (through representation in the Program Committee according to the specific administrative needs, if required, (d) professionals through representation in the Advisory Board), (e) faculty members (through participation in the Program Committee). The Program Committee has a central role in the process, continuously monitoring academic and other issues of the program, such as curriculum development, delivery and assessment, students' admission and progress, career paths of alumni, results of student evaluation questionnaires etc. It is expected that every program completes a PER process every five years. However, a Program Committee can initiate a PER report at any time within the five-year period suggesting documented program changes. PER reports, designed by the Program Committee, are successively sent to the department's quality assurance committee, the department council, the school academic committee, the school council, the university quality assurance committee and the senate for further input and final approval.

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

The program is designed with overall objectives (both general and specific) that are line with the institutional strategy and it has explicit intended learning outcomes. The knowledge and skills the program aims at seem to be of the appropriate level to which the program of the study corresponds, according to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).

The program is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' work load, progression and completion, the effectiveness of assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction. The established PER procedures guarantee involvement of students and other stakeholders in the design and further development of the program.

The program has a clear structure. All students must complete the following requirements: 30 ECTS General Education Requirements, 120 ECTS Major Requirements, 72 ECTS Major Electives and 18 ECTS Free Electives. The General Educations Requirements involve courses in communication, academic writing and ethics. The Major Requirements comprise an extensive package of methodological and statistical training (including an undergraduate thesis) and a strong basis of general psychology courses. As Major Electives, a list of 20 courses in various domains of psychology is offered, from which students freely choose 12 courses.

No formal documentation on pass rates, average time to graduate etc. was available. However, according to teaching staff, students' progression through the program occurs very smoothly. Most (if not all) students pass for most (if not all) courses at the end of an academic year, which suggests that the graduation rate for the study program is high compared to other European programs with similar content. The relatively small number of students (max 30/group, max 90 new admissions/year) and the fact that the program mostly attracts mature students (who pursue this degree after having obtained another bachelor's degree already) may be part of an explanation for this.

The expected student work load is documented in detail in the study guides. For each course, expected student work load is in accordance with the number of ECTS allocated. The study guides detail expected numbers of working hours per week. For most courses, 6 ECTS has been allocated and, in accordance with that, expected study load ranges from 150 to 180 hours.

Thus far, the program has been offered in Greek only, limiting the opportunities for international students (other than Greek) to participate. A future plan is, however, to also offer the program in English. (Note that, in addition to this program, based on distance learning, the school also offers two on-campus variants, one in Greek and one in English).

Student feedback is asked for each course each academic year and the results are reviewed by dean and chair person of the department, who discuss the outcome with the instructor. Depending on student feedback, instructors may be encouraged to take additional professional development courses. Student feedback results are also taken into account in the context of instructors' evaluation for promotion purposes.

1.3. (Public information)

Some public information on the program is available on the website: language of instruction, duration, mode of study, number of ECTS, program of study, teaching personnel and work settings of graduates. For other information, prospective students are invited to send an e-mail request or schedule a call.

Staff use social media to share webinars with the public.

1.4. (Information management)

Information management does not seem to be of high priority. The committee has repeatedly asked for clear numbers of student progression, success, drop-out, student satisfaction etc. for both modalities of the bachelor degree, but no detailed or consistent information could be delivered.

Strengths

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

- EUC has formal and publicly available Program Evaluation Review (PER) procedures, and each program is reviewed periodically.
- The program is well-designed and it has a clear structure. It has a solid basis of methodological and statistical training (including an undergraduate thesis) and covers many domains of psychological science (either in the compulsory part or through the electives)
- Students progress smoothly through the program, dropout rates are very low (especially considering it is a distance learning program).
- The expected student work load per course is consistent with the number of ECTS allocated.
- Student feedback is asked for each course each academic year and the results are monitored and used for the optimization of instructors' teaching practice (e.g., by directing him/her to modules of the professional development plan).

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.

- The programme has a good selection of modules/relevant content. However, in the compulsory part, there is an very strong emphasis on cognitive and developmental psychology and less emphasis on other areas (e.g., social psychology, biological/neuropsychology). A more balanced approach could be considered.

- Given that many prospective student do not seem to have a clear picture of the content of the program (e.g., the importance of methodological and statistical training), it would be good to give attention to this in information to prospective students.
- As to program has been offered in Greek only thus far, there are limited opportunities for international students (other than Greek) to participate. This will likely change once the program is offered in English too.
- Depending on specific activities and assignments, work load in some courses is unequally spread over the weeks and there appears to be no coordination of this at the level of the program. As a result of this, in some weeks of specific semesters, the expected numbers of work hours per week are unreasonably high. The committee recommends to coordinate this better, at least for the 'model trajectory' (i.e., the program designed for full-time students with adequate study progression).
- Although student feedback questionnaires are meant to be scheduled each year, only 85% of the course is compliant in this respect (due to time constraints or technical problems). One reason for this may be the instructor is inspected to organize this (instead of the administration of the university, as is more commonly the case).
- The information presented on the webpage is not clear enough. Most of the details of the programme need to be requested by a call or by email. Moreover, it appears the same information for the programme on campus and the one online and there is not a difference either about the language (if you choose the Greek or the English version). We suggest making it clearer for both aspects and especially what it means to study in a distance learning programme. Even in the section of the webpage about distance learning the information is very general and it is not clear the pedagogical model behind this approach. It is also necessary to add the graduate employment information of the program.
- Information management is one of the weakest aspects. Clear numbers of student progression, success, drop-out, student satisfaction for both modalities of the bachelor degree were missing from the documentation provided beforehand but could also not be delivered accurately during the site visit.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular program of study.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*
- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
 - *among students*
 - *between students and teaching staff*
 - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of e-learning 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 e-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

- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on e-learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *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 the 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 e-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.*

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with e-learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
 - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the program, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
 - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
 - ***Weekly schedule of interactive activities and exercises (i.e. simulations, problem solving, scenarios, argumentation)***
 - *Clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
 - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
 - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*
 - *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
 - *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the program according to the EQF.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the nature of the program compatible with e-learning delivery?*
- *How do the program, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- *How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- *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. (Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology)

The e-learning methodology is appropriate to achieve the aims of the program. There is a balance between teleconferences for presentations and discussion sessions to promote students' interaction.

The materials and tools are modern and regularly updated with videos integrated in the activities. In general, the pedagogical approach encourages students to take an active role and the activities are designed with this purpose. Psychology students also highlighted the organisation of the programme (materials, teleconferences, discussions) and the support provided by the teaching staff.

2.2. (Practical training)

The program is almost exclusively theoretical. One exception is PSC400 *Applications in Psychology*, of which the study guide indicates that the course will involve practical application of theoretical concepts through integration of knowledge to relevant case studies. As such, the course aims at giving the students opportunity to explore their professional interests and to develop their practical thinking, vocational skills, self-awareness and critical thinking. This happens through field experience in the community or participation in research activities within the department.

2.3. (Student assessment)

Assessment is carried out in accordance with the stated procedures. Continuous-formative assessment is planned in the courses through self-assessment Exercises/Activities. All the courses follow the same percentage: 50% for assignments/on-going evaluation and 50% final examinations, except in three courses: PSC400 Applications of Psychology which is 75% for evaluation of Field Supervisor and 25% of Written reports; PSC480 Undergraduate Thesis 1 which is 100% written project, and PSC490 Undergraduate thesis II which is 80% written project and 20% presentation.

2.4. (Study guides structure, content and interactive activities)

Study guides are available for each course. They include clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner. Course material is presented, and students' activities are detailed on a weekly basis (including the expected number of working hours). There are also self-assessment exercises and bibliographic references and suggestions for further study. Study guides, material and activities appear to be appropriate for the level of the program according to the EQF.

Strengths

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

- A diverse range of teaching methods is used.
- Students feel that staff is supportive and offers a lot of flexibility (e.g. extending deadlines)
- Study guides include clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner. Students mention that the program is well-organized.
- Marking is done blindly.
- There is an appeal procedure for student's complains regarding grades

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 seems that there are two types of opposite modalities of teaching-learning (teleconferences to “deliver knowledge” and discussion sessions) while they can and should be more interrelated to guarantee students scaffolding and therefore learning. This interrelationship may happen in some of the courses but we do not have clear evidence that there is this purpose in the whole programme. It may need specific coordination in order to guarantee that this approach is part of the whole programme.

- From the information on the course Applications of Psychology, it seems that the practical and theoretical studies are interconnected. However, the course does not involve practical training. Instead, a series of meetings are organized. A concern of the committee is that the practical training to achieve the learning outcomes is all based on meetings and case studies and there isn't any contact with an institution, nor any simulations of different scenarios to tackle the practicum virtually. The university has different labs and even a Simulation room, but they are mainly used for medical programmes (any of the Psychology courses have included them in their planning). The committee would suggest to include any of those approaches (F2F practicum or simulation practices (students could even use the simulation room remotely) to guarantee the learning outcomes planned in the curriculum. Scientific collaborators, especially those who work in practice part-time, can also play a role in enhancing the practical skills training in the program.
- Marking is done by one member of staff. It would be advisable that a small percentage could be double marked. It would have been good if some samples of feedback forms would have been presented, as well as an overview of quality of feedback and consistency among markers. Also it would be good to provide more information on assessment/marketing criteria so that students get to know why they got the marks they got and how to improve in the future. Monitoring stats on grades/marks over years and among modules would be helpful to safeguard norm constancy in evaluation.
- In the general information for the accreditation of the programme it is mentioned that continuous-formative assessment and feedback are provided to the students regularly. However there is no evidence of how feedback to assignments in the courses is planned and provided. We suggest that if continuous formative assessment wants to be guaranteed it is necessary to plan and provide to the students when the feedback will be provided for each assignment and what is expected from the students to do with it in order that it becomes really formative.
- Self- assessment activities defined in each study guide are mainly individual and there are some assignments that students can choose to perform individually or in groups. Also, group Consultation Meetings are planned. There are two areas of improvement here: 1) to include the assessment criteria in the study guides specifically for the assignments (what do students need to take into account? 2) to include details of the feedback for the assignments (when it will be provided and what it is expected from the students?).

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Partially compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	Compliant

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.*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *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:

- *Is the teaching staff qualified to teach in the e-learning program of study?*
- *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 analysed 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.

3.1. (teaching staff recruitment and development)

Selection committees are responsible for the recruitment and selection of teaching staff. Recruitment occurs through an interview procedure and a demo lecture. For non-permanent staff, teaching is evaluated semester by semester (with contracts on a term to term basis). EUC established a professional development plan, with three levels: Initial (for newly hired faculty), Ongoing and Ad-hoc (for innovative interventions).

3.2. (teaching staff number and status)

Teaching staff consists of 24 persons, of whom 3 associate professors, 4 assistant professors, 3 lecturers, 1 senior instructor, 10 scientific collaborators and 3 special scientists. Scientific collaborators hold a PhD degree, special scientists can be master degree holders.

3.3. (synergies of teaching and research)

Teaching staff studies and publications are related to the courses they teach in the program. Teaching load is closely monitored (with a cap). Faculty staff can get reduction of teaching hours on the basis of participation in research projects, authoring of books or by accumulation of research points.

Strengths

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

- Teaching staff have research expertise in the area they are teaching.
- All staff members continue to have professional development.
- A peer review system is in place for teaching.
- The programme team is enthusiastic and displays high levels of ownership.
- EUC has the Executive Training Center fully equipped with all the latest technology in audio-visual aids and was developed with the objective to cater to the needs of University faculty, for in-house training of University personnel, for holding executive seminars and for executive training of outside clients. There is also a team of Pedagogical Planning of Distance Education programs of study engaged in: monitoring and evaluating the existing programs; pedagogical planning of new programs; the design and evaluation of educational material; feedback process to the students; the pedagogical use of technology, Internet and digital information; the training, mentoring and support of teachers; the interaction between instructors and students.

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.

- In order to save resources, the committee suggests to drop the English variant of the on campus program, once the distance learning program is offered in both Greek and English.
- The committee has no clear view on the percentage of teaching delivered by permanent staff versus scientific collaborators, but there is the clear recommendation to ensure sufficient teaching involvement of the permanent staff. Also, to ensure continuity and experience building, it would be good if scientific collaborators can get the opportunity to teach courses in several consecutive semesters.
- The transference of Executive Training Center and the team of Pedagogical Planning of Distance Education into the design of the courses can be better monitored to guarantee the implementation of innovative methods into them.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	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, processes and criteria

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. (student admission)

Student admission requirements are pre-defined and publicly available. To be considered for admission, applicants must have completed a secondary (high) school education or twelve years of study, or hold a bachelor's degree for post-graduate study. Applications for admission, together with the applicant's credentials, are examined and evaluated by the Office of Admissions, which makes the final decision for the application. Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.

4.2. (student progression)

Pre-defined regulations regarding student progression are in place. Student who fail a course, have achieved a total grade in the range of 50-59 and have no outstanding incomplete grade have a right to resist the final exam.

4.3. (student recognition)

Pre-defined regulations regarding student recognition are in place. Students who have started their higher education elsewhere and wish to apply for admission to EUC as transfer students can apply for transfer of credits. Transfer of credits can be applied as parallel credit (if the previous course involves at least the same amount of class time and has approximately the same content as the EUC variant) or as an elective (if the course is sufficiently related to the student's academic program and career goal).

4.4. (student certification)

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. The Diploma Supplement follows the model developed by the European Commission, Council of Europe and UNESCO/CEPES. It details the program completed and the individual grades/marks/credits obtained.

Strengths

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

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.

- The committee suggests to provide information/stats about progression etc. e.g., number of students who fail; number of students who graduate with first class degree, what career paths students follow.

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

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

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

- *Weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The e-learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
 - *Simulations in virtual environments*
 - *Problem solving scenarios*
 - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
 - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
 - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
 - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for e-learning, which is responsible for the support of the e-learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*
- *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 e-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.

5.1. (Teaching and Learning resources)

Online resources are available for students and staff. The library has over 47,000 titles in print and over 300,000 in electronic form. It subscribes to a great number of databases and the library's online access public catalogue is accessible by all students and staff members. The Library has a repository, which was established for the purpose of gathering preserving and distributing original research material produced by the EUC faculty and researchers.

Students have access to documents and tools (text or multimedia) taken from the various sources, and/or created by the students themselves. Lectures delivered by staff are recorded. Students have the opportunity to see the videos at their convenience. It's a flexible approach, especially for some groups of students (e.g., students with families, students in employment).

5.2. (Physical resources)

Data from the virtual tour show that the European University of Cyprus has good building infrastructure and offers a range of facilities (classrooms, cultural centres, auditoriums, cafes, athletic centres, emergency unit, the general psychology and psychotherapy lab, the observation testing room, the therapy room, lab used for psychological assessment).

5.3. (Human support resources)

The specialized administrative staff members provide students with support and information with regards to course enrolment, registration, payment of tuition fees, and students' professional development.

The university offers psychological and counselling services to students and staff. It also provides support for students with special needs.

The university provides guidance on self-development, job placement and enhances students' employability through the development of competencies (e.g., teamwork, communication and language skills).

5.4. (Student support)

Students have an advisor who provides guidance on the selection of courses for each semester by advising and providing information on the academic and personal issues through their studies. In addition, the advisor provides guidance on students' educational goals that are consonant with their academic abilities, skills, interests and needs. The advisor also provides information on the university's policies and regulations.

If students don't progress satisfactorily they are allocated to a member of staff who provides further guidance/tutoring.

Strengths

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

- Provision of online learning environment to distribute materials and encourage collaboration and interaction. In addition, the university has good building infrastructure and range of facilities within campus.
- There are online resources that are available for students and staff. The library has resources in electronic form that are available to staff members and students.
- Administrative staff members provide students with support and information. The university offers psychological and counselling services to students and staff, and also support for students with special needs.
- The university provides guidance of students' employability e.g., organises career fairs.
- Mentors provide students with support and guidance on academic and personal issues throughout their studies.

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.

- Although simulation activities are part of the methods considered in the university's pedagogical model, we do not have evidence that are included in the programme.

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

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

D. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the program of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

The bachelor of psychology program, distance learning, has several notable strengths.

- The program is well-designed and it has a clear structure. It has a solid basis of methodological and statistical training (including an undergraduate thesis) and covers many domains of psychological science (either in the compulsory part or through the electives)
- The materials and tools are modern and regularly updated with videos integrated in the activities. In general, the pedagogical approach encourages students to take an active role and the activities are designed with this purpose. Psychology students also highlighted the organisation of the programme (materials, teleconferences, discussions) and the support provided by the teaching staff.
- Study guides are available for each course. They include clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner.
- The programme team is enthusiastic and displays high levels of ownership. Teaching staff have research expertise in the area they are teaching and all members continue to have professional development.

Nevertheless, the committee would like to give some recommendations for further improvement.

- The program is very theoretical. A concern of the committee is that the practical training to achieve the learning outcomes is all based on meetings and case studies and there isn't any contact with an institution, nor any simulations of different scenarios to tackle the practicum virtually. The university has different labs and even a Simulation room. The committee strongly recommends to include any of those approaches (F2F practicum or simulation practices (students could even use the simulation room remotely) to guarantee the learning outcomes planned in the curriculum. Scientific collaborators, especially those who work in practice part-time, can also play a role in enhancing the practical skills training in the program.
- In the compulsory part of the program, there is a very strong emphasis on cognitive and developmental psychology and less emphasis on other areas (e.g., social psychology, biological/neuropsychology). A more balance approach could be considered.
- Depending on specific activities and assignments, work load in some courses is unequally spread over the weeks. The committee recommends to coordinate this better, at least for the 'model trajectory'.
- The information presented on the webpage is not clear enough. Most of the details of the programme need to be requested by a call or by email.
- Information management is one of the weakest aspects. Clear numbers of student progression, success, drop-out, student satisfaction for both modalities of the bachelor degree were missing from the documentation provided beforehand but could also not be delivered accurately during the site visit. The committee suggests to provide information/stats about progression etc. e.g., number of students who fail; number of students who graduate with first class degree, what career paths students follow.
- In order to save resources, the committee suggests to consider dropping the English variant of the on campus program, once the distance learning program is offered in both Greek and English.



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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION





E. Signatures of the EEC

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Date: 24/10/2020