

Doc. 300.3.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

(Departmental)

Date: 24/6/2022

- Higher Education Institution: **University of Cyprus**
- Town: Nicosia
- School/Faculty: **Faculty of Humanities**
- Department: **French and European Studies**
- Programme(s) of study under evaluation
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)
- **(No programs were evaluated under this
Departmental evaluation)**

Programme 1

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

Programme 2

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

Programme 3

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

- **Department's Status:** Choose status



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



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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. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the Department in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.3.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*



1. Department's academic profile and orientation

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning**
- 1.2 Connecting with society**
- 1.3 Development processes**

EEC's comments /Recommendation

The Department of French and European Studies is clearly understaffed, and this issue makes it difficult to exploit the richness of its cultural offer, particularly innovative and promising in a multicultural society. Medium and long-term goals should consider this necessity, in order to enhance the attractiveness and the dimension of the Department itself.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

After the evaluation procedure, three new positions were allocated to the Department of Department of French and European Studies:

A position in European studies (Senate session 12/2020), which has already been published. The selection Committee has also been chosen by the Senate (03 March 202, see annexed Document).

Two other new positions are to be published soon (French and European Literature and Translation Studies).

They have both been approved by the Senate on 09 June 2021 (see annexed Documents).

EEC's comments /Recommendation

The Department application states p. 63 that "There is no specific procedure for monitoring the professional development of graduates. It is expected in the near future that the Alumni Office will develop a specific policy for the process and mechanisms for monitoring their professional development". We were informed during the onsite visit that the data processing is now systematic and provided by the Alumni office. As this kind of data is extremely useful to assess well targeted strategic plans, we strongly recommend that it is clearly published in the Department website.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

The Department of French and European Studies wishes to specify that when the application was filed there was no activated University procedure for monitoring the professional development of graduates.

The Department, however, has been compiling its own list for a long time now and is in the process of updating it after the coronavirus lockdown.

It will be soon published on the Department of French and European Studies website and updated semesterly.

EEC's comments /Recommendation

Additional teaching staff would be required to carry on the good results of the Department. In particular, teaching staff in languages different than French and English would be in line with the European mission of the Department. The German language teaching, for example, relies on one single professor, who must ensure the whole program of German. Furthermore, as it was said by the previous evaluation, it would be wise for a long-term planning that the Department widens its perspectives towards more languages and cultures. Although aware of the small dimensions of the Department, we think that having a wider program would probably help to attract more students. The teaching staff is well qualified both for teaching than for research. However, the selection and upgrading procedures are controlled only by internal committees, and this might become, in long-term perspective, an issue to be tackled.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

The Department is fully aware of the necessity to widen its perspectives towards more European languages and cultures.

The previously published positions as well as all the new positions take this parameter into consideration. They include German and another European language in the required qualifications.

As for the Romanic dimension of the program, the Department is deliberately aware of these suggestions, which it will take into consideration provided that the number of interested students rises. For the time being, however, considering the official numbers of Cyprus-wide registered public schools' pupils in the above-mentioned languages (see annexed Document), neither the University nor the Department can develop such tracks. The teaching staff will be further enhanced in the German language provided that the number of interested students rises. In 2021, in all the Cypriot public schools only 21 students in total chose the German language among the 1,229 who chose to study foreign languages other than English.

As for the selection and upgrading system procedures, they never involve exclusively internal committees. There is in fact a mixed procedure established by the University of Cyprus for all selection and upgrading committees, where the committees comprise both internal and external members (2 or 3 external members, out of 5, depending on the academic rank).

**PART III – ELECTION IN THE RANKS OF ASSISTANT
PROFESSOR AND LECTURER**

Official Gazette,
Suppl. III(I):
6.4.2001.

7. - (1) For the purposes of election in the ranks of Assistant Professor and Lecturer, the Senate shall appoint a Special Committee.

Appointment of
Special Committee.
Official Gazette,
Suppl. III(I):
6.4.2001.

(2) The Committee shall consist of two external advisers of the same or related field of study, being university professors and coming from universities of two foreign countries and of three internal advisers, one of whom shall be designated as Chairman of the Committee.

**PART II – ELECTION IN THE RANKS OF PROFESSOR
AND ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR**

Official Gazette,
Suppl. III(I):
6.4.2001.

4. - (1) The Senate shall appoint a Special Committee for every election in the ranks of Professor and Associate Professor.

Appointment of
Special Committee.
Official Gazette,
Suppl. III(I):
6.4.2001.

(2) The Committee shall consist of three external advisers of the same or related field of study, being university professors and coming from universities of at least two foreign countries and of two internal advisers, one of whom shall be designated by the Senate as Chairman of the Committee.

Source: http://ucy.ac.cy/documents/UniversityLaw/ucy_Statutes.pdf

EEC's comments /Recommendation

This program should be widened (as it was suggested in the previous evaluation) and embrace the Mediterranean culture in its whole. The Department lacks courses in Italian and Spanish languages and literatures, as well as Romanian. This is recommended as a long-term goal. The teaching staff needs to be enhanced, in the first place in the European Studies program and in the German language.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

The Department takes this long-term recommendation very seriously. It has already mentioned the Greek, French, and English languages in the published positions, adding that the "knowledge of German or another European language will constitute an additional advantage".

As for the widening of the program and the comment that "The Department lacks courses in Italian and Spanish languages and literatures, as well as Romanian", the Department wishes to reiterate that although it is deliberately aware of these suggestions, it can take them into consideration only provided that the number of interested students rises. At least for the time being, considering the official numbers of Cyprus-wide registered public schools' pupils in the above-mentioned languages (see annexed Document), neither the University nor the Department can develop such tracks.

2. Quality Assurance

Sub-areas

- 2.1 System and quality assurance strategy**
- 2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study**

EEC's comments /Recommendation

The Quality of Research should be more clearly assessed, particularly when it is related to the teaching process (participation of students to research programs) and the teaching outcomes (in the didactic of French language, for example).

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

Although the Humanities generally suffer from a lack of funding and have less of opportunities to pursue research projects, the Department of French and European Studies has been praised by the University for succeeding in obtaining various research programs, both internal and European. In all these programs, students actively participate as paid research assistants and very often publish papers related to this experience. These participations are assessed in the CVs of the Departmental academic staff.

As to the didactics of French language, graduate and postgraduate students are asked to participate in the research process in various ways. They learn to design lesson plans, pedagogical material, curricula, and conduct research based on school placements and teaching. They are also asked to compile bibliographies, write comments on scholarly articles, draw questionnaires, create and evaluate interviews. Finally, postgraduate students are strongly encouraged to participate in conferences and publish in peer-reviewed journals. These participations are assessed in the CVs of the Departmental academic staff.

3. Administration

EEC's comments /Recommendation

It seems very necessary to recruit another secretary.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

The Department has repeatedly informed the University about the necessity of recruiting a second secretary in order to handle 2 Majors, 2 Minors, 2 Master's degrees and 2 Doctoral degrees, with different language requirements. All its previous Chairpersons have underlined the reasons for such a request. Despite various assurances that this request will be met nothing has been done so far.

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

EEC's comments/Recommendation

In the presentation of its BA and MA programs the Department could make much more clear how it fills in the didactical aim of 'student centred' teaching. The MA European studies really needs one or two modules in the field of EU administration and/or EU policy making.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

Having relatively small classes in most of the courses, the instructors encourage learners to take initiatives in the frame of student-centered procedures.

- Shifting from whole-class instruction to small-group and individual inquiry.
- Promoting collaborative work rather than keeping learners busy with individual work.
- Encouraging and facilitating learners' shared decision-making with projects.
- Encouraging to participate in various competitions which promote creativity (AMOPA Contest).
- Focusing on topics of current interest and creating inquiry into those areas.
- Reading and using authentic materials and scholarly articles rather than exclusively textbooks and basal readers.
- Promoting the undertaking of internships and performances within the undergraduate and postgraduate courses to be better prepared for their future professional roles.
- Using of a progressive approach, with multiple teaching methods and pedagogical styles, based on positive pedagogy principles and aiming at embracing as much as possible all students.
- Using formative evaluation.
- Giving comprehensive feedback on students' written productions and projects, such as audiovisual feedback while screen casting their production.

- Offering in both tracks (French Studies and European Studies) a wide range of very diverse courses in order to 1) meet the students' needs in matters of knowledge as well as skills and 2) to offer them at the bachelor's level a well-rounded and strong base in their field before they choose their specialization in Master.
- Planning of cultural, ecological, research activities outside the University so that the students will have the opportunity to experience real-life environments.

Regarding the need to have "one or two modules in the field of EU administration and/or EU policy making" in the MA in European Studies, the Department fully agrees and intends to apply these suggestions when the new colleague in European Studies will be appointed.

5. Teaching Staff

EEC's comments /Recommendation

Besides the problematic number of staff, the recruitment of new staff takes too much time: minimal 2 years! This may well be partially the effect of the University's appointment procedure, but the Department could be more flexible in terms of the date of appointment and not wait until September to bring in the selected candidate. Another point would be the distribution of the specific disciplinary competences with regard to new staff, given the content of the programs the Department would like to offer in the near future.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

If the recruitment of new staff sometimes exceeds the standard period of eight to ten months for various reasons (unavailability of external members, medical reasons, holiday intervals, etc.), it has to be underlined that it is altogether exceptional. In the particular domain of the appointing dates, the Department has no such flexibility since the matter falls normally outside its jurisdiction.

6. Research

EEC's comments /Recommendation

The researchers in the Department work mainly alone: it could be interesting to elaborate a platform through which they could meet and exchange on a regular basis even if their fields are quite different.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

As the researchers in the Department were more numerous in the past, and because their respective fields often overlapped, it is a fact that they collaborated more frequently, participating in conferences, scientific events, collective volumes, etc., organized by their colleagues.

A platform through which the present and future academics could meet and exchange on a regular basis even if their fields are today quite different would indeed be very promising.

7. Resources

EEC's comments /Recommendation

An increase of the budget is necessary to recruit new lecturers and professors and to create new courses which would satisfy the present students and attract new ones.

Response of the Department of French and European Studies



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The three ongoing new positions in the Department will help the creation of new courses, satisfy the present students and surely attract new ones. However, the recruitment resources are exclusively managed at the Senate level and not at the Departmental budget level.

The Department will convey this recommendation to the University higher levels.

B. onclusions and final remarks

Response of the Department of French and European Studies

The Department warmly thanks the evaluation committee for its very constructive insight, understanding and remarks. They will certainly form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of our Department will be achieved.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Position</i> | <i>Signature</i> |
|-----------------------------|--|------------------|
| Fryni Kakoyianni Doa | Chair of the department | |
| Yiannis Ioannou | Member of the department's internal Evaluation Committee | |
| May Chehab | Member of the department's internal Evaluation Committee | |
| FullName | Position | |
| FullName | Position | |
| FullName | Position | |

Date: 8/7/2021