ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

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

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Doc. 300.3.1

Date: 07-07-2021

External Evaluation Report
(Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

  University of Nicosia

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **School/Faculty:** School of Humanities and Social Sciences

- **Department:** Department of Social Sciences

- **Department's Status:** Currently operating

- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation:**
  Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

  Programme 1
  In Greek:
  Programme Name
  In English:
  BSc Psychology (4-years, 240 ECTS, first cycle)

  Programme 2
  In Greek:
  Programme Name
  In English:
  MSc Clinical Psychology (3-years, 180 ECTS, second cycle)

  Programme 3
  In Greek:
  Programme Name
  In English:

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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].

Department's programmes (to be filled by the CYQAA officer and verified by the EEC):

DEPARTMENT	PROGRAMMES OF STUDY
	BSc Psychology (+ DL)
	BSc Social Work
	MSc Clinical Psychology
	MSc Counseling Psychology
	MSc Criminology (+ DL)
	MSc Educational Psychology (+DL)
	MSc School Psychology
	MSc Social Work (+ DL)
	PhD in Psychology
	PhD in Criminology

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A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

Restrictions due to the COVID-19 pandemic have made it impossible to physically visit the facility. Instead, on July 1 and 2, 2021, virtual meetings were carried out with the following program:

Day 1

10:00 – 10:10

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

[10 minutes]

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

[15 minutes]

·   A meeting with the members of the Internal Evaluation Committee

[15 minutes]

10:40 – 11:20

·   A meeting with the Head of the relevant department.
    Short presentation of the School's / Department's structure

[40 minutes]

Maximum duration of presentation: 15´   Discussion: 25´

11:20 – 11:30

·   *Coffee Break*   *[10 minutes]*

11:30 – 12:30

Programme 1: BSc Psychology

·   The programme's standards, admission criteria for prospective students, the learning outcomes and ECTS, the content and the persons involved in the programme's design and development   *[60 minutes]*

Maximum duration of presentation: 20´   Discussion: 40´

12:30 – 13:30

·   *Lunch Break*   *[60 minutes]*

13:30 - 14:30

- A meeting with members of the teaching staff on each course for all the years of study (QA session).

    o 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 programmes.

    o Discussion on the content of each course and its implementation (i.e., methodologies, selected bibliography, students' workload, compliance with Teaching ESG).

    o Discussion on the learning outcomes, the content and the assessment of each course and their compliance with the level of the programme according to the EQF.

    o Discussion on assessment criteria, samples of final exams or other teaching material and resources.

[60 minutes]

14:30 - 14:40

- *Coffee Break* **[10 minutes]**

14:40 – 15:10

- A meeting with students and graduates only (5 – 15 participants).

[30 minutes]

15:10 – 15:30

- A meeting with members of the administrative staff.

[20 minutes]

15:30 – 15:45

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

[15 minutes]

15:45 – 16:10

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

[25 minutes]

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16:10 – 16:40

· Live streaming of courses.

[30 minutes]

In addition, the evaluation is based on the following materials:

- Application for departmental evaluation (date of submission: 24.06.2019)
- Presentations from Zoom meetings (July 1 and 2, 2021 and additional information in line with the committee's request
- Videos: Virtual tour of the university; KESY; Psychology labs
- Course recordings (PSY-240 Abnormal Psychology; PSYC-510 Child Psychopathology)

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B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Prof. Ute GABRIEL	Academic member; Chair	Norwegian University of Science and Technology, Trondheim, Norway
Prof. Roshan DAS NAIR	Academic member	University of Nottingham, UK
Prof. Patricia BIJTTEBIER	Academic member	KU Leuven, Belgium
Chloe Yiannakou CONSTANTINIDES	Representative from the Professional Association	University
Maria CHRISTOFOROU	Student representative	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Name	Position	University

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C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

● *The external evaluation report refers to the Department as a whole (programmes offered, teaching staff, administrative staff, infrastructure, resources, etc.).*

● *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas and sub-areas.*

● *Under each assessment area there are quality indicators (criteria) to be scored by the EEC on a scale from one (1) to five (5), based on the degree of compliance for the above mentioned quality indicators (criteria). The scale used is explained below:*

> *1 or 2:   Non-compliant*
>
> *3:   Partially compliant*
>
> *4 or 5:   Compliant*

● *The EEC must justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.*

● *It is pointed out that, in the case of indicators (criteria) that cannot be applied due to the status of the Department, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the Department's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality indicator.*

● *In addition, for each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - 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 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.**

● *The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.*

1. Department's academic profile and orientation
(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas
1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis) 1.2 Connecting with society 1.3 Development processes

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria	
1. Department's academic profile and orientation	
1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)	**1 - 5**
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	**5**
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	**4**
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	**3**
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	**5**
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Department's development strategies.	**4**
1.1.6	Stakeholders such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Department's development strategy.	**4**
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Department's academic development is adequate and effective.	**5**

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The Department's mission statement is not yet accessible on the English version of the Department's homepage. However, the Department's mission statement is in line with the University's vision and mission statement, which is publicly accessible.

The Department has a specified strategic plan with prioritized goals in four key areas, Brand, Student learning and Services, Research, Professional community engagement, and two supporting areas, People and culture, Revenue generation. The strategic planning is not sufficiently differentiated with reference to immediate, short-term and long-term priorities. Also, it remains unclear how the prioritized goals are aligned with the results of the SWOT analysis. Developing a clearer structure of what quantifiable goals should be achieved and how and by when, could be helpful.

Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.
2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

Programmes of study offered by the Department (BSc in psychology [on-site and distant learning programs] and in social work, MSc in Clinical Psychology, in Counselling Psychology, in Criminology [on-site and distant learning programs], Educational/School Psychology, Social Work [on-site and distant learning programs] Educational Psychology [distant learning program] , PhD in Psychology, PhD in Criminology] are sufficiently coherent and compatible. A significant part of the teaching staff contributes to more than one program of study.

It would be beneficial to demonstrate more inter-departmental research and teaching activities, which may offer students added value by mixing with other students and staff.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

not applicable

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.2 Connecting with society		1 - 5
1.2.1	The Department has effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities.	4
1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	5

1.2.3	The Department ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	5
1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The Department is in contact with various stakeholders and contributes to the community in large, both academically and professionally. The Department's Centre for Research and Counselling Services (KESY) provides services to the community.

Mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society are in place, but their efficiency cannot be conclusively assessed.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.3 Development processes		1 - 5
1.3.1	Effective procedures and measures are in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure that they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach, carry out research and effectively carry out their work.	5
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	4
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	4
1.3.4	The funding processes for the operation of the Department and the continuous improvement of the quality of its programmes of study are adequate and transparent.	n/a

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The professional development plan seems very focused on pedagogical development. While this is an important prerequisite for providing attractive study programs, other equally important moments should not be lost sight of : to ensure the future quality of the study programmes, staff need to have time to keep their expertise uptodate and to pursue research. These aspects could be worked out more clearly in the department's academic development plan.

The EEC has no insight into the funding processes for the operation of the Department.

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Additionally, write:

- Expected number of Cypriot and international students

- Countries of origin of international students and number from each country

According to the application, the Department expects 80 Cypriot students and 100 international students per year. However, due to the pandemic, the number of international students has dropped recently.

Forty percent of the students in the undergraduate programs are international students, with the majority (70 to 80%) being Greek and the others coming from a variety of countries across the globe.

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

This is a well-run unit. There is a clear and transparent allocation of responsibilities. The Department has a dedicated team that gave the EEC the impression that they have analysed their current situation well and have a good understanding of how the Department can be developed further.

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

- Very committed staff, who appear appropriately qualified to undertake the teaching and research for the courses inspected.
- Staff have experiences of working at multiple institutions, especially international experience, which they can adapt to the local context
- Very good academic support for students
- Well-documented procedures with reference to teaching
- The Department offers courses that are part of several programs. This is not only cost-effective for teaching staff but also brings interesting opportunities for interdisciplinary student contacts.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Based on the notes provided above, the EEC's recommendations are:
- Develop the Department's strategic planning and add a strategic action plan
- Revisit the professional development plan and ensure academic and pedagogical development
- Consider establishing more links with other Departments within the School and with other Schools within the University
- Increase the number and scale of international collaboration for teaching and research (e.g., by having more visiting faculty, student and staff exchange programmes, etc.)

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

Sub-area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	Compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	Compliant
1.3 Development processes	Compliant

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2. Quality Assurance
(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8)

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

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3:   Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria	
2. Quality Assurance	
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	**1 - 5**
2.1.1	The Department has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of the Institution's strategic management.	**4**
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	**5**
2.1.3	The Department's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.	**5**
2.1.4	The quality assurance system adequately covers all the functions and sectors of the Department's activities:	
	2.1.4.1 Teaching and learning	**5**
	2.1.4.2 Research	**5**
	2.1.4.3 The connection with society	**5**
	2.1.4.4 Management and support services	**5**
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	**5**

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2.1.6	Students' evaluation and feedback	4-5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The Department's policy for quality assurance is not publicly available.

The Department considers faculty, students and administrators to be the core stakeholders. The involvement of external stakeholders in the development and implementation of the quality assurance policy is not clearly addressed; the involvement of healthcare providers or patients is not mentioned.

The evaluation of 2.1.3 to 2.1.5 is based on an understanding that the Department's policy for quality reflects the latest version of the European Standards and Guidelines of 2015 (as stated in the application) and on the University's booklet on Institutional Values & Code of Practice.

Several mechanisms to collect students' evaluation and feedback are in place. However, it remains somewhat unclear how feedback is acted on or communicated back to the students.

2. Quality Assurance	
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study	**1 - 5**
2.2.1	The responsibility for decision-making and monitoring the implementation of the programmes of study offered by the Department lies with the teaching staff.	5
2.2.2	The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Department are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	5
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective, which have been presented and discussed.	4
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	5
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	5
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	5
2.2.7	The Department publishes information related to the programmes of study, credit units, learning outcomes, methodology, student admission criteria,	5

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	completion of studies, facilities, number of teaching staff and the expertise of teaching staff.		
2.2.8	Names and position of the teaching staff of each programme are published and easily accessible.		5
2.2.9	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.		5
2.2.10	The Department flexibly uses a variety of teaching methods.		5
2.2.11	The Department systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.		5
2.2.12	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.		3
2.2.13	The Department ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and/or international practices, particularly:		
	2.2.12.1	Building facilities	5
	2.2.12.2	Library	5
	2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	5
	2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	5
	2.2.12.5	Academic support	5
2.2.14	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.		5
2.2.15	The Department's mechanisms, processes and infrastructure consider the needs of a diverse student population such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities.		5
2.2.16	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.		5
2.2.17	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.		3
2.2.18	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff, enables continuous and effective feedback to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.		4

2.2.19	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.	4
2.2.20	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Grade employment information is not accessible on the English version of the Department's homepage. The University's Career Success Center offers services to all recent graduates.

The evaluation of the University's facilities is based on videos of the campus in general and the teaching and learning facilities of the department.

The University's *Code of Practice and Regulations for Doctoral Programmes* and the *PhD-Handbook* are not accessible on the English version of the University's homepage.

The Department has limited funds to support doctoral candidates' participation in conferences and seminars.

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

Quality assurance procedures have been developed. All programs are reviewed periodically. This monitoring system has been established at different levels; academic staff and students are represented.

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

- High degree of student involvement
- The Centre for Research and Counselling Services (KESY) is a clear strength as it provides valuable learning experiences

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- Grade employment information and PhD related information should be made accessible.

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

Sub-area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant

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

3. Administration
(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3:   Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
3. Administration		**1 - 5**
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	5
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, to a satisfactory degree and on the basis of specified procedures, in the management of the Department.	5
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	4
3.4	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Department's council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	5
3.5	The Department applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	5
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	5
3.7	The Department's council operates systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the law and / or the constitution of the Department without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	5
3.8	The manner in which the Department's council operates and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	5
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	5

3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	5
3.11	Internalization of the Department and external collaborations.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The administrative services are centralised, which seems to be a very efficient organisation for providing certain services. There is a core team of administrators who have been working together for a long time. The EEC is concerned how other less experienced or new administrative staff will be able to deal with issues as effectively if the collective wisdom of the members currently in post was lost.

As there seem to be no administrative resources at department (or school) level, academic staff does not only perform academic administrative tasks but also *non academic* administrative tasks. This does not seem to be a good use of resources. It further limits faculty staff's time for research activities, which was scarce already.

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The academic and administrative structure is described in the University's Charter (June 2015). Disciplinary regulations and procedures are presented in the University's Internal Regulations. The documents are thorough and laid out clearly. From the discussions at the virtual meetings, the EEC got the impression that procedures and regulations are very well known and followed.

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

- clear structure with transparent role assignment and task allocation
- administrative mechanisms seem to be effective; students' progress is monitored closely.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

EEC recommends considering non-academic administrative support at school/department level, which would allow academic staff to use more working hours for scholarly activities.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant

3. Administration	Compliant

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4. Learning and Teaching
(ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

Sub-areas
4.1 Planning the programmes of study **4.2 Organisation of teaching**

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3:   Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria	
4. Learning and Teaching	

4.1 Planning the programmes of study		**1 - 5**
4.1.1	The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study.	5
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	4
4.1.3	Intended learning outcomes, the content of the programmes of study, the assignments and the final exams correspond to the appropriate level as indicated by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	5
4.1.4	The programmes of study are in compliance with the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	5
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.
External stakeholders are involved in the programmes' review and development, but to a limited extent.

4. Learning and Teaching

4.2 Organisation of teaching		1 - 5
4.2.1	The Department establishes student admission criteria for each programme, which are adhered to consistently.	5
4.2.2	Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	5
4.2.3	The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	5
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Department has regular and effective communication with their students, promoting mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship.	5
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	5
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	5
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	5
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
Click to enter text.		

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The Department has a very elaborate system in place for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing their programs of study. Students and graduates who met the EEC, had very positive views about teaching and learning at the Department.

As the Department offers Distance Learning programs, structures and resources were already in place to move all teaching online shortly after the onset of the pandemic.

For courses with multiple sections, the course coordinator ensures that instruction and exam are consistent across the sections.

Strengths

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

- effective system for the organisation of teaching
- excellent student-teacher communication
- flexibility and experience in offering and supporting online teaching and learning

<u>*Areas of improvement and recommendations*</u>
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

The EEC recommends considering making the bachelor thesis mandatory. This would allow including students in ongoing research, hence strengthening the integration of teaching and research. At the same time, it would allow students to show their ability to independently work on a topic and to consolidate their academic skills. The EEC believes that successfully writing a bachelor thesis increases employability in general, i.e. not just for research-related positions.

The EEC recommends considering the possibility of reducing the Department's teaching load by modifying the organisation of teaching in the study programs. The Department offers study programs in parallel in Greek and English, but might consider not to provide all courses in Greek and English.

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

Sub-area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	Compliant

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5. Teaching Staff *(ESG 1.5)*

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3:   Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
5. Teaching Staff		**1 - 5**
5.1	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	5
5.2	The teaching staff of the Department has the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	5
5.3	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Department's programmes of study.	n/a
5.4	The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study.	5
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	5
5.6	The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught by teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	5
5.7	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the programme of study.	5
5.8	Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
There are currently no visiting professors.		
Also, write the following: - Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work 23 - Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work 5 - Number of visiting Professors 0		

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The teaching staff's qualifications are in line with the requirements for teaching the individual subjects. Teaching staff's areas of expertise sufficiently cover all central topics in the Programmes of Study.
The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is good and hence contributes to ensure the quality of the Programme of Study .

Strengths

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

- Diversity in academic staff in terms of national and international academic background.
- Teaching staff are research active, which is a major credit for the study programs and which is recognised by students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The EEC recommends utilising the experience of visiting professors in a strategic manner. Visiting professors contribute to enriching and updating the Department's study programs as well as to extend staff's international teaching and research network.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
Teaching staff number, adequacy and suitability	Compliant
Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

6. Research

(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3:   Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
6. Research		**1 - 5**
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	**4**
6.2	The Department consistently applies internal regulations and procedures of research activity, which promote the set out research policy and ensure compliance with the regulations of research projects financing programmes.	**5**
6.3	The Department provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	**5**
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development of students' research skills.	**5**
6.5	The results of the teaching staff research activity are published to a satisfactory extent in international journals which work with critics, international conferences, conference proceedings, publications, etc. The Department also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	**3-4**
6.6	The Department ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	**4**
6.7	The Department provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	**5**
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	**4**
6.9	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the teaching staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	**4**

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The Department adopts the University's research policy. On the Department level, research is one of the four key areas in the strategic plan with three prioritized goals, that refer to fostering research and publishing activities, conference participating, and international research collaborations. The EEC recommends that these goals should be framed in a quantifiable way.

Even though the Department applies an open access policy, implementation of such policies can be improved.

The Department regularly acquires external funding (average of 1.3 Mio Euro with the exception of 2017 when more than 5 Mio Euro were acquired).

Not sufficiently clear how the Department ensures that research results are integrated into teaching.

Internal funding mechanisms of research activities are rather limited. Academic staff members have an annual budget to spend on research related activities and can in addition apply for funding to participate in scientific events. Recently, incentives for publication in Scopus-indexed journals have been introduced (200 - 1000 Euro) and the University has for the first time awarded seed grants (5 projects à 20K Euro university wide).

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The Department's main focus is on teaching. There is an expectation that teaching staff are research active, but so far, research has been based on the individual staff members' experiences and networks. In the past, staff has been research active to a very different extent.
Recently, more attention is paid to the development of research. A financial incentive for publishing in Scopus indexed journals has been introduced and seems to have had an effect, as the number of publications in Scopus in Social Sciences from authors affiliated with the University of Nicosia rose from 45 in 2017 to 82 in 2020 (first half in 2021: 50).

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

- Department is actively involved in third party funded activities.
- student research activities are very well supported
- Staff provide various services in the academic community

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

The EEC finds that there is a clear ambition and potential to develop the Department's research activities further. However, the centralised structure leaves little resources to implement the Department's strategic goals. The EEC recommends to better balance top-down and bottom-up processes in strategy implementation.

The EEC welcomes the staff's initiative to form research groups to strengthen research collaboration.

Open access: No funds seem to be available to cover publishing fees of open access journals. The EEC recommends establishing an institutional repository to archive and share the author's final manuscript versions during the embargo period.

It is the EEC's understanding that the prevailing methodological approach to research at the Department is a quantitative approach. Methodological diversity is valuable for all social-behavioural research due to the complexity of the subject. We hence suggest building capacity in qualitative research methods at the Department.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
Research mechanisms and regulations	Compliant
External and internal funding	Compliant
Motives for research	Compliant
Publications	Compliant

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7. Resources *(ESG 1.6)*

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria	
7. Resources	**1 - 5**
7.1 The Department has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Institutional and Departmental bodies.	**5**
7.2 The Department follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	**5**
7.3 The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	**N/A**
7.4 The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	**N/A**
7.5 The Department carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.	**5**
7.6 The Department's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	**5**
7.7 The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	**5**

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The financial budgets relating to the university's revenues and expenses are managed centrally. The Department prepares a *New Faculty Needs Budget* and a *CAPital EXpenditure Budget* (funding of computer and office equipment, licenses). Appendix 6 provides the decisions with reference to the CAPEX 2017, 2018 and 2019 (5K to 17.5K EURO).

As the budget neither includes the income the Department receives for teaching, research, innovation and other activities nor the personal and operational costs, it is not possible for the EEC to evaluate the Department's scope for implementing strategic decisions that go beyond the need for new faculty.

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

According to the self-evaluation, the financial affairs of the Department are carried out in a sound and transparent manner by budgeting being decided and managed by the Council and the Senate. Financial issues were not further discussed during the online meetings.

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

Click to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Click to enter text.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
7. Resources	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 Department under review may be achieved.

The overall assessment of the EEC is very positive. We found the Department of Social Sciences to be well-organized and managed and having well qualified, appropriately trained and highly committed internal and external staff. Overall, we felt that the Department was compliant on all aspects we were required to evaluate.

We would like to congratulate the academic, administrative, management and student teams who attended the online meetings. We felt that the staff and students were open about their experiences and receptive to feedback.

We could not help but notice that academic staff was frustrated with the amount of time that went into preparing the application and conducting the evaluation. While these tasks are standard tasks in academic positions, we recognize that aspects of this work have been unnecessarily time consuming due to the lack of access to *local* administrative support. We hope that the feedback provided by the EEC was worth the work and that the Department as a whole can benefit from our recommendations.

We have identified both strengths and areas for development. We do not wish to reiterate our recommendations, but would like to end with two overarching remarks.

We are pleased to see, at some levels, almost equal proportions of men and women represented. However, we note that women are significantly underrepresented in the higher levels of university leadership. We would like to strongly encourage the university to consider how this imbalance can be addressed.

To improve the reach and remit of the Department (and the psychology programmes), we would encourage the university to consider how to thematically organise their research, so as to encourage and facilitate more interdisciplinary and boundary crossing research, to investigate open access principles and practices, options for hiring visiting professors and opportunities for methodological diversity.

E.   Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Prof. Ute GABRIEL	
Prof. Roshan DAS NAIR	

Prof. Patricia BIJTTEBIER	
FullName	

Date: 07/07/2021