

# External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
**University of Nicosia**
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Education
- **Department:** **Department of Education**
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**  
**Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

## Programme 1

### **In Greek:**

Δημοτική Εκπαίδευση (4 έτη/240 ECTS, πτυχίο)

### **In English:**

Primary Education (Bed, 4 years)

## Programme 2

### **In Greek:**

Επιστήμες Αγωγής (1,5-2 έτη / 90-120 ECTS, Μάστερ)

### **In English:**

Master in Education Sciences (MEd, 3 Semesters)

## Programme 3

### **In Greek:**

Επιστήμες Αγωγής (1,5-2 έτη, 90-120 ECTS, Μάστερ Εξ αποστάσεως)

### **In English:**

Master in Education Sciences (MEd, 3 Semesters) –  
Distance Learning

## Programme 4

### **In Greek:**

Επιστήμες Αγωγής (3 έτη, 180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό)

### **In English:**

Phd in Education Sciences (PhD, 3 years)

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

**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.*

The relevant documentation was delivered well in time for the evaluation. Two days of virtual/distance site visits were conducted on the 15th and 16th of February 2021. A virtual tour of the premises gave further insights. The personnel and students were very well prepared and the atmosphere was positive and constructive. In addition to the material provided in advance, the in site presentations offered insights into both the Department of Education and the four programmes to be evaluated.

## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Patrik Scheinin</b>	Professor, Chair	University of Helsinki
<b>Joe O'Hara</b>	Professor, Member	Dublin City University
<b>Josefina Sala Roca</b>	Professor, Member	Autònoma de Barcelona
<b>Olaf Zawacki-Richter</b>	Professor, Member/DL expert	University of Oldenburg
<b>Rafelia Ioannou</b>	Ms, Student member	University of Cyprus

## C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *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:	<i>Non-compliant</i>
3:	<i>Partially compliant</i>
4 or 5:	<i>Compliant</i>

- *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 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
- 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		
<b>1. Department's academic profile and orientation</b>		
<b>1.1 Mission and strategic planning</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	3
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	3
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.		

In the Department report 1.1.1 to 1.1.3 are referred to and said to be in order. The EEC did not, however, find any direct or clear mission statement. Neither it is not easily to be found e.g. through the departments web pages.

Also: "short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives" also received a full score in the self report. Such goals were not to be found in our material (using normal search commands etc).

The EEC has no reason to believe these points have not been thought of in the Department. Clearly and prominently stating them should enhance future strategic plans.

The EEC did find a several references to such plans, but they were neither very clear or explicitly aligned:

- (1) The Department's Mission statement is "The Strategic Plan of the Department of Education seeks to enhance growth and reputation..."
- (2) Later "Our mission is to provide high quality knowledge and excellent professional training"
- (3) "The promotion of Education Sciences is succeeded, on the one hand, through effective teaching and on the other, through research."
- (4) Vision: to "be a leading contributor to excellence in education and research"
- (5) Further: "We operate in an environment where many schools (private and public) have needs that we are positioned to help address."

A mission statement should bring alignment and a common identity and future direction internally and externally. Why are growth and reputation the goals? Are we talking about research producing the knowledge – or is it the result of good instruction? The mission of the Department does not seem to be linked to the strategy of the University.

The EEC feels that the mission and goals of the Department could be synchronized and made clearer so that both faculty and even first year students understand what is going on and why. However, the "pillars" are relevant and well explained.

The importance of a well built strategy is in it providing longer term goals and the means to reach them. With this in mind, it is clear that the funding system, the localities provided, as well as the recruitment of faculty and students are quite firmly decided on the University level. This restricts the opportunity for real strategic planning and the degrees of freedom necessary for responsible action at the Faculty and Department levels. In times of change this may easily result in loss of opportunities.

E.g. as brought up in the Department SWOT "Lack of financial aid to support PhD internships and teaching-research assistantships." With the freedom to create such positions and to allocate needed funds, the Department could do much to further the careers of young researchers, while also providing the faculty with help and assistance. Young doctors with experience in teaching and counseling have an obvious advantage in recruitment. This would make the programme more attractive and strengthen the research of the Department, in turn providing better opportunities for external funding. Definitely a Win-Win situation.

The Department is also bound by regulations, some of which may severely limit the strategic choices available. E.g. the EEC found it problematic that a DL programme can

only be offered by a Department which also has a conventional programme with the same content. This may be a safeguard to start with, but after the Department and said DL programme have been evaluated, it makes little or no sense. Having parallel conventional and DL programmes may sometimes be called for, but may also be costly and inefficient. Such regulation tend to force a fundamentally unfair competition with publicly funded universities in Greece and Cyprus, as pointed out in the Department SWOT.

If the University aims to be a visible and trusted provider of high quality education based on strong research, some hard choices need to be considered. In a rapidly changing world universities may easily be regulated into decline. This may be especially true for privately funded universities. In the Department SWOT some such threats are recognized: “Restrictive regulatory environment in both Cyprus and Greece.”

In the Department SWOT some weaknesses were found. Overdependence on the Greek market is an obvious one. With the strong DL capability in the Department, this can be changed. The world is big and there is a growing demand for European degrees. Need we say it? Africa. To continue the DL Med already in English with a Ded also in English should be considered.

Infrastructure constraints and faculty development were also listed in the SWOT, highlighting the needs stated above.

The development of an Alumni society is to be warmly recommended. Knowledge ages rapidly these days. To keep our alumni up to date is a lifelong task important for their careers and the reputation of the University.

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).

The EEC concludes that the programmes appear to be well integrated. This is, however, perhaps less important than one could imagine for the many of the students who only take part of the courses of one programme and relatively few students continue to a second or even third degree. There is an ongoing need to balance the cost of tuition for the students with the quality of the instruction to make it more realistic that the students would take the whole degrees. There are several factors driving up the costs discussed in the previous section, among these especially the need for parallel conventional and DL programmes. Without such measures the majority of the students do not in reality experience the whole programme or programmes, and thus do not experience the coherence and compatibility – even when the Curriculum provides for them.

## 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.	3

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

**The Alumni connection should be improved upon. It is far from easy to have such a living connection, when so many of the students take just a limited number of courses.**

## 1. Department's academic profile and orientation

<b>1.3 Development processes</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
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.	4
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	3
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	3
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.	2

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

**There seem to be clear limits to what can be done in recruitment at the Department level. This is similar to many universities. Centralized governance is quite often rather a part of the problem than the solution. In 1.3.4 there are two different questions: 1) adequate and transparent funding processes for the operation of the Department. The EEC is not convinced of this. We asked e.g. how the funding of the Faculty and Department would change with the stated mission of growth. The answer was that there would not be a change. Either there is a problem with the funding system or the transparency at the University level. And 2) there are processes of quality assurance and curriculum development in place. ((CYQAA: Questionnaires should NEVER ask more than one thing per question.))**

Additionally, write:

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

**The programmes of the Department have a relatively large percentage of international students. Most of these are from Greece. The masters and doctoral programmes in English provide opportunities for widening the recruitment base. Is there a will to do so?**

### Findings

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

The EEC received well prepared material beforehand. During the site visits we had open discussions with a variety of representatives from different areas of the Department (students, alumni, faculty and staff).

We learned a lot about the operative workings of the Department. However, the long term strategic planning was less in evidence. The SWOT analysis made by the Department was instructive. Our suggestions are in line with it.

The majority of the basic funding is controlled outside the Department. More budget autonomy on the Faculty and/or Department level is needed for more goal oriented and flexible action. Since rapid and serious changes are evident in the context of the faculty and department, they need to be able to responsibly use their expertise to further the goals of the university.

For example, the recruitment of faculty is firmly on the university level. Same with the localities. With the huge changes brought on by distance work and learning, the department is exceptionally well situated to use less office and teaching space and in need for suitable facilities for such activity as pointed out in the SWOT. If they find ways of doing so, they should have the opportunity to use the freed resources for further improvements of the department. This could make the department more attractive when recruiting faculty and students.

In our discussions it was clear that positions at the beginning of the research career (doctoral positions and young researchers) could boost the research productivity and with time also the quality of the department. Similarly, when e.g. a professor is retired, it should be decided on the Department or Faculty level how those resources are best invested.

### Strengths

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

In the DL programme we encountered creative and interesting innovations and practices. Over all, the support for students and faculty seem to be well planned and efficient. The community formed by the faculty was impressively vibrant and positive. Much can be achieved with such people. The EEC was also impressed by the students we encountered from the programmes. We would all be proud to have them at our universities.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

***The university senate takes decisions on a number of issues across all Faculties. Goals, demands, quality and expertise naturally vary between disciplines. So, fiscal responsibility and decisions concerning personnel, premises, curricula and doctoral dissertations need to be taken closer to the fields of expertise, e.g. at the Faculty and Department level. Programmes in English have the potential greatly to enhance visibility and reputation of the Department, and naturally also broaden the opportunity for recruitment of international faculty.***

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

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

## 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		
<b>2. Quality Assurance</b>		
<b>2.1 System and quality assurance strategy</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
2.1.1	The Department has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of the Institution's strategic management.	5
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	4
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	4
2.1.4.3	The connection with society	4
2.1.4.4	Management and support services	5
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		

**The quality assurance system was evident on all systemic levels from international regulation to internal committees.**

## 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.	4
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective.	5
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.	3
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	4
2.2.7	The Department publishes information related to the programmes of study, credit units, learning outcomes, methodology, student admission criteria, completion of studies, facilities, number of teaching staff and the expertise of teaching staff.	5
2.2.8	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	5
2.2.9	The Department flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods.	5
2.2.10	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
2.2.11	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	4
2.2.12	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	4
2.2.12.2	Library	5

	2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	3
	2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	4
	2.2.12.5	Academic support	5
2.2.13	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.		5
2.2.14	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
2.2.15	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.		5
2.2.16	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.		5
2.2.17	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.		5
2.2.18	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.		2
2.2.19	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.		3

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

**There needs to be funding for doctoral students attending conferences. Once a year would be good. Concerns were raised about plagiarism. The Med and Ded students raised concerns about a policy of 30% accepted plagiarism. The EEC understands that an absolute zero is not realistic with the apps now in use, and that this concern might even be a legend. But if this actually is the policy, then this is unacceptable. Technical numbers aside, intellectual property rights in universities rely on a no plagiarism policy. Insufficient modern facilities and infra for DL were noted in the Department SWOT. The lack of laboratories was brought up. In 2.2.18 at least two very different things are again asked ((CYQAA!)): Mechanisms to support writing exist at a good level, but conference funding for doctoral candidates does not exist at the moment - but it is planned. Some concerns about the technological infrastructure were also raised in the SWOT.**

### Findings

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

**The need for modern, flexible, and appropriate infrastructure and localities as well as support for instruction (especially DL) and research is obvious, especially if the University**

intends to increase the number of international students and to have a large percentage of its students graduate.

### Strengths

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

The student feedback for the courses and the teachers was impressively comprehensive and the results positive. It is clearly a valuable asset in developing curricula and the Department more generally.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The plagiarism policy may be adequate but needs to be seriously considered. At least the students expressed their worry.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
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		1 - 5
<b>3. Administration</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	4
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of specified procedures, in the management of the Department.	4
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	5
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.	4
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	4
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.	4
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



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

**No problems with procedures, transparency or minutes were brought up. The students were quite unfamiliar with their role in decision making, but that is probably not unusual. The students interviewed typically had been successful in their studies.**

### 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.*

The Department has all the hallmarks of a well functioning university community. The faculty is active and they clearly work well together. The atmosphere was tangibly positive and constructive.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

There is much that is positive. Having such a strong influence on how things are run and regulated from the model that is in use in publicly funded universities and especially from Greece may be unrealistic. There are many opportunities globally, but demanding that the private universities replicate traditional public universities when DL and instruction in English will probably hinder development.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
3. Administration	Compliant

#### 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		
<b>4. Learning and Teaching</b>		
<b>4.1 Planning the programmes of study</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
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.	5
4.1.3	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).	4
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.		
<a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a>		
<b>4. Learning and Teaching</b>		
<b>4.2 Organisation of teaching</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>

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.*

[Click to enter text.](#)

### Strengths

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

**The instruction at the Department is at a good international level. We encountered inspired and active students and teachers. From what we heard and saw, many instructional arrangements were innovative and impressive.**

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

**The need for conventional Bed and Med programmes at the Department should be questioned. With the a clear majority of the students taking only a selection of the courses,**

with relatively low rates of students taking the degree of the programmes, and with such success in DL, there are other than traditional approaches that need to be considered. If regulations hinder, they may be changed. The same goes for administrative practices.

The doctoral students could be more integrated into the faculty by positions as junior researchers or assistants. This would help the teaching staff, provide teaching experience, and strengthen the first steps of the research career.

One practice that some in the EEC found less than optimal is for most of the students in the Med programme to be allowed not to do a Master's Thesis. The reason given, that most students want it so, is familiar but unconvincing. Teachers typically want practical skills and knowledge. This is the same in many countries. However, it makes continuing studies on the doctoral level so much harder. One could also argue, that the most useful skill for teachers and professionals more generally in changing times is to learn to gather research based information, to test it, and to be critical about it, and to find new policies, methods etc based on sound research. Without these skills, our masters are left with knowledge, practices and skills that these days get old faster and faster. Not having the students learn to do research may be a serious hindrance to them later in life. It also weakens and hinders the research based development of their future work places and society. Letting the students have their way may in this case be popular and tactically astute, but also strategically unwise.

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

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

## 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		1 - 5
<b>5. Teaching Staff</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
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.	4
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.

[Click to enter text.](#)

Also, write the following:

- Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of visiting Professors
- Number of special scientists on lease services

[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.*

Click to enter text.

### Strengths

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

The Department has a faculty and staff commensurate with its tasks. It is also relatively small and intimate, which has advantages. As the funding is largely dependent of student tuition fees, much may change with DL. This would also create need for change in the work load and structure of the personnel.

The qualifications of the teaching staff and their competence in their subject is convincing.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Increasing the presence of incoming academics could enhance the international cooperation and discourse at the Department.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
5. Teaching Staff	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		1 - 5
<b>6. Research</b>		
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.	3
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development of students' research skills.	4
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.	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.	5
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.	5

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.*

As stated in the Department report, the Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission and institutional capabilities. The limitations in the funding have been discussed previously. Given the circumstances, the faculty does perform well in research. There is definitely a potential for improvement, if the workload and resources can be optimised.

### Strengths

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

The researchers at the Department are active in publishing, conferences, editorial boards, and international exchange. International research cooperation can be found on many levels. Also external research funding, though the flow could be more substantial.

### 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 found little evidence for Open access publishing, which would increase international visibility and reputation.

We would strongly recommend that the policy of not accepting article based doctoral dissertations be discontinued. Monographs should still be an accepted option, but doctors need to be trained to communicate research findings through articles to prepare them for the demands of modern research. This has the added benefit of making the doctoral students part of the living research community of their field.

It may also be good idea to consider the possibility of professional doctorates in addition or instead of PhDs.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
6. Research	Compliant



## 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		1 - 5
<b>7. Resources</b>		
7.1	The Department has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Institutional and Departmental bodies.	3
7.2	The Department follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	4
7.3	The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	5
7.4	The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	2
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.	4
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 limitations of the Department funding and budget are obvious and have been discussed previously. It is not clear and transparent how the Department could receive more resources from the University – even if they would dramatically change their sources of income. This does not provide incentive and encouragement for bold strategic improvement. The salaries and resources of the Department are reported to lag behind the public University of Cyprus. This may lead to unwished attrition of personnel and be a serious hindrance in recruitment. You do not necessarily get quality for money, but that does not prove the opposite.**

### Findings

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

Long term strategic planning would definitely be healthy for the development of the Department. This includes extended budgetary autonomy providing, as well as controlling strategic resources and recruitment. The Department and Faculty have obvious potential in a challenging situation, but they are held back by their lack of autonomy.

There is a general agreement on that the conditions are less than optimal. At the same time, people cooperate well and are quite happy and productive. Changing unnecessary regulations, allocating funding and resources according to strategic goals and results, and giving strategic and fiscal power – but also responsibility - to the Faculty and Department level, would give the Department the possibility of attaining its full potential. They do, after all, possess the best expertise in their field. If they can not find the way to a better tomorrow, who can?

Strengths

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

The Department seems to be making good use of the little money they are budgeted.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

See previous.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
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 EEC is thankful for the trust placed in us. The opportunities to observe and talk with the students, faculty, and staff of the Department have been frank and eye-opening. We have learned a lot.

The present situation of the Department is not unproblematic. Finding a way to attract good students to the programmes, as well as a way to keep them in the programmes till graduation are of the essence. There is also much that is definitely promising. DL as well as Med and Ded programmes in English provide abundant opportunities. The balance between risks and possibilities is not an easy one, and the EEC fully understands that none of us has had the same circumstances.

On the other hand the international English Master's and doctoral programmes provide ample opportunities for expansion, further development of the personnel (larger, more varied and more international) and would enhance the visibility and reputation of the Department, the programmes and the University. This would in turn help the University reach its strategic goals.

Instruction and research of tomorrow will need investments in infrastructure and personnel. The Department is also well placed to provide inspiration for other Faculties at the University and more globally to find new and efficient methods and technology for instruction.

One important way modern universities have of enabling progress in research, instruction, and societal impact is to provide those who have the expertise and responsibility for their field with responsibility and autonomy over fiscal matter, recruitment and localities. Presently the Department can only dispose of a relatively small sum for operative costs. This needs to change.

Much is changing in instruction and research. With flexibility in how resources are allocated, many innovative solutions are found daily in the Universities around the world. As long as the resources are used efficiently and in an accountable way, to reach the strategic goals of the University and country, the *raison d'être* of the University is fulfilled. The University senate and ministry do well in keeping their work focused on the strategic level.

## E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Patrik Scheinin	
Joe O'Hara	
Josefina Sala Roca	
Olaf Zawacki-Richter	
Rafelia Ioannou	

Date: 19.2.2021