

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:** KES College
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Journalism and Media Production (2 academic years, 120 ECTS, Diploma)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status:** Choose status
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].



A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The committee consisted of three academics and one student representative with a relevant disciplinary background.

The evaluation took place at KES College. The committee met with senior management, lecturers, administrative staff, and a group of current and former students. They attended presentations on the history of the College and the structure of the programme before being given a tour of the campus. They had the opportunity to view the library, student support facilities, and the radio and television studios used by journalism students in the College.

The EEC would like to thank all parties involved for their cooperation and support during the evaluation, as well as the CYQAA coordinator for their help managing the process.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Christian Christensen	Professor	Stockholm University
Anastasia Veneti	Professor	Bournemouth University
Paul Reilly	Senior Lecturer	University of Glasgow
Elina Paraskeva	Ph.D. Student	Open University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

Findings

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

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

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

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*

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

1.3 Public information

Standards

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

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

The College has established quality assurance processes that are transparent and inclusive. Such processes and policies underpin the on-going review and development of both new and existing programmes. Teaching and administrative staff were aware of the relevant policies and procedures. The teaching community is vigilant towards academic fraud through the supervision of students' work and the use of the Turnitin software for plagiarism.

Overall, the Committee felt that the programme featured appropriate learning objectives at the programme level. The Programme has been designed having in mind current needs of the media industry, and it is obvious that it takes advantage of the good and productive relations that the College maintains with external stakeholders (Cypriot media industry). A great number of the teaching staff are active journalists in Cyprus.

In the academic design of the programme, there is a strong practical component suitable for vocational programs. Nonetheless, following the review of the module descriptors and the discussion with the teaching staff, we identified the need for more meaningful engagement with theory in this field of study as we explain in more detail below. The designers of the programme have understood the value of theory for the course by offering a number of theory related modules. However, it is not clear at the moment how theory is differentiated from practice and how this is reflected in students' assignments.

ECTs are clearly defined signalling the corresponding student workload. The practice around the definition of ECTs is along the expected lines.

The website of the College offers a wide variety of information regarding admission procedures and program specific information.

From our discussions with University officials and faculty members it became apparent that they have in place a data base for collecting and analyzing information regarding the student body. They conduct regular student satisfaction surveys and students from the 3-year course assured us that their feedback has been taken into consideration by the College management.

Strengths

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

Admissions criteria are in line with the EEC expectations.

Available information for current students.

The program has been designed to address market needs with good attention to local economy, labour and market.

The programme benefits from several staff members who have a wealth of practical experience and expertise and can bring this into the classroom.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The EEC would like to encourage the teaching team to consider introducing a possible separation of practical and theoretical modules in the goals of the program. Goals, as stated, still differentiate between theory and practice. For the program of study to reflect the purposes of higher education as defined by the Council of Europe (*preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base*), it is imperative that students are exposed to a certain amount of communication theory in a meaningful way so that they can develop their critical thinking.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

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

Standards

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

2.2 Practical training

Standards

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

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

The EEC notes that the assessment methods for this programme were broadly congruent with national standards. This includes marks for participation and the use of written examinations in many courses, as well as more practical tasks as appropriate. Workloads seemed appropriate for a two-year programme, and there was an emphasis on student-centred learning in most of the courses we reviewed.

It was clear that students were encouraged to provide feedback and felt this was acted upon. This was reflected in the very high response rate in course evaluations (as high as 70% in some cases). Students were satisfied with the level of feedback they received and the level of individualised support they received from instructors.

A wide range of practical courses (including radio and TV production) were provided for students. These benefit greatly from the professional experience of the instructors, most of whom currently work in the Cypriot media industry. These links help students find employment after completing the programme and are undoubtedly a key selling point.

The EEC noted that there were many of the core readings provided were very out of date. This is particularly problematic when dealing with courses that focus on digital media technologies and new innovations in journalistic practice. Students will want to learn about the latest developments and the reading materials need to reflect these.

Strengths

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

Students were very complementary about the responsiveness of staff to feedback received via course evaluations. The low staff-student ratio meant that they often received highly individualised support (beyond the confines of the classroom) and this was viewed as a key strength of the course. They also praised the high quality of the practical instruction they received in the College, and the links that teaching staff had to media organisations in Cyprus. Instructors spoke of how they used their own experience e.g. crime reporting to impart practical knowledge to their students.

The employability prospects of graduates were another strength of the programme identified by students. Several noted that they had been able to obtain vital experience in newsrooms and media organisations via their instructors. Courses like Investigative Journalism were particularly popular among those we interviewed during the visit.

Practical Training (PRCT201) stood out as an example of good practice as it addressed a concern raised by a recent graduate, namely about how to learn to work in an office environment. We felt the use of the logbook and the supervisor visit to the workplace were effective ways to ensure students met the learning outcomes.

It was good to hear that ethics was integrated into several courses on the programme. Students are made aware of the Code of Journalistic Ethics in Cyprus in the introductory 'Principles of Journalism' (JOUR107) course in Year 1, with further references to ethics in courses such as 'Propaganda, Misinformation and Fake News' (JOUR103).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Based on our discussions with staff and students, there were are three recommendations that the EEC would like to make:

First, there needs to a clearer articulation of the relationship between theory and practice in each course. The former should be understood as more than just a classroom-based understanding of the latter. We would urge the teaching staff to include more critical social science research e.g. on the role of media in contemporary societies in order to add a more critical dimension to the course. This will complement the strong practice-based approach evident in the courses we reviewed.

Second, the number of electives could be expanded to incorporate other areas of journalistic practice. While we recognise that many students on the previous iteration of the course wanted to study fashion and sports journalism, the present course structure limits the choice available to future cohorts. For example, an elective dedicated to climate journalism might provide opportunities to collaborate with other parts of KES College. We would also recommend that a dedicated course looking at AI and technological innovations in journalism might be an attractive option for students in the future.

Finally, the teaching materials should be constantly reviewed in order to ensure that they reflect the latest developments in journalism and media studies. We found core readings on many of the courses to be very outdated (possibly due to a lack of material available in Greek). We would suggest using journal articles accessed via EBSCO and providing lists of translation tools in order to ensure students were reading more contemporary sources.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Partially compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

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

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

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

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*

- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings

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

The EEC found that staffing levels for the proposed program were in line with the proposed learning outcomes and teaching. As is discussed in other areas of this evaluation, however, while the program suggests a synergy of practice and theory (in line with broader national and European higher education goals), listed staff have a lack of teaching experience on subjects related to academic and critical theory, as well as actual research experience.

Teaching staff have largely worked at the institution for a number of years, indicating a clear level of competency and continuation. Staff are offered regular opportunities for teaching and pedagogy development, and the recruitment of staff appears to pass through a clear and structured application and hiring process. Because of the practically-oriented, vocational nature of the proposed program (as well as the 3-year program it will replace), the issue of staff promotion and “upward mobility” is not relevant, as there is no move up to Assistant/Associate/Full Professor levels. It was unclear, however, what benefits staff obtain from years of employment (in terms of increased salary or position within the department).

Strengths

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

The staff for the proposed program demonstrate a number of very clear strengths which should be protected and encouraged in the future. These include:

- Staff Continuity: many of the teaching staff in the department have worked at KES for a number of years, and have clearly developed an excellent relationship with both students and the university administration. Their background in professional work also means that they provide outstanding points of contact between students and the professional world
- Experience/excellence in practical work: Staff have enormous experience in practical work, and have translated that experience into effective practical training and education.
- Good communication with students: Discussions with students, staff and administration indicates a sustained, productive level of communication between staff and students. Students commented on staff availability, as well as their willingness to work with students outside of the classroom.
- Good staff-student ratio: In the current 3-year program, students (and staff) clearly benefit from good Teacher-Student ratios, making hand-on teaching and contact possible. This is likely the biggest strength of the proposed 2-year program (somewhat ironically, as larger student numbers would indicate the popularity of the program, while at the same time negatively impacting that productive ratio).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

As addressed in the previous section, there is a clear need for KES to better integrate theory and research across the proposed 2-year program. The synergy of research and teaching in the KES proposal is the only area we have determined to be “non-compliant,” as such synergy is not apparent or elaborated. The EEC would like to note that this is NOT a call to give theory/research and practice equal weight in the program, nor is it the EEC’s intention to force or demand that the department engage in significant research. It is, however, a call for the department to include research/theory in a more structured manner. At the moment, the proposed curriculum does not adequately reflect the theory/research component; teaching staff, while extremely well-qualified and competent in the areas of practical education and training, are not conversant in theory. In addition, there is a need to expand the research element (as it is) to include journalism, and a clear need to integrate theoretical/research reading into all coursework (in some way) so that the theory-practice relationship is made more explicit. The content of the course reading related to theory and research is also somewhat dated and basic, and should be updated to account for more up-to-date issues facing students interested in (eg via research on both dangers and potential uses AI in journalism; how social media use impacts journalistic work and how audiences receive and consume news). Finally, theory and research could be incorporated into the proposed program via research projects conducted under the KES Research Center. (PLEASE NOTE THAT MORE DISCUSSION ON THE INTEGRATION OF THEORY INTO TEACHING IS INCLUDED IN THE FINAL CONCLUSIONS SUGGESTION IN THIS EVALUATION.)



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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

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

4.2 Student progression

Standards

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

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

The EEC were satisfied with the information provided by staff on the admissions criteria. Based on the previous three-year iteration of this course and the Journalism and Public Relations one, we are confident that the admission criteria will be clearly defined and made available on the KES College website and other channels.

Processes for monitoring student progression were very clearly articulated in the documentation submitted for review. Both administrative and teaching staff work very closely with students, making it easier to monitor progress and ensure learning outcomes will be met.

In relation to sustainability, our discussions with members of staff suggested that the plans for recruitment seem realistic (ideally 15 students). The teaching staff were knowledgeable about the local media jobs market, and have well-established links with industry that will no doubt help the College attract students to this programme.

Strengths

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



The monitoring of students' progress follows the required standards and is based on coursework and final examinations.

Students were very positive about the level of support provided by teaching staff throughout their studies. It was clear that instructors on media courses took an active role in mentoring students, helping arrange placements, creating Viber groups for cohorts, and providing 1-2-1 support.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

There were no areas we felt were in need of improvement.



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

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

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

5.2 Physical resources

5.3 Human support resources

5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

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

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*

- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

The EEC found that the College provides students with every facility and support to enable them to progress and complete their studies successfully. There are counselling services as well as career guidance services and the College is responsive to the needs of students with learning difficulties or physical disabilities.

The committee had the opportunity to meet with representatives of the administrative and IT units and discussed the support facilities and processes in place. The committee also visited the facilities of the College (e.g., studios, library, classrooms etc) and the online resources available. The committee feels that the teaching and learning resources made available to support teaching and learning, are sufficient. The virtual learning environment follows the international standards (e.g., the use of Moodle). Sufficient IT support is provided to enable teaching staff to deliver their classes smoothly. Furthermore, from the discussions with the teaching staff and students of the 3-years course, the committee has seen evidence of student-centred learning and teaching.

Strengths

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

Considering student numbers there is good infrastructure; buildings; technical resources (studios and labs).

HR and the rest of the administrative team were all knowledgeable and well informed.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

As suggested in Section 2 above, the EEC recommends updating the readings lists so that students are able to translate (e.g. via use of shorter research articles); ensure that students have digital access to such articles; inform students about translation possibilities.

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

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

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**
- 6.2 Proposal and dissertation**
- 6.3 Supervision and committees**

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *the minimum word limit*
 - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*

- reports per semester and feedback from supervisors
- support for writing research papers
- participation in conferences
- The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.

You may also consider the following questions:

- How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?
- Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?
- Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?

Findings

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
6.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

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 programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

In this final section, the EEC would like to present its final comments using a “traffic light” form: (1) Green (areas we found to be effective/strong and should be nurtured; (2) Yellow (areas that, while not in need of urgent attention, should be considered as potential areas of future concern; and (3), Red (areas we feel are in need of immediate attention in order for the proposed program to meet the standards required of institutions of higher education as outlined by Cyprus and the EU).

Green: The EEC was struck by the positive feedback from students (graduate and current) regarding their experiences at KES. We are aware that these are NOT students in the proposed 2-year program, but we are equally aware that the courses to be offered in the 2-year program, and the staff who will teach those courses, will remain from the expiring 3-year program. Staff demonstrated a great deal of engagement with students, and a willingness to extend their collaboration and teaching to outside of the classroom. In addition, students expressed a high degree of satisfaction with how the content of their practical training translated into valuable work skills. Department instructors and university management also had a clear grasp of the media market in Cyprus and Nicosia, and how education at KES fit into that market. This combination of engaged staff and understanding of the market resulted in high levels of “employability” of graduating students, and employment number of graduates in the 80% range. Taking into account the relatively small student numbers, teaching, infrastructural and technical resources available to students were at a decent level. This is clearly a small, effective department staffed by employees with significant experience.

Yellow: The EEC encourages KES to consider what could be an over-reliance on outside stakeholders (private media industry, in particular) to shape the proposed 2-year program. While the experience and knowledge of media professionals is incredibly valuable, KES is nevertheless an institution of higher education, and, as such, should have goals for the students above and beyond mere employability. Having said this, there is nothing to say that there is an inherent conflict between teaching a critical perspective on media and teaching media practice. On the contrary, experiences from other universities (including those employing EEC evaluators) is that providing future journalists with critical perspectives on media influence and power can create effective and inquisitive journalists who are also aware of their own position in society. Other issues that worthy of consideration include the extent to which internationalization is possible with a primarily Greek-language program, the possibility of increased collaboration with other departments and the extent to which students with mobility issues might have their needs taken into consideration.

Red: The area the EEC feel is in need of immediate attention is a lack of attention paid to theory and critical perspectives on media and journalism in the proposed program. During the meetings, there appeared to be a misunderstanding about the meaning of the term “theory.” For the EEC, theory is NOT classroom instruction on practical issues (such as reading a book about camera angles or radio production). That, for the EEC, is simply a variation or extension of practical training. For the EEC, “theory” is the study and application of research and writing on/about media that provides students with a deeper, more critical understanding of the role of media and journalism in modern society (production, distribution and reception). As noted in the “Yellow” section above, KES is an institution of higher education, and, as such, should exist are more than just an extension of media companies. Students should be able to demonstrate an understanding of some basic research and theory on the role/place of

journalism in contemporary society, as well as how various media technical and ownership forms influence content and reception. This not only makes for better journalists, it also makes for better citizens. It is this second component – citizenship – that distinguishes higher education (even in short 2-year forms) from mere practical training. It is the EEC's position that this aspect can be achieved by the integration of research into theory into multiple course areas via literature and reading. It can also be achieved by the proposed program taking a more active role in the research component of KES (at the moment Journalism/Media appears to have little or no involvement in that area). The EEC are fully aware that the current staff do not have backgrounds in academic research into journalism/media, but this lack of research experience could be remedied by the hiring of one/two instructors with a research background who can not only teach the theory courses, but can also help to integrate critical perspectives into practical teaching (where appropriate). Based on discussions with staff and students, it appears that the theoretical components (as the EEC defines it, see above) have largely been bypassed, or at least seriously under-addressed. We would also note that since the proposed 2-year program involves eliminating several courses from the 3-year program that DID address social, economic and political issues, the integration of critical perspectives in the proposed program becomes all the more important.

One smaller issue that we feel should be addressed is the very limited options of Sports and Fashion offered as elective specializations at the end of the 2-year program. To the EEC, these are very limiting and send a somewhat unfortunate message to students about the range of possibilities available. A suggestion would be to allow students to pick their own area of specialization and adapt teaching to those selections.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Christian Christensen	
Anastasia Veneti	
Paul Reilly	
Elina Paraskeva	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: February 20, 2024