

Doc. 300.1.3

Date:

Feedback Report from EEC Experts

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Nicosia / University of Patras
- **Town:** Nicosia / Patra
- **Programme of study
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Ολυμπιακές Σπουδές: Πολιτισμός, Αθλητισμός και Εκπαίδευση
(1,5 ακαδημαϊκά έτη / 90 ECTS, Μάστερ, Εξ Αποστάσεως,
Διαπανεπιστημιακό Πρόγραμμα Σπουδών με το Πανεπιστήμιο
Πατρών)

In English:

Olympic Studies: Culture, Sports and Education (1.5 years / 90
ECTS, Master of Arts, E-Learning, Joint Programme with the
University of Patras)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** New
- **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. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Emilio Fernández Peña	Professor	Universitat Autònoma of Barcelona
Emanuele Isidori	Professor	University of Rome Foro Italico
Dimitris Gargalianos	Professor	Democritus University of Thrace
Christothea Herodotou	Professor	Open University UK
Stella Koupepidou	Student	University of Cyprus



A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

The EEC based on the external evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) and the Higher Education Institution's response (Doc.300.1.2), must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

We take note of the comments and recommendations by the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) emanating from their understanding for further improvement of our programme.

We also note that the EEC has concluded that the program is fully compliant in the areas of "Teaching staff", "Student admission, progression, recognition and certification" and "Learning resources and student support", for most of the criteria in the areas of "Study programme and study programme's design and development" and "Student – centered learning, teaching and assessment".

Below you will find detailed responses to all recommendations.

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendation and comments on the HEI's response
<p>The master's program in Olympic Studies reveals critical flaws affecting its integrity and efficacy related to core curriculum's structure, the faculty's alignment with Olympic Studies, and the program's engagement with essential Olympic educational bodies</p>	<p>The criticism addressed to the proposed programme of studies depends on the reviewers' very specific stand regarding "Olympic Studies", and is therefore by and large not relevant to our conception of the MA programme as we proposed. We would like to strongly emphasize our stand that there is no such scientific discipline or field as "Olympic Studies". "Olympic Studies" is an interdisciplinary subject combining a number of areas, mainly Culture, Sports and Education. From its conceptual bases, it was never the intention of the MA programme by the University of Patras & the University of Nicosia (UNIC) to provide training in sports management (which already exists as a BA Programme at UNIC (https://www.unic.ac.cy/sports-management-bba-4-years/)).</p> <p>Instead, its aim is to provide a new, innovative, multidisciplinary theoretical educational plan, drawing on thematic material from various disciplines in the field of Culture, Sports and Education such as history, philosophy, ethics, literature, the arts, education, athletics, anthropology, archaeology, heritage studies, communication and administration, as well as current, cutting-edge topics that are related to contemporary professional market and industry, such as digital culture, sports communication and international sports management.</p> <p>To conclude, as evidenced by its description and objectives (see p. 10 of the application), the MA Programme in Olympic Studies: Culture, Sports and Education serves a</p>	<p>It is surprisingly inconsistent that a proposal for a master's degree in Olympic Studies is presented and at the same time it is claimed that "there is no such scientific discipline." Olympic studies are a reality, since the same University that denies its existence in these allegations organizes a master's program that specializes students in this field of knowledge.</p> <p>At this point it is unquestionable that the logic of the academy is based on the recognition of the work of other academics who have previously reflected on the topic from which a training project begins. That a master's degree titled: "Olympics Studies" is proposed and at the same time the existence of Olympic studies is denied is highly surprising and difficult to accept from a rational and scientific point of view.</p>

	<p>new educational/academic domain in Olympic Studies, completely aligned with the fundamental principles of Olympism as mentioned in Olympic Charter: “Olympism is a philosophy of life [...] blending sport with culture and education” https://stillmed.olympics.com/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/General/EN-Olympic-Charter.pdf. Moreover, this MA programme will open up new research interests on the field from a deep humanistic and educational perspective.</p> <p>Regarding the criticism referring to the suggested bibliography, of course we welcome suggestions for additions to the programme’s proposed specialised reading list, but it must be made clear that the absence of specific names from this list is not a result of ignorance, since even an elementary Google search would result in relevant hits. Instead, it is the result of a conscious selection on the part of each course instructor, based on the specific needs and content of their courses. For example, we are criticized for not consulting Conrado Durántez’s works. We would like to simply reply that the rich publication list of Conrado Durántez was naturally not included since it is almost exclusively in Spanish. Additionally, the EEC’s comments regarding the not inclusion of the work of scholars such as N. Müller is not valid since Norbert Müller’s book is a core text of the course MOS 560.</p> <p>The claim that there are “thousands” of scientific publications not included in the proposed bibliography is indeed an exaggeration. This is especially true when there is in fact only ONE book mentioned as an example (namely Naul et al. 2017, instead of which the edited volume on the very same topic, i.e. Olympic Education by D. Chatziefstathiou & N. Müller, was included), only ONE journal article (published in 2023), and only ONE conference proceedings (from an institution called “Japanese Centre for Research on Women in Sport”, https://research-center.juntendo.ac.jp/jcrws/en/).</p> <p>Especially striking is the criticism that there is no mention of the “Olympic World Library”, when in fact the website itself admits that half of the topics it aims to cover have not been published yet https://library.olympics.com/Default/essential-readings.aspx#Theme1). Regarding the suggestion of taking into consideration “The 67 Centers of Olympic Study in the world, all of them linked to universities on the five continents” with a link provided https://stillmedab.olympic.org/media/Document%20Library/OlympicOrg/General/EN-Olympic-Charter.pdf.</p>	<p>We reiterate that there is a deep-rooted tradition of decades in Olympic Studies that is based on many issues already presented in our previous report but that we reiterate here: See the link: https://olympics.com/ioc/olympic-studies-centre/olympic-studies-in-the-world</p> <p>If you examine the previous link you will see that there are more than 67 Olympic Studies Centers in the world linked to Universities on the 5 continents that carry out research, training and knowledge transfer with a multidisciplinary vision. None of these Olympic Studies Centers belongs to any of the Universities that present this project, nor do any of the online courses on the subject, which are not master's degrees, nor is there any solid known prior research or teaching experience on this topic by any of them. On the other hand, a bachelor in Sport Administration does not deal with the core of this master’s program and cannot be presented as a previous experience in this field.</p> <p>This ECC agrees with the multidisciplinary nature of Olympic Studies. However, this is not an obstacle to there being a holistic vision of the project, interconnected and with parts that refer to each other and provide feedback. We reiterate the lack of a comprehensive, integral vision of an educational project that is</p>
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	<p>y/OlympicOrg/Olympic-Studies-Centre/Academic-Activities-and-Network/Olympic-Studies-monitoring/Academic-Olympic-Studies-and-Research-Centres-in-the-world.pdf), which, when followed, leads to a pdf document listing Centers by country, but does not include either Cyprus or Greece.</p> <p>Another, in our view, unjustified criticism has to do with the lack of connection with the “officially accredited” Olympic Organizations, local and international. It is one of the basic aims of the MA Programme to adopt a critical, objective and unbiased scholarly analysis of the Olympic phenomenon. Connections to administrative bodies deeply involved in the concrete organization of the Games would deprive the Programme of basic instruments of academic freedom, research, such as impartiality, objectivity, critical thinking, interdisciplinarity and plurality.</p> <p>In any case, although the Olympic Organizations are not involved in the academic mainly humanistic design of the curriculum, the University of Nicosia has strong links with the Cyprus National Olympic Committee and its Olympic Academy through consultancies, organization of workshops, invitations of speakers from both sides, and submission of European funded projects.</p> <p>Organizing events and workshops with the CyNOC and the Olympic Academy offers students numerous benefits. It enhances their leadership and organizational skills, providing hands-on experience in planning and executing large-scale events. Students gain a deeper understanding of the Olympic values of excellence, friendship, and respect, fostering a sense of global citizenship and cultural awareness. Additionally, students can network with athletes, industry professionals, and peers, opening doors for future career opportunities. Exposure to diverse perspectives and ideas promotes personal growth and inspires a commitment to physical fitness and healthy lifestyles, aligning with the Olympic spirit.</p> <p>Indicatively, very recently Mr. Korellis, the Head of the Education and Training Department of the Cyprus Olympic Committee, also serving as the deputy chair of the Development and Cooperation Committee of the European Olympic Academies, gave a lecture at the University of Nicosia. Additionally, the most recent project, “Promoting Olympic values to enhance inclusivity diversity in the school environment” was submitted in March 2023; among its partners was/is the University of Nicosia, the Cyprus National Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Academy. The content of the project is directly linked to the</p>	<p>not multidisciplinary, but rather adds isolated parts to the project that do not participate in an idea of a cohesive whole. This is not the only problem which faces this project but affects dramatically its core.</p> <p>We insist on the worryingly basic, partial, compartmentalized, and inaccurate nature of the previous bibliography related to Olympic Studies that is handled in the presented project. The proceedings of the first session of the Olympic Academy, in 1961, include a bibliography with hundreds of references to what was published up to that date on issues related to Olympic studies. The arguments of the University try to hide - with a response to bibliographic details - the inconsistency of the project on this topic and the lack of previous experience in the form of publications or participation in conferences or training programs related to Olympic Studies.</p> <p>This project aims to build a master's program without solid academic foundations. The multidisciplinary approach on which this program is supposedly based must be served by experienced academics. Researchers must work with other researchers from different areas in publications or educational programs on this subject. Multidisciplinary cannot be an argument to hide the lack</p>
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	<p>MA philosophy and Dr Yiapanas, a lecturer of the MA programme in Olympic Studies, is leading the research proposal and the research team.</p> <p>Furthermore, the clear intention of the MA Programme is to approach the subject less from a historical and more from an anthropological and social point of view, focusing on the critical dialogue that has developed over the last 15 years mainly in the USA and Canada regarding the contemporary dimensions of the Olympic Games. Therefore, the interconnection of the MA Programme with institutions inextricably linked to the organization of the Olympic Games would deprive a large part of the scientificity and objectivity when studying the phenomena at the postgraduate level.</p> <p>In the same vein, the preferences, desires and choices of the Olympic bodies themselves are actually irrelevant to the proper academic study of the Olympic phenomenon. Nor is the existence of other graduate programmes a serious obstacle to the launching of a new, wider and more inclusive MA Programme by universities that in fact have a much higher academic standing (as is evidenced by recent rankings, e.g. those of the Times Higher Education World University Ranking 2024). The student community, and the academic community in general can only benefit from the availability of multiple approaches to the Olympic phenomenon; exclusivity, and the effective monopoly by the national or international Olympic bodies (which do not even form part of the academic community) can only be detrimental to high-level scholarly study. It is not at all clear why the particular two existing European MA programmes should be the model of a new and innovative MA in Olympic Studies with a fresh philosophy and scope.</p> <p>Last but not least, the Memorandum of Cooperation with the Municipality of Ancient Olympia, signed by the two collaborating Universities, should not be ignored. The mayor of Olympia stated that this was the first official participation of an organization of the Local Government in a higher education program: https://www.unic.ac.cy/el/ta-panepistimia-leykosias-kai-patron-ypografoyn-mnimonio-synergias-me-ton-dimo-archaias-olympias/</p>	<p>of previous experience of the teaching staff of this master's degree in this specific area.</p> <p>Multidisciplinary requires a holistic, interrelated and comprehensive vision, which this project lacks. We recommend that researchers first publish on the topic, attend international conferences, such as the ones organized by the International Olympic Academy, based in Ancient Olympia, Greece, or make presentations at conferences, publish books, and carry out scientific exchanges.</p> <p>We share the need for independent and critical research and teaching, but the lack of previous experience or any relationship with the Olympic world does not seem to us to be an argument that indicates the solidity of a purely university project like this. Another formula to carry out a guaranteed project on a European scale is for the collaborating Universities to partner with University centers that have previous experience in Olympic studies.</p> <p>We congratulate the University of Nicosia for its extraordinary work on administrative and technical issues related to the delivery of courses in the distance learning modality. Although there are many more sections that are correct or excellent than those that are deficient, we understand that the</p>
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		<p>deficiencies refer to the main pillar of an educational project: the knowledge that is passed on to the students. This issue seriously affects the viability of this project, which will offer a European degree, valid in all countries of the European Union. Let us not forget that University degrees transmit a message regarding Higher Education Systems in their totality.</p>
<p>There is a need to understand the profile of prospective students and employability opportunities following completion of the proposed programme by researching the market in both Cyprus and Greece, and internationally if applicable.</p>	<p>The proposed programme by University of Patras and UNIC aims to attract a much wider audience compared to other existing programs. Inclusivity is one of the main ideals of Olympism as demonstrated by the Olympic symbol on the Olympic flag. The proposed distance learning Programme is addressed to any student who wish to pursue a career in the fields of the Humanities, Education, the Arts and Sports and aspire to be actively engaged in research and education on Olympic studies, or plan to seek admission to a Ph.D. programme in related fields. The potential employment domains extend much beyond Cyprus and Greece and certainly much beyond the conventional 4 years Olympic Committees and other Olympic bodies.</p>	<p>The EEC members acknowledge that identifying the people who might be interested in attending the program is important. For the program to be viable it is imperative that each year the appropriate number of students enroll.</p> <p>However, before such a program is offered, the University has a moral and practical obligation to perform a well-designed and thorough market analysis, to identify which sports organizations need people with what kind of knowledge, skills, experience etc.</p>

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

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>Lack of coherence across proposed courses. This needs a new structure and content of courses.</p> <p>Absence of fundamental subjects such as Pierre de Coubertin ideal, the structure of the Olympic Movement, its governance and law should be included.</p>	<p>The criticism addressed to the course structure is too general to be answered concretely. What specifically is so problematic that needs to be changed? In a similar vein, the criticism leveled at the proposed teaching methodology in some occasions verges on the absurd. For example, "The program fails to incorporate or leverage a variety of pedagogical tools that are fundamental to effective value-based education, such as moral dilemmas, experiential learning, storytelling and role models, project-based learning, Socratic dialogue, value clarification exercises, and autobiographical writing". We honestly fail to see how the lack of incorporation of Socratic dialogue and autobiographical writing constitutes an insuperable obstacle to the implementation of an MA programme.</p> <p>The EEC has also mentioned that the founder of the Modern Olympics, Pierre de Coubertin, is not honored by a full course, or that there is no provision for the legal and administrative aspects of the Games. However, both "omissions" were conscious decisions at the planning stage:</p> <p>a) Pierre de Coubertin could not of course be absent from any discussion of the Olympic concept, but his contribution is discussed in a multi-faceted, multi-disciplinary way, in several different courses, rather than in a single "biographical/linear" one and</p> <p>b) as already stated above, the proposed MA Programme has a more general outlook, targeting sports management and cultural aspects of sports in general, rather than the structure of a specific sports organization (such as the national and</p>	<p>The criticism of the program is global and as you have read in our first report, we offer an amendment to the entire program since it does not offer a holistic and integral vision. The themes do not appear linked, there is no solution of continuity between the contents, which appear isolated, as if they were designed by a connoisseur, always superficial, of a subject who has not worked on research on the Olympic Studies topic. The topics are not taken to the territory of Olympic studies, which should be the ultimate goal. They focus on the topic in which the lecturer who is going to teach the course is an expert. This prevents the syllabus from having a comprehensive, integral and interconnected vision that a master's degree should have. The topics and courses seem like mere additions not related to each other. This seriously collides with the idea of multidisciplinary spoken of in these allegations.</p> <p>The MA's synchronous sessions do not show any significant strategy for implementing interactive pedagogical tools that facilitate collaborative learning and active student engagement.</p> <p>The absence of methodologies aimed at teaching Olympic Values and sports Ethics – such as Socratic dialogue and autobiographical writing – presents a significant barrier to effectively implementing this distance learning MA program, whose core content deals with Olympism and Olympic studies. Integrating moral dilemmas, experiential learning, storytelling, role models, project-based learning, Socratic dialogue, value clarification exercises, and autobiographical writing are not arbitrary additions. Each method plays a crucial role in</p>

	<p>international Olympic Committees). In any way, Coubertin's contribution is taught in an entire week of the course MOS 520, while his writings and ideas are also studied in various courses, something that may have escaped the committee's attention.</p> <p>Moreover, the EEC considers the discussion of the politics and the economy of the Games as Marxist, and claims that “it does not agree well with the concept that is presented later, that of the Commercialization of Games, a term associated with the most exacerbated economic liberalism”. Although we strongly refute any such outdated labels as “Marxist economics”, we disagree that it is contradictory for an allegedly Marxist outlook (which by definition views culture as a superstructure on economy) to discuss the commercialization of the Games. The perception put forward by the EEC, that the History of the Olympic Games ought to be taught linearly through a conventional and conservative chronological approach, is in contrast to the modern anthropological approach that characterizes the courses of the proposed MA Programme , according to which the phenomena are examined thematically and dialectically, while crucial parameters are discussed and new challenges of the Olympic Games such as commercialization, the anti-Olympic movement, even the Olympic Games in the era of social movements, rights claims and inclusiveness.</p> <p>We also disagree that there is no relationship of the course “Digital cultural environments: Virtual Exhibitions and Competitions” with the Olympic Games, since this innovative course covers the topics of studies of digital applications developed in the archaeological site of the cradle of the Olympic Games, ancient Olympia.</p> <p>Moreover, the teaching of legal subjects is not included in the objectives of the</p>	<p>fostering critical thinking, ethical reasoning, and personal reflection, which are indispensable components of an advanced academic program taught at a distance, particularly in Olympic studies, whose central core is ethics, education, and sports values. The absence of methodologies such as Socratic dialogue and autobiographical writing presents a significant barrier to the effective implementation of an MA program. Socratic dialogue, for instance, encourages students to engage in deep, reflective questioning, promoting a deeper understanding of complex issues. Autobiographical writing allows students to connect theoretical concepts to their personal experiences, fostering a more profound and meaningful learning experience at a distance. Of course, implementing these methodologies requires the engagement of instructors specialized in value-based education in distance learning. Moreover, the program for synchronous sessions needs to mention educational tools such as break-out rooms, real-time polling, and collaborative platforms, which are essential for creating an effective distance-learning environment and for meaningful student interaction and engagement during live sessions.</p> <p>The paucity and near absence of specific distance learning methodologies for the content in general, and more specifically, the ethical and pedagogical aspects of sports studies, is also revealed by the lack of a specific evaluation model for the outcomes resulting from the application of such methodologies to the training of potential students, and by the extreme inadequacy of the asynchronous materials intended for use during the course.</p> <p>Relying on preexisting internet video materials without creating original learning objects significantly undermines the learning experience. Learning objects should be designed to align with the course objectives and tailored to meet the specific needs of the students. Reusing generic materials does not provide the depth or contextual relevance</p>
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	<p>proposed MA Programme, since it is offered under the Faculty of Education and has a clear purpose to connect the Olympic Games with Humanities, Arts, Cultural Studies and Education.</p> <p>Finally, the optional course "Digital Sports Communication" aims to analyze communication strategies in the field of sports in the digital era and does not aim to review the means of communication and promotion available exclusively to the Olympic Games, such as the Olympic Channel and the audiovisual rights of the Games. We do not consider it wise to limit the teaching material to the practices of the Games and not to spread it to the wider field of sports, since we aim to offer our students the possibility to work in the field of communication of major sports events if they chose to do so.</p>	<p>necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.</p> <p>This critique does not dismiss the potential of a distance learning course in Olympic Studies but calls for a more severe and robust incorporation of well-established pedagogical strategies that can significantly enhance the educational experience at a distance. Implementing these methodologies would address the current shortcomings and elevate the program's overall quality and effectiveness.</p> <p>It is noted that there is no mention of the International Olympic Committee and its structure and governance. This is justified by the University because "MA Program has a more general outlook, targeting sports management and cultural aspects of sports in general, rather than the structure of a specific sports organization (such as the national and international Olympic Committees)." This justification is not at all convincing since this master's degree is on Olympic Studies and the owner and promoter of the Olympic Games is the International Olympic Committee. The organizational, legal and governance aspects of the Olympic Games should have a determining role in this master and do not appear in a program that attempts to be multidisciplinary.</p> <p>We understand that an important part of the teachers is from the Faculty of Education, since it is the organizer of the master's degree. However, this does not at all justify the absence of legal topics in a master's degree that aims to be multidisciplinary. A professor expert in legal issues and governance could have been included from the faculty of law of one of the promoting institutions.</p> <p>We reiterate that the presence of "Digital cultural environments: Virtual Exhibitions and Competitions" is not sufficiently justified. It appears in the master's syllabus in isolation and its presence in this master is not clearly explained, apart from the mention in this</p>
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		<p>explanatory note of the virtual exhibition prepared by Microsoft of the ruins of Ancient Olympia. This section, like many others, does not appear properly integrated into the whole that is the master on Olympic Studies, nor is its presence adequately justified. It appears as a cut and paste, a mere addition of topics that the lectures available in the institutions involved can offer, without any integration into the whole, once again.</p>
<p>Marking criteria should be clearly stated and explained for all marked assignments and accompanied by a marking rubric.</p>	<p>These criteria are included on the last two pages of all Study Guides.</p>	<p>The last 2 pages of study guides detail the aim and instructions of different assignments. There are no details of what an assignment graded A should look like, graded B etc. This information should be listed in a respective marking rubric for each assignment.</p>
<p>The study guide template of DLU should be used to improve the presentation and readability of study guide content.</p>	<p>The DIPAE template was used.</p>	<p>The study guide prepared by the university's DLU presents a clearer structure and is more user-friendly compared to the template used at the moment. Also, given that courses need to adhere to the DLU principles, the respective template by DLU needs to be used.</p>
<p>Clear and detailed instructions need to be provided to students as to how to take part in weekly interactive activities such as online discussions, role playing and forums.</p>	<p>Each weekly activity includes clear instructions, which are detailed in the Interactive Activities appendix and will be further detailed when they appear on Moodle.</p>	<p>In the respective appendix, there are instructions detailing the aim and questions students need to answer for each activity. There are no details of e.g., what students need to do to the forum (length of their forum responses, number of responses to comments of others) to enable discussion and not just submission of answers. Another example is the group debate (p.9); there are no details of how students should be grouped and how they should conduct the debate online.</p>
<p>Self-assessment activities and a self-correction guide need to be used across all courses.</p>	<p>The Programme includes a large number of self-assessment activities, such as quizzes, role-playing, simulations etc. However, as the interactive activities are already numerous weekly, we would not wish to add more workload, as students are already systematically tested and assessed.</p>	<p>The presence of self-assessment activities and self-corrections guides is a requirement for all Distance Learning Programmes, see https://www.dipae.ac.cy/index.php/en/news-and-events/events/10-dipae-en?start=90</p>

<p>Innovative online tools such as games, simulations and virtual museum tours should be considered.</p>	<p>Such activities have been included in almost all courses. Please refer to the Interactive Activities Appendix.</p>	<p>The presence of self-assessment activities and self-corrections guides is a requirement for all Distance Learning Programmes, see https://www.dipae.ac.cy/index.php/en/news-and-events/events/10-dipae-en?start=90</p>
<p>Material should be integrated in the body of Moodle, creating a seamless learning experience by navigating within a single window.</p>	<p>Shortly after the EE visit this suggestion was adopted in Moodle for the sample course that was presented to the EEC. The suggestion will be implemented in all Moodle courses of the programme.</p>	<p>Compliant</p>
<p>The optional offering of student internships would enhance connections to the job market and facilitate future employment.</p>	<p>We appreciate the comment and we acknowledge the importance of internships. However, according to the Cypriot law, internships are optional and suggested to students who are not working, and have not had relevant experience through the Erasmus Training Programme.</p>	<p>Compliant</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>The absence of research experience in coordinators and professors is not something that can be addressed in the short term. This is a fundamental structural problem that decisively determines the quality of the program content.</p> <p>The recommendation would be to reformulate the program by seeking association with a new European university with expert researchers in Olympic Studies. The University of Nicosia has consolidated experience in online teaching and should seek, together with the University of Patras, a partnership with another European university with experts in Olympic Studies. Otherwise, we do not see this</p>	<p>The EEC's position that the teaching staff CVs do not exhibit any connection to Olympic Studies is simply contrary to fact, and seriously misrepresents the academic staff profile. To give a few concrete examples:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Two funded research projects on the creator of the Athens 2004 ceremonies and internationally acclaimed artist, Dimitris Papaioannou managed by the MA coordinator, A. Xepapadakou. 2. The article MOS 530: Pateraki Mimina, <i>Performances of Greekness in international sports events: Celebrating the winning with the cinematic Zorba's dance</i>, which studies the ritualistic aspects of victory celebrations in the Olympic games. 3. The research project "Promoting Olympic values to enhance inclusivity and diversity in the school environment" implemented by the University of Nicosia, the Cyprus National Olympic Committee and the International Olympic Academic. Dr Yorgos Yiapanas participates as leader of the research team. 4. 4-year-long professional managerial activity and experience by the MA coordinator in the "Athens 2004" Games. 5. Coordination of the <i>Olympic Paralympic Flame Relay</i> (2004) by the instructor of MOS 530. 6. Participation of the MA coordinator, Prof. E. Karakantza in two International Scholars Symposium 'Sports, Society, and Culture' in Ancient Olympia: a) July 2017 with the contribution "In Athletics We Remember; The Phaeacians Games and the (Re)Construction of Odysseus Lost Identity in Book 8 of the <i>Odyssey</i>" and b) in July 2023, dedicated to "Female Athletes, Women's Sport, and the Olympic Experience" with the contribution: "Sapphic poetry as (ant)agonistic paradigm in the male sympotic world of excellence". <p>To conclude, the academic staff of the proposed MA in Olympic Studies: Culture, Education and Sports has research experience in subjects related to the three scientific disciplines/fields of the Programme (Culture, Sports, Education). In support of the above, we would like to refer to the CVs that have been submitted, as well as the</p>	<p>The previous academic and professional experience of the master's coordinators and the teaching staff is certainly scarce. None of them has a sustained interest over time in the subject of the master's degree. There is no continuity or depth in this topic by any of the academics or the coordinators. No truly relevant publication on the topic is shown. At the same time, technical / administrative or local coordination works are presented as indicators of previous experience in the field of knowledge. On the other hand, none of the elements alleged as previous experience show the multidisciplinary nature that is considered key to this master's approach. For example, the only lecture at the International Olympic Academy was in the institution's only session not dedicated to Olympic issues. On the other hand, the participation of one of the members in a research project on the topic has not led to any research article or book. These insights clearly show that previous experience does not correspond to the subject of the master's degree.</p>

<p>program as viable as it is formulated due to the lack of expertise in its teaching staff regarding research in Olympic Studies</p>	<p>profiles of the academic staff in international databases such as Scopus and Google scholar. The EEC's suggestion to cooperate with a third European university, which has expertise in Olympic Studies, worries us, given that very few institutions internationally offer studies in this field, which are mostly very low in international rankings. This MA Programme proposes a more open, inclusive and critical approach to the subject.</p>	<p>Regarding cooperation with other Universities with previous experience, we can recommend the 67 Olympic Studies Centers, all of which are linked to universities and an important part of which has the experience that the University of Nicosia lacks. Therefore, we do not see the University's concern about the existence of few international partners with previous experience justified. As you have been able to read in the arguments mentioned above, this previous experience does not need to be in the organization of master's projects, but rather they have a research or training background superior to and at the same time complementary to your own in the master's themes they present. We once again reiterate that the staff of teachers presented in this master's degree is of a good level in their fields of study, but they lack the necessary experience in work related to Olympic Studies, the central theme of the master's degree, and in multidisciplinary collaboration in this field of knowledge.</p>
<p>A plan should be in place to ensure all staff involved in teaching the programme attend to online training and this is repeated/rephrased every couple of years.</p>	<p>All full-time faculty members of the programme are required to complete the 36-hour (12-week) "UNIC Faculty Training and Development Seminar on Teaching and Learning." Additionally, the University constantly monitors the faculty training needs through the "Faculty Training and Development Unit" and offers every semester trainings to update the knowledge and skills acquired by the faculty members through the teaching and learning Seminar mentioned above. The schedule of these trainings for several semesters was provided to the EEC the day after the visit.</p>	<p>There should be a plan in place detailing the minimum number of hours per year a faculty member needs to attend professional development activities related to online learning and teaching, to ensure they remain up to date with changes in the area and they can respond effectively to the</p>



		changing needs of online instruction.
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
Forums should be systematically used in teaching as a core means of communication and collaboration between students.	The offered courses include at least 120 Forum discussions. Please refer to the Interactive Activities Appendix.	Compliant.
Regarding the learning progression, a student support policy should be formulated to ensure students are regularly monitored by their tutors and support is provided on a timely manner.	The DL unit already has advisors that help the students throughout their studies. We will additionally implement the tutor-tutee system. Each student will be assigned to a full staff faculty that will be the point of contact for any issue he/she may face, or for any help needed.	Compliant.

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
The use of innovative tools, such as online games, simulations and virtual museum tours, would benefit the online delivery of this programme.	They are already included in the proposed activities. Please see the Appendix "Interactive Activities".	See relevant response in previous sections.
Students' mobility within and across institutions should be specified for this programme and encouraged.	No physical mobility is predicted in the framework of the proposed e-learning MA programme.	In the public presentation held last March by the organisers of the program, it was commented that students would have the possibility of attending Olympia for the development of various activities. This aspect is not clarified in this document.

B. Conclusions and final remarks

The EEC must provide final conclusions and remarks, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>The program presents two major weaknesses that we consider fundamental: the total absence of expert teaching staff in Olympic Studies and, therefore, a very poor design of the study program, a consequence of this lack of specialization on the part of the coordinators and teachers of this master</p>	<p>See Section 1, 2 & 3</p> <p>Moreover, please find a selective list of bibliographical sources that were utilized for the preparation of the content of the MA Programme and which constitute its teaching material:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Albanides, E. & Karasimopoulou, S. (2014). <i>Implementation of Olympic education in Greece</i>. In Chatziefstathiou, D., & Müller, N. (Eds.), <i>Olympism, Olympic Education and Learning Legacies</i>. Cambridge Scholars Publishing 2. Ancient Olympia. Common Grounds. https://unlocked.microsoft.com/ancient-olympia-common-grounds/ - Accessed on 19 February 2023 3. Anderson, E., Magrath, R., & Bullingham, R. (2016). <i>Out in sport: The experiences of openly gay and lesbian athletes in competitive sport</i>. Routledge. 4. Bale, John (2008), "From the Anthropological Days in the Anthropological Olympics", in <i>The 1904 Anthropology Days and Olympic Games. Sports, Race and American Imperialism</i>, Susan Brownell (ed), Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, pp. 324-349. 5. Billings, C. & Andrews (2008), <i>Olympic media. Inside the biggest show on television</i>, Routledge: New York. 6. Bourgeois, Robyn (2009), "Deceptive inclusion: the 2010 Vancouver Olympics and violence against First Nations people", <i>Canadian woman studies</i> 27, no 2/3 (2009): 39-44. 7. Boykoff, Jules, (2014), <i>Activism and the Olympics: Dissent at the Games in Vancouver and London</i>, New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. 8. Brandt, S., ed. (2021). <i>The Modern Heritage of the Olympic Games. Historic Sports Sites</i> 	<p>The use of these sources appears in the project that this commission has reviewed in a carved form. The inclusion of this bibliography does not solve the fundamental problem of the teachers' lack of expertise in the topics they are going to develop. There is no evidence that the publications are from members of the teaching staff, but rather from external sources - other academics.</p>

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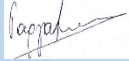
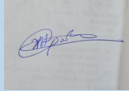

	<p>83. Tzanelli, Rodanthi (2008), "The nation has two 'voices'. Diforia and performativity in Athens 2004", <i>European Journal of Cultural Studies</i>, 11(4), 489-508</p> <p>84. Tzanelli, Rodanthi (2013), <i>Olympic Ceremonialism and The Performance of National Character: From London 2012 to Rio 2016</i>, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.</p> <p>85. Walters, Guy (2006), "Berlin Games. A party in such a house may not be a pleasant Experience" in <i>How the Nazis stole the Olympic Dream</i>, Harper-Colling e-books, 23-64.</p> <p>86. Watt, Paul. "It's not for us' Regeneration, the 2012 Olympics and the gentrification of East London", <i>City</i> 17/1 (2013): 99-118.</p> <p>87. Willis, W. H. (2014) "Athletic contests in the epic" in Thomas F. Scanlon (ed), <i>Sport in the Greek and Roman Worlds, V. I: Early Greece, The Olympics and Contests</i>, Oxford, pp. 60-90.</p> <p>88. Woff, R. (2000). <i>The Ancient Greek Olympics</i>. Oxford: Oxford University Press.</p> <p>89. Young, D. (1996). <i>The Modern Olympics: A Struggle for Revival</i>. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press</p> <p>90. Young, D. (2004). <i>A Brief History of the Olympic Games</i>. Malden, MA: Blackwell</p>	
<p>The proposed program lacks the necessary feedback and enrichment that the combination of research in Olympic Studies and its teaching brings. The EEC considers this fact fundamental, as it dramatically affects the structure of the program, the syllabus, and the interactive design offered to future students. As commented in previous sections, the program's design has a total lack of coherence in its contents. Probably this is due to the lack of research tradition in the Olympic Movement and Olympic Games of any of the coordinators and professors.</p>	<p>See section 1, 2 & 3</p>	

<p>As described in the document, none of them can demonstrate any academic publication or teaching experience in Olympic Studies.</p>		
<p>The part dedicated to the synergies of teaching staff between research and teaching occupies a point in section 3.3, but qualitatively it should have a determining weight because this shapes the design of a program in an area of knowledge, in which teachers have not previously worked on. It is a decisive structural issue that seriously questions the quality of the content that is going to be taught. This fact questions its viability as a serious academic project that should be put into practice.</p>	<p>See section 1, 2 & 3</p>	
<p>The absence of research experience in coordinators and professors is not something that can be addressed in the short term. This is a fundamental structural problem that decisively determines the quality of the program content, as we have mentioned. The recommendation would be to reformulate the courses by seeking association with a new European university with expert researchers in Olympic Studies. The University of Nicosia has consolidated experience in online teaching and should seek, together with the University of Patras in classical studies, and a partnership with another</p>	<p>See section 3</p>	



<p>European university with experts in Olympic Studies is fundamental to create a meaningful program. Otherwise, the proposed program will not be viable.</p>		
<p>The program does not adequately describe the job opportunities and employability possibilities of future students, apart from the continuation in doctoral studies.</p>	<p>See section 1</p>	

A. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Emilio Fernández Peña	
Emanuele Isidori	
Dimitris Gargalianos	
Christothea Herodotou	
Stella Koupepidou	

Date: