

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 14.2.2026

## Higher Education Institution's Response

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

**In Greek:**

**Αναλυτικά Προγράμματα, Διδασκαλία και Συγκριτική Παιδαγωγική [3-8 ακαδημαϊκά εξάμηνα, 90 ECTS, Μεταπτυχιακό]**

**In English:**

**Curriculum, Teaching and Comparative Education [3- 8 academic semesters, 90 ECTS, Master]**

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

**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. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2<sup>nd</sup> column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
  - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in \*.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

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

We agree that the ‘Independent Study’ course, which was a recommendation of the prior evaluation in 2020 and has been implemented since, has been greatly appreciated by students and coordinators for the substantial flexibility and customisation it affords. We also think that the compulsory core seminar has been an innovative element which has been providing students and staff with opportunities to invite international experts to design theme-based and issues-based seminars, which provide detail and depth to broader areas we explore in the courses. These elements, in combination with the personal advising of students we think have contributed to the culture of trust and support developed amongst students and staff as a community.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Whilst this is beyond the competence of the Department, we feel that the Graduate School could be viewed as a vehicle at the level of the university that offers more than administrative services for graduate students. We offer a set of reflections on this in the final section on recommendations.</p>	<p>We found the discussion very useful as to how the Graduate School could acquire a more substantial position in our master’s students’ academic experience. Several activities that the School is involved in of academic nature we have already been supporting and involved in for doctoral students and can certainly open up for master’s students as well. The Graduate School and the Vice-Rectorship of Academic Affairs are involved in an annual Doctoral Student Colloquium (alongside other Cyprus universities and across all disciplines) to which our doctoral students have presented (e.g. in April 2024 when it was organised by the University of Cyprus) and will present in the upcoming one (at Neapolis University, Paphos in April 2026). The Graduate School also organises several internal events (seminars, colloquia and symposia) which we offer to our master’s students to attend as part of the courses or the seminar to then conduct small assignments and reflective pieces around their experience in relation to the program’s topics and issues of interest. It was with this rationale that the Graduate School supported us in the ECER Summer School 2024, which was an international event, but our own master’s students attended and developed relevant essays as part of the seminar requirements. Along similar lines, an interdisciplinary summer school for doctoral students, funded and organised by the School of Social Sciences and Sciences of Education in the summer of 2026, will also be</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>supported by the Graduate School and will be offered as an optional activity to our master's students. Finally, many of our master's and doctoral students have benefitted from partial or full scholarships administered by the Graduate School. Part of the part-time opportunities and studentships available to master's students are administered by the Graduate School, as part of the character of the university which expects income from postgraduate programme tuition fees to 'return' to students in the form of part-time employment opportunities, opportunities to present work in conferences and/or studentships/support (on both academic and economic grounds). This indirectly supports our master's students academic experience as they get to develop small-scale work experience in tasks of academic nature with our guidance and/or have some financial support allowing them to focus more on their studies, rather than having to seek other employment.</p>	
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## 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

We thank the Committee for acknowledging the dedication and professional attitude of the academic staff and we are glad this also emerged in your meetings with students and graduates.

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Although doing internships is possible and encouraged, this component of the course might be strengthened further, e.g. by including an internship as a compulsory element of the programme.</p>	<p>Internships are at the moment informally pursued through assignments in the master's courses, especially as part of the seminar or independent study and through the use of Erasmus+. This is a timely comment because the Department of Education is in the process of establishing a network of institutions and actors for more formally providing optional internships to its undergraduate students (Department Council Meetings in January and February 2026 set the course outline and regulations for these), expected to be implemented for the first time in the summer of 2026. Having established this network and experience, we will then carefully review actors whom we would more formally involve in the master's program as well.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

The teaching staff, carefully selected and promoted through University law, regulations and procedures, we think lies at the heart of the quality of the program and has so far been working as a counter-weight to any difficulties (e.g. of the geography of the Department) might be presenting to students, as we try to limit student movement and schedule classes so that the teaching staff mostly commutes between the old and new campus. That this staff is permanent and devoted to the Department's programs we agree provides the stability and long-term commitment students recognise in the support they receive. It also enables the dynamic relationship between the academic staff's research and teaching. The ability to host visiting international scholars, long and short-term, as well as young researchers, facilitates research discussions and teaching alike. We also agree that the staff is substantially and continuously supported by the Centre for Teaching and Learning for both ongoing development and feedback/evaluation mechanisms.

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Although the teaching staff demonstrates strong qualifications, active research profiles and a clear commitment to high-quality teaching, the way student evaluations inform staff development and career progression is not fully evident. Evaluations are systematically collected and analysed; any issues with performance are picked up by the Department Chair. Student concerns can be flagged with the Course Coordinators.</p>	<p>Evaluations are systematically collected by the Centre for Teaching and Learning for each instructor by all students for all taught courses at the end of each semester. According to University regulations, the results are communicated only to each instructor and the Department Chair, who can use this information to encourage reflection and suggest support, if deemed necessary. The Centre has also been using overview departmental data to inform decisions as to what seminars, activities and professional development opportunities it could offer to the staff overall.</p> <p>The Department, also receives feedback from students and graduates (for undergraduate and postgraduate programs separately), as per the University's Internal Quality Assurance Committee processes. The more recent results have been discussed in the January 2026 Department of Education Council and decisions have been made to address them.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

We welcome the Committee’s comments on the clarity and transparency of the admission policy, progression, recognition of previous studies and the certification students receive from this program, as well as the financial support/customisation that facilitates students’ enrolments. Attention to these, alongside the small cohorts and the constant support these enable in a professional manner, we think have contributed to students’ remarkable completion rates and positive feedback.

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<p>Although the programme demonstrates strong student progression outcomes and a high level of support from academic advisors, one area where transparency could be enhanced relates to the visibility of key progression indicators. While staff reported excellent completion rates, no dropouts and timely graduation patterns, these data are not systematically published. Making this information accessible would reinforce the programme’s accountability and could provide valuable guidance to prospective and current students. For this reason, it is recommended that the programme compile success rates, completion times and data on interruptions annually and make them publicly available in a clear and standardised format.</p>	<p>These numbers have so far been very satisfactory and internally clear to the coordinators (no dropouts, completion rates in the 3-4 semesters time range as per the program’s stipulated time-frame); we agree that adding this information to the web-site and social media (as from the Fall Semester 2026-2027) information can add transparency as well as showcase the program’s success to potential candidates.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>In terms of admission information, the programme already applies well-structured and transparent selection criteria; however, the public-facing documentation could be strengthened by more clearly communicating how the various admission elements—academic background, English proficiency, reference letters and interview-based motivation—are considered in the final decision. Providing this clarification would enhance applicants’ understanding of expectations and further reinforce the transparency of the process.</p>	<p>These selection criteria for admissions are common for all master’s programs and the Call for Positions each semester is prepared and administered by the Graduate School (upon consultation for the number of positions with each Department and program). The specific gravity for each of the elements in this call is not pre-determined and this is not something we control as a program or Department. As a program, we examine each candidate considering all elements simultaneously and also use the space of the interview to ask for any additional information that might be needed in a way that has so far been very valid and trustworthy.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



<p>Finally, regarding recognition of learning, the programme's procedures for recognising prior studies are clearly defined, but the documentation makes limited reference to the potential recognition of non-formal or informal learning. Even if such cases are rare, clarifying the programme's position—either by stating whether this recognition is possible or by outlining its limits—would improve alignment with European standards and provide greater clarity for applicants.</p>	<p>We agree this is an important dimension and has been a very recent discussion at the University of Cyprus; we forward this recommendation to the Graduate School and the Internal Quality Assurance Committee for their study and further actions, as it is a university-wide matter.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
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## 5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

The Library and new campus with its diverse teaching facilities for all kinds of courses and sizes are state of the art and infrastructure supports our efforts for quality teaching and student support. The high quality of the new campus is actually fuelling our requests for the Department to be relocated there, so that academic and administrative staff are further facilitated in supporting students' studies.

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Move the Department of Education offices to the new campus as soon as is feasible as this has placed limits on the ability of the Department – academics, administrators and doctoral students - to feel part of the university and easily access all of its services.</p>	<p>Since the Onsite Visit of the Committee in November 2025, the Department's leadership has conducted meetings and arrangements with the University Leadership and its Technical Services and a plan for its move to the main/new campus has been laid out. This is expected to be completed until December 2026 to a substantial office area (in the spaces previously occupied by the Engineering School which has now moved to its own building). These spaces are currently being renovated and adjusted to the needs of our Department as requested, to include office space for the academic staff, meeting areas as well as a substantial area of doctoral students, visiting and emeriti academic staff. We expect this workspace, which also includes niches of socialisation, to further support our students' experience as they will have additional spaces to meet with staff, between them and work in the new campus where they also attend classes, use the library and all other services provided during their studies.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

**6. Additional for doctoral programmes**  
 (ALL ESG)

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## 7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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## B. Conclusions and final remarks

We would like to thank the Committee for this detailed and insightful report; meeting you, answering questions and preparing the presentation of the programs already encouraged a reflective process we rarely have the opportunity to conduct in a systematic manner. We address below each of the points raised above, in the spirit of further supporting the strengths of the program as experienced by our students and staff.


Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The most pressing issue is the physical separation of the Department's offices from the main teaching resources and the library on the new campus. We strongly recommend prioritising the relocation of the Department to the main campus to better integrate academic activities and support services for both staff and students.</p>	<p><b>Relocation to the New Campus:</b> Since the Onsite Visit of the Committee in November 2025, the Department's leadership has conducted meetings and arrangements with the University Leadership and its Technical Services and a plan for its move to the main/new campus has been laid out. This is expected to be completed until December 2026 to a substantial office area (in the spaces previously occupied by the Engineering School which has now moved to its own building). These spaces are currently being renovated and adjusted to the needs of our Department as requested, to include office space for the academic staff, meeting areas as well as a substantial area of doctoral students, visiting and emeriti academic staff. We expect this workspace, which also includes niches of socialisation, to further support our students' experience as they will have additional spaces to meet with staff, between them and work in the new campus where they also attend classes, use the library and all other services provided during their studies.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>While the programme continues to attract students, a slight decline in enrolment has been noted. We encourage the department to actively advertise the demonstrable quality of the programme to ensure its long-term sustainability and visibility for future student intakes.</p>	<p><b>Enhanced Visibility of the Program:</b> We have taken further action in promoting the program to graduates and senior students of our undergraduate programs with the new call for positions which has been announced for the new academic year. Moreover, the Department has participated in the university event of promotion of the programs on the 15th of February and has created social media accounts for the same purpose, administered by the Secretariat of</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>the Department. Finally, the School of Social Sciences and Sciences of Education has employed a social media expert who is in contact with us to disseminate information about the program through the official accounts of the School as well as through the production of a short video/interview with us and current students and graduates.</p>	
<p>The role and benefits of the doctoral school for Master's students, particularly those on a coursework track, require clarification. We recommend further elaboration on how this school can function not just as an administrative unit, but as a vehicle for fostering interdisciplinary work and providing tangible value to all postgraduate students.</p>	<p><b>Role for the Graduate School:</b>          We found the discussion very useful as to how the Graduate School could acquire a more substantial position in our master's students' academic experience. Several activities that the School is involved in of academic nature we have already been supporting and involved in for doctoral students and can certainly open up for master's students as well. The Graduate School and the Vice-Rectorship of Academic Affairs are involved in an annual Doctoral Student Colloquium (alongside other Cyprus universities and across all disciplines) to which our doctoral students have presented (e.g. in April 2024 when it was organised by the University of Cyprus) and will present in the upcoming one (at Neapolis University, Paphos in April 2026). The Graduate School also organises several internal events (seminars, colloquia and symposia) which we offer to our master's students to attend as part of the courses or the seminar to then conduct small assignments and reflective pieces around their experience in relation to the program's topics and issues of interest. It was with this rationale that the Graduate School supported us in the ECER Summer School 2024, which was an international event, but our own master's students attended and developed relevant essays as part of the seminar requirements. Along similar lines, an interdisciplinary summer school for doctoral students, funded and organised by the School of Social Sciences and Sciences of Education in the summer of 2026, will also be supported by the Graduate School and will be offered as an optional activity to our master's students.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>Finally, many of our master's and doctoral students have benefitted from partial or full scholarships administered by the Graduate School. Part of the part-time opportunities and studentships available to master's students are administered by the Graduate School, as part of the character of the university which expects income from postgraduate programme tuition fees to 'return' to students in the form of part-time employment opportunities, opportunities to present work in conferences and/or studentships/support (on both academic and economic grounds). This indirectly supports our master's students academic experience as they get to develop small-scale work experience in tasks of academic nature with our guidance and/or have some financial support allowing them to focus more on their studies, rather than having to seek other employment.</p>	
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## A. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Stavroula Philippou</b>	Coordinator	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
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**Date:** 14.2.2026

