



Doc. 300.1.2

# Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: 7.1.2021

- **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 εξάμηνα, 90 ECTS, Μάστερ, 2<sup>ος</sup> κύκλος)  
**In English:**  
Curriculum, Teaching and Comparative Education (3-8 semesters / 90 ECTS, MA, 2<sup>nd</sup> cycle)
- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating

**The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws of 2015 to 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].**

## **A. 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) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
  - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.1.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

### ***Introductory remarks***

We would like to begin by expressing our thanks to the members of the External Evaluation Committee for the time and effort invested in this evaluation process which we found constructive and useful. We also thank the members of the Committee for their positive feedback as well as for their identifying areas for improvement. In what follows in the rest of this document we respond to each of their recommendations in detail per section as well as overall.

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

### *External Evaluation Committee's "Areas of improvement and recommendations"*

1. It could be useful for the programme to indicate where external advice/expertise from international academic experts is drawn upon, or who the employers/institutions are where Master's students work. These might align better the learning outcomes of the programme and the needs of these institutions.
2. It would be valuable to have some data about the added-value of the programme in terms of access to the labour market and career development. This data is missing in the report and only some qualitative impressions were given in the dialogue with the Coordinators as part of our virtual visit.
3. The two options of the Master could be better explained and differentiated. The exclusion of a Master thesis in Option A (which includes more courses) is an interesting alternative, but it could also be substituted by a different type of thesis (less research oriented and more policy oriented or based on new pedagogical practices).

### *Coordinators' Response (each point below follows the numbering of the recommendations above)*

1. International expertise is drawn upon through the coordinators' participation in international academic bodies and journals, as well as through the hosting of international conferences and seminars (e.g. the 2018 Conference of the Comparative Education Society in Europe) when our students are exposed to and participate in international conversations in the fields of curriculum studies and comparative education. Moreover, international expertise is present through the use of international literature in the reading lists and overall material of the courses. It is finally evident in the seminars and lectures given within courses by visiting academics who are invited to interact both with students and academic staff (e.g. for example in the past we hosted internationally renowned scholars in Curriculum Studies such as Ivor Goodson and in Comparative Education such as Robert Cowen), as well as in the participation of academics from outside Cyprus in examining committees of MA dissertations. Finally, international speakers are specifically sought for teaching the EDU 697 Seminar in "Curriculum, Teaching and Comparative Education" (6 ECTS).
- 2 (which also covers the latter part of point1). Master's titles add to a candidate's "points" for appointment in public schools and are an almost necessary qualification for working in private schools. In addition, this specific Master's and the expertise it provides have expanded the range of employers and institutions where our Master's graduates have found work; based on our records, these include the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, the CYQAA (Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education), public and private universities, NGOs, the European Commission, research projects and centres. Though these institutions are diverse and demand different kinds of work, the learning outcomes of the programme are designed to cover a broad range of outcomes from understanding governance, policy and official curricula to issues of implementation and enactment in classrooms, schools and diverse educational bodies/institutions.
- 3 The provision of the two options for the Master's degree is a decision taken at the Department level and applies to all its Master's programmes; these are now clearly distinguished on the web-site:  
<http://www.ucy.ac.cy/edu/documents/edu/Postgraduate/%CE%91%CE%BD%CE%B1%C>

[E%BB%CF%85%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AC %CE%A0%CF%81%CE%BF%CE%B3%CF%81%CE%AC%CE%BC%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B1 %CE%94%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%B1 %CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B9 %CE%A3%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%81%CE%B9 %CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE %CE%A0%CE%B1%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%B1%CE%B3%CF%89%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE %CE%9C%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%81.pdf](#)

as well as in the induction materials provided to students at the beginning of their studies. We agree that the theses conducted can vary from basic (research oriented) to applied (more policy and practice oriented) research, and this is a decision taken with each student who opts for Option B, having considered their background and research interests. Such variety can also be seen in the examples of theses titles included in the presentation of the programme.

## **2. Teaching, learning and student assessment**

*(ESG 1.3)*

### *External Evaluation Committee's "Areas of improvement and recommendations"*

1. Its flexibility can be further improved with more use of blended teaching approaches, allowing, for example, a flipped classroom in which students attend a lectures and review literature online prior to class so as to discuss, debate and collaborate physically in class. In this way, more time can be spent on student-centered learning with student input in class.
2. Except for the Seminar (6 ECTS) there is not much scheduled space for community development of the students. Meetings with students are scheduled as part of the courses. It would appear that student meetings, formal or informal, are difficult to schedule as there is not enough working and meeting space for students in the department's location. We hope that the University will prioritise the relocation of the Department into a space that enables more conducive and collective learning to take plan.
3. Students indicated a need for more interdisciplinary work which involves meeting teachers and students from other disciplines. This need can be combined with other requests to have more space for independent study, and community development amongst students.
4. Only a few students choose Option B with a master thesis. That means that most student complete the master programme without a major research work. It is recommended that more students who want to go on to doctoral level studies are encouraged to take Option B to provide the programme graduates with research skills and knowledge on independent research work in the domain of Educational Sciences. More students undertaking the Option B route would also strengthen the research-base of the programme.
5. With respect to the assessment, a recommendation is to include a second assessor or peer assessment for each individual assignment (essays, presentations, project reports).
6. Ensuring awareness of education issues in schools and other learning settings via relationship with public providers might benefit those Master students who do not have a formal teaching background.

### *Coordinators' Response (each point below follows the numbering of the recommendations above)*

1. The flexibility of the courses can indeed be improved through the provision of blended learning approaches, however these will have to be approved at a university level before they can be adopted overall-elements of such approaches however are already included in the design of the courses, since readings, notes, videos and other materials are assigned for each week of the semester to be read by students before the meetings; the meetings (scheduled centrally by the university as 3-hour sessions) are thus organized to include discussions, debates and student presentations around this material.
2. & 3. We agree that community development for students would be facilitated by a relocation of the Department to the main campus; this will occur permanently when the building housing the School of Social Sciences and Sciences of Education is completed as planned. In the short-term, we are aware that the Dean of the School is working with the Rectorship to find a suitable building for rent close to the main campus.
4. Although most students select Option A (coursework), all of them are involved in research projects of some scale, either through their assignments for the courses or if they select

EDU689 (Independent Study) which amounts to approximately half of the workload required for a master's thesis. Overall, students who select Option B proceed to apply for a doctoral position as well.

5. A second assessor and peer assessment is a practice that could be helpful if these colleagues/students are aware of the specific topics of the other students' essays. Peer assessment in particular is a practice already implemented for student presentations when the rest of the group are invited to provide feedback and comments.
6. Master students who do not have a formal teaching background indeed need more support in understanding education matters in schools and other settings; this is something taken into consideration when assignment and presentation topics are selected with them as well as when we have individual customized meetings with them to address their particular questions and concerns. Moreover, there is a number of invited speakers in the courses and/or seminar from teachers, doctoral students and other researchers who share their experience on such matters. Finally, because the majority of our students have a previous degree in education at some level, students who do not have a formal teaching background benefit from their interaction during informal small group discussions during class, during formal assignment-presentations from groups of students to the rest of the class as well as by mixing these kinds of students in group assignments.

### 3. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

#### *External Evaluation Committee's "Areas of improvement and recommendations"*

1. Put a process into place to review and update reading lists so that when students are viewing these, they see that the courses are completely up to date.
2. Engage in formative and summative assessment of the courses. This might be done through a mid-semester meeting with the coordinators to ensure that areas of improvement or concerns can be dealt with and be effective for the current cohort.
3. Make teacher development, and teacher development programmes within the University more explicit, and the expectation with regard to staff and their development.

#### *Coordinators' Response (each point below follows the numbering of the recommendations above)*

1. Each semester students receive a course outline for each of the courses they enroll in during the first week of the semester; these course outlines are updated each semester to include recent scholarship as well as to reflect the design of the course by each specific member of academic staff; samples of such course outlines are attached for courses EDU 693 and EDU 603 (Fall Semester 2020). Course outlines are submitted to the Department secretariat at the beginning of each semester. They are thus more detailed and updated when compared to the brief description of each course included in the evaluation application or the prospectus. The reading lists students have access to are therefore the updated ones given to them at the beginning of each semester.
2. A formal pre-semester meeting is organized each July and January for the Fall and Spring semesters respectively with masters and doctoral students together; during these meetings we give guidelines to students about course selection according to the design of the programme and their own interests. Moreover, we collect feedback about their experiences from the previous semester and expectations for the following one. Mid-semester meetings occur within each course with the coordinators who ensure they address any concerns of the particular cohort with the particular course as well as during office hour meetings.
3. The University of Cyprus has established the Centre for Teaching and Learning and signed a Charter on Teaching 2017-2020 (updated every 3 years). The Centre has been very active in providing seminars for new and current staff on a number of topics. It has recently agreed on a Policy for Quality Assurance in Teaching ([http://www.ucy.ac.cy/ctl/documents/KEDIMA/QAssurance/ENGLISH\\_QualityofTeachingPolicyDocument.pdf](http://www.ucy.ac.cy/ctl/documents/KEDIMA/QAssurance/ENGLISH_QualityofTeachingPolicyDocument.pdf)). There are frequent emails by the Centre to the whole of the university community on its activities, including those of teacher development. This was particularly necessary during the last two semesters when courses needed to move online, when the Centre provided a number of seminars addressed to staff on different platforms and online tools. Such activities can be found here: <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/ctl/en/activities/for-instructors/workshops-seminars>. In addition, staff development is covered through the 311 research activities grant. This is an annual grant given centrally by the University to all members of staff for participation in international conferences and research collaboration with foreign universities.

#### 4. Students

(ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

##### *External Evaluation Committee's "Areas of improvement and recommendations"*

1. It might be useful to distinguish between admission and selection requirements. That would help to make the process more objective and transparent.
2. Indications of 'good level of English' could be better specified in the public facing paperwork (e.g. IGCSE IELTS certificates) and the thresh-holds needed.
3. The selection system could include other possible aspects such as previous qualifications or motivation letters to generate richer data on each candidate and improve the selection process.

##### *Coordinators' Response (each point below follows the numbering of the recommendations above)*

- 1 & 3: Following the recommendation, the Graduate School of the University and the Department of Education, which are responsible for setting objective and transparent admission and selection requirements, have now made these more distinct and clear, as seen on their web-sites. More particularly, the Graduate School sets as minimum requirements for admission:
  - a University degree awarded by an accredited institution in the country where it operates, or a degree evaluated as equivalent to a University degree by the Cyprus Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications.
  - Letters of recommendation (2).

See here: <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/graduateschool/el/admissions/admission-requirements>

In addition, the Department of Education sees a candidate's performance to a personal interview as a crucial criterion for admission to one of its programmes, specifically defining the following list of criteria as selection requirements:

- Understanding of the nature of the postgraduate programme of interest. (20%)
- Ability to draw the link between background studies in education or relevant disciplines with the postgraduate programme of interest (20%)
- High commitment to studying/researching for a postgraduate course (20%)
- Explanation of the content and process followed in previous research experience during undergraduate studies and postgraduate studies (if the application is for second master programme or for a PhD) (20%)
- Ability to express own research interests and level to which they are relevant to the programme of interest. (10%)
- Very good knowledge of English language (10%)

See here: <https://www.ucy.ac.cy/edu/en/admission/postgraduate#a3>

Additional selection criteria include: relevant work experience of the candidate; research experience, general and specific to the programme applied; a short statement of the candidate's research goals and interests; the candidate's prizes and awards; and publications (if applicable). These are required from the candidate during the online application process. (See below a copy of the admission application).

Βεβαίωση (Πανεπιστήμιο ή άλλοτα κατά χρονολογική σειρά και έτος που αναφέρεται. Παρατίθεται να αναφέρεται στο σύστημα πιστοποιημένα αντίγραφα πτυχίων της Βαθμολογίας και Πτυχίων)

Από (ημ/μ/γγγ)	Μέχρι (ημ/μ/γγγ)	Πανεπιστήμιο/Κολέγιο	Έντυπο Σπουδών	Επίπεδο Σπουδών	Σταθμικός Μέσος Όρος	Αναλυτική Βαθμολογία	Πτυχίο ή Βαθμολογία Αποφοίτησης
		Πανεπιστήμιο Κύπρου	Τύπιο Επιστημών της Αρχαίας	Πυξίο			Πτυχίο ή Βαθμολογία Αποφοίτησης

Άλλες Σχολικές Διπλώματα Εθνικής Γλώσσας (π.χ. ΓΕΣΙΑΣΕ, ΣΜΑΚ, ΤΣΕΠ, ΙΕΠ ΤΣ). Παρά απίστευτα των εδωδών πρέπει να αποκαταφύγουν.

Εξέταση	Επίπεδο	Αποτέλεσμα	Ημερομηνία	Αναλυτικότητας

Γλώσσες (το επίπεδο προσδιορίζεται με 1, 2, 3 ή 4 ως ανάλογος αριθμός: 1: Ξερό, 2: Πολύ Καλό, 3: Καλό, 4: Μέτριο)

Γλώσσα	Ανδρική/Γυναίκα	Επίπεδο Γραφής	Ομάδα
		Πολύ Καλό	Πολύ Καλό
		Πολύ Καλό	Πολύ Καλό

Εργοδότηση (αναφέρεται, εφόσον υπάρχουν, τις πιο πρόσφατες συναρξές απασχόλησης στις 9 ημ/μ/μμ που σας ενδιαφέρει και κατά δεύτερο λόγο σε άλλα αντίθετα)

Όνομα Εργοδότη/Εταιρίας	Ημερομηνία Από (ημ/μ/γγγ)	Ημερομηνία Μέχρι (ημ/μ/γγγ)	Θέση/Τίτλος	Καθήκοντα

Ερευνητικές Εμπειρίες (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε)

Τίτλος	Αρχείο

Σύντομη Έκθεση Ενδιαφερόμενων Προκαταρκτική Ερευνητική Πρόταση (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε)

Τίτλος	Αρχείο

Δημοσιεύσεις (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε)

Τίτλος	Αρχείο

Αναστάσεις/Αρραστηριότητες/Βραβεία (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε)

Τίτλος	Αρχείο

Άλλες πληροφορίες (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε) (αναφέρεται ταχόν εμπειρίας, εάν διαθέτουμε)

Επιστημονικές Υποτροφίες και Στοιχοδομήματα Διπλών

2. English language requirements for student admission are publicly specified in the website of the Graduate School under the entry “Admissions” first and then “Admission Requirements”. Please see here:

<http://www.ucy.ac.cy/graduateschool/en/admissions/admission-requirements>

This information is also accessible via the Department of Education’s website:

<https://www.ucy.ac.cy/edu/en/admission/postgraduate>

In particular, proficiency in English can be demonstrated through the following certificates:

- G.C.E. O-Level English with a minimum grade “C”.
- I.G.C.S.E. English with a minimum grade “C”.
- I.E.L.T.S. minimum average score 6.5.
- T.O.E.F.L. with a minimum score of 550 (Paper-based) or T.O.E.F.L. with a minimum score 213 (Computer-based) or T.O.E.F.L. (Internet based) with a minimum score 92.
- Cambridge English First (FCE), with a minimum score 176.
- Cambridge English Advanced (CAE), with a minimum score 176.
- Cambridge English Proficiency (CPE), with a minimum score 176.
- Certificate of Proficiency in English (ECPE), with a minimum score 650.
- Anglia Examinations – Proficiency (C1).
- IB diploma (International Baccalaureate).
- Certificate of success in the exams conducted by the Ministry of Education and Culture.
- Certificate of success in year 6th final exams, of the Cyprus State Institutes of Further Education.
- Any other equivalent exam that will prove proficiency in English language.
- Candidates who hold a degree from a recognized university programme taught in English are considered to have proficiency in English.

## 5. Resources

(ESG 1.6)

*External Evaluation Committee's "Areas of improvement and recommendations"*

1. Online accessibility of the resources might be improved. Students indicated a wish to have access to teaching and learning materials from a distance.

*Coordinators' Response (each point below follows the numbering of the recommendations above)*

1. Access to teaching and learning material from a distance is possible and is offered:

-by the Library and especially via VPN (Virtual Private Network) Service, which allows all students to have access, regardless of their IP address, to all Library's information sources and services provided through the Web as if they connect within the University network. For more info please see here: <http://library.ucy.ac.cy/el/services/technical-support/vpn>

-by each course's instructor weekly through Blackboard (<http://ucy.ac.cy/el/ypiresies-diadiktyou>)

**6. Additional for distance learning programmes**  
*(ALL ESG)*

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

**8. Additional for joint programmes**  
(*ALL ESG*)

Click or tap here to enter text.

## 9. Conclusions and final remarks

### *External Evaluation Committee's "Areas of improvement and recommendations"*

The review of the programme has identified a number of aspects that could improve the programme. These have to be understood as recommendations to enhance what is already an excellent programme.

1. The premises of the Department of Education, situated outside of the university campus, does not help to construct a sense of community and engagement with the rest of the university. It would be important to address this problem to optimise the learning experience of students and the engagement of the Faculty in the wider activity of the university.
2. It would be valuable to have some data about the added-value of the programme in terms of access to the labour market and career development. This data is missing in the report and only some qualitative impressions were given in the dialogue with the Coordinators as part of our virtual visit.
3. The two options of the Master could be better explained and differentiated. The exclusion of a Master thesis in Option A (which includes more courses) is an interesting alternative, but it could also be substituted by a different type of thesis (less research oriented and more policy oriented or based on new pedagogical practices).
4. With respect to the assessment, a recommendation is to include a second assessor or peer assessment for each individual assignment (essays, presentations, project reports).
5. The programme's flexibility can be improved with more use of blended teaching approaches, allowing, for example, a flipped classroom in which students attend a lectures and review literature online prior to class so as to discuss, debate and collaborate physically in class.
6. Put a process into place to review and update reading lists so that when students are viewing these, they see that the courses are completely up to date.
7. Engage in formative and summative assessment of the courses. This might be done through a mid-semester meeting with the coordinators to ensure that areas of improvement or concerns can be dealt with and be effective for the current cohort.
8. Make teacher development, and teacher development programmes within the University more explicit, and the expectation with regard to staff and their development.
9. Put a process into place to review and update reading lists so that when students are viewing these, they see that the courses are completely up to date.
10. It might be useful to distinguish between admission and selection requirements. That would help to make the process more objective and transparent.
11. Students' selection could be improved by requiring supplementary information such as previous qualifications or motivation letters.
12. Considering the current situation caused by Covid-19, online accessibility to learning resources might be improved.

### *Coordinators' Response (each point below follows the numbering of the recommendations above)*

1. We agree that community development for students would be facilitated by a relocation of the Department to the main campus; this will occur permanently when the building housing the School of Social Sciences and Sciences of Education is completed as planned. In the short-term, we are aware that the Dean of the School is working with the Rectorship to find a suitable building for rent close to the main campus.
2. Master's titles add to a candidate's "points" for appointment in public schools and are an almost necessary qualification for working in private schools. In addition, this specific Master's and the expertise it provides have expanded the range of employers and

institutions where our Master's graduates have found work; based on our records, these include the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, the CYQAA (Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education), public and private universities, NGOs, the European Commission, research projects and centres.

3. The provision of the two options for the Master's degree is a decision taken at the Department level and applies to all its Master's programmes; these are now clearly distinguished on the web-site:

<http://www.ucy.ac.cy/edu/documents/edu/Postgraduate/%CE%91%CE%BD%CE%B1%CE%BB%CF%85%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AC%CE%A0%CF%81%CE%BF%CE%B3%CF%81%CE%AC%CE%BC%CE%BC%CE%B1%CF%84%CE%B1%CE%94%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%B1%CF%83%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%BB%CE%AF%CE%B1%CE%BA%CE%B1%CE%B9%CE%A3%CF%85%CE%B3%CE%BA%CF%81%CE%B9%CF%84%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CE%A0%CE%B1%CE%B9%CE%B4%CE%B1%CE%B3%CF%89%CE%B3%CE%B9%CE%BA%CE%AE%CE%9C%CE%AC%CF%83%CF%84%CE%B5%CF%81.pdf>

as well as in the induction materials provided to students at the beginning of their studies. We agree that the theses conducted can vary from basic (research oriented) to applied (more policy and practice oriented) research, and this is a decision taken with each student who opts for Option B, having considered their background and research interests. Such variety can also be seen in the examples of theses titles included in the presentation of the programme.

4. A second assessor and peer assessment is a practice that could be helpful if these colleagues/students are aware of the specific topics of the other students' essays. Peer assessment in particular is a practice already implemented for student presentations when the rest of the group are invited to provide feedback and comments.
5. The flexibility of the courses can indeed be improved through the provision of blended learning approaches, however these will have to be approved at a university level before they can be adopted overall-elements of such approaches however are already included in the design of the courses, since readings, notes, videos and other materials are assigned for each week of the semester to be read/viewed by students before the meetings; the meetings (scheduled centrally by the university as 3-hour sessions) are thus organized to include discussions, debates and student presentations around this material.
6. & 9. Each semester students receive a course outline for each of the courses they enroll in during the first week of the semester; these course outlines are updated each semester to include recent scholarship as well as to reflect the design of the course by each specific member of academic staff; samples of such course outlines are attached for courses EDU 693 and EDU 603 (Fall Semester 2020). Course outlines are submitted to the Department secretariat at the beginning of each semester. They are thus more detailed and updated when compared to the brief description of each course included in the evaluation application or the prospectus. The reading lists students have access to are therefore the updated ones given to them at the beginning of each semester.
7. A formal pre-semester meeting is organized each July and January for the Fall and Spring semesters respectively with masters and doctoral students together; during these meetings we give guidelines to students about course selection according to the design of the programme and their own interests. Moreover, we collect feedback about their experiences from the previous semester and expectations for the following one. Mid-semester meetings occur within each course with the coordinators who ensure they

address any concerns of the particular cohort with the particular course as well as during office hour meetings.

8. The University of Cyprus has established the Centre for Teaching and Learning and signed a Charter on Teaching 2017-2020 (updated every 3 years). The Centre has been very active in providing seminars for new and current staff on a number of topics. It has recently agreed on a Policy for Quality Assurance in Teaching ([http://www.ucy.ac.cy/ctl/documents/KEDIMA/QAssurance/ENGLISH\\_QualityofTeachingPolicyDocument.pdf](http://www.ucy.ac.cy/ctl/documents/KEDIMA/QAssurance/ENGLISH_QualityofTeachingPolicyDocument.pdf)). There are frequent emails by the Centre to the whole of the university community on its activities, including those of teacher development. This was particularly necessary during the last two semesters when courses needed to move online, when the Centre provided a number of seminars addressed to staff on different platforms and online tools. Such activities can be found here: <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/ctl/en/activities/instructors/workshops-seminars>. In addition, staff development is covered through the 311 research activities grant. This is an annual grant given centrally by the University to all members of staff for participation in international conferences and research collaboration with foreign universities.
10. & 11. Following the recommendation, the Graduate School of the University and the Department of Education, which are responsible for setting objective and transparent admission and selection requirements, have now made these more distinct and clear, as seen on their web-sites. More particularly, the Graduate School sets as minimum requirements for admission:
- a University degree awarded by an accredited institution in the country where it operates, or a degree evaluated as equivalent to a University degree by the Cyprus Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications.
  - Letters of recommendation (2).

See here: <http://www.ucy.ac.cy/graduateschool/el/admissions/admission-requirements>

In addition, the Department of Education sees a candidate's performance to a personal interview as a crucial criterion for admission to one of its programmes, specifically defining the following list of criteria as selection requirements:

- Understanding of the nature of the postgraduate programme of interest. (20%)
- Ability to draw the link between background studies in education or relevant disciplines with the postgraduate programme of interest (20%)
- High commitment to studying/researching for a postgraduate course (20%)
- Explanation of the content and process followed in previous research experience during undergraduate studies and postgraduate studies (if the application is for second master programme or for a PhD) (20%)
- Ability to express own research interests and level to which they are relevant to the programme of interest. (10%)
- Very good knowledge of English language (10%)

See here: <https://www.ucy.ac.cy/edu/en/admission/postgraduate#a3>

Additional selection criteria include: relevant work experience of the candidate; research experience, general and specific to the programme applied; a short statement of the candidate's research goals and interests; the candidate's prizes and awards; and publications (if applicable). These are required from the candidate during the online application process (please see sample in Section 4 above).

12. Access to teaching and learning material from a distance, a need accentuated during the Covid -19 pandemic, is possible and is offered:
- by the Library and especially via VPN (Virtual Private Network) Service, which allows all students to have access, regardless of their IP address, to all Library's information sources and services provided through the Web as if they connect within the University network. For more info please see here: <http://library.ucy.ac.cy/el/services/technical-support/vpn>
  - by each course's instructor weekly through Blackboard (<http://ucy.ac.cy/el/ypiresies-diadiktyou>) or, additionally since the shift online due to the pandemic, on Teams or Zoom
  - in addition, the Centre for Teaching and Learning referred to above in relation to teacher development, has also been very active in providing on seminars for various topics and tools around distance education during the last two semesters (<http://www.ucy.ac.cy/ctl/el/activities/for-students/courses-for-students> ).

## Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Stavroula Philippou	Programme Coordinator	
Eleftherios Klerides	Programme Coordinator	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

**Date:** 7 January 2021