

Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: 18/2/2021

- **Higher Education Institution:**

European University Cyprus

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **Programme of study
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Programme 1

In Greek:

Νηπιαγωγικά (4 έτη/240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

In English:

Early Childhood Education (4 years/240 ECTS, Bachelor of Arts)

Programme 2

In Greek:

Επιστήμες της Αγωγής (18 μήνες/90 ECTS, ΜΕΤΑΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΟ):

- Ειδική και Ενιαία Εκπαίδευση
- Δημιουργικότητα και Παιχνίδι στην Πρώτη Αγωγή και Εκπαίδευση
- Τεχνολογίες Μάθησης & Επικοινωνίας και Εκπαίδευση STEAM
- Εκπαιδευτική Διοίκηση και Ηγεσία

In English:

Education Sciences (18 months/90 ECTS, Master of Arts):

- Special and Inclusive Education
- Creativity and Play in Early Childhood Education
- Technologies of Learning & Communication and STEAM Education
- Educational Management and Leadership



Programme 3

In Greek:

Επιστήμες της Αγωγής (3 Έτη /180 ECTS, Doctor of Philosophy)

In English:

Education Sciences (3 Years/180 ECTS, Doctor of Philosophy)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek and English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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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.*

The Department of Education Sciences of European University Cyprus wishes to express its sincere gratitude to the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for the evaluation of its three programmes of study: Early Childhood Education (BA), Education Sciences MA in 4 concentrations: Special and Inclusive Education, Creativity and Play in Early Childhood Education, Technologies of Learning & Communication and STEAM Education, Educational Management and Leadership and PhD in Education Sciences.

It is with great pleasure that the Department and the School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences noted the positive feedback of the EEC and we highly appreciate its insightful recommendations, which provided us with the opportunity to further improve the quality and implementation of our programmes. In the following pages, we respond in detail to all recommendations for improvement suggested by the EEC, and we provide all the necessary information for explaining the actions taken to ensure that all the programmes under re-accreditation are of high quality.

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

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.8, 1.9)

The EEC has raised the following issues in relation to each programmes' design and development. The EUC's corresponding response can be found below numbered according to the number of each point/issue in Findings and/or Areas of Improvement

Comments by the EEC:

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Early Childhood Education (4 Years/240 ECTS/Bachelor of Arts)

1. Opportunities for student and teacher mobility could be enhanced by the introduction of more courses in English. We suggest a staged strategy. Currently the programme offers English option units. We suggest that this is extended by the introduction of one compulsory English course, and once established, the programme should aim for English courses for a full semester. The introduction of such a strategy should be informed by a SWOT analysis to identify obstacles and resources. This could be included as part of the PER-strategy already in place.

Education Sciences (18 months/90 ECTS/Master of Arts in Education Sciences)

2. The concentration on Inclusive Education has a strong orientation in courses related to disability, however the objectives of the course encompass aspects such as culture, which are less strongly reflected. Given the research strengths of members of the Faculty, a focus upon a wider range of areas for inclusive education could be strengthened within the programme.
3. Reducing to three concentrations may reduce the teaching burden on staff and support innovations in the remaining programmes. We note, for instance, that the Department intends to offer students the opportunity to undertake an English version of each Masters' concentration. This will take time and resources.
4. English versions of the MA would be attractive to international students and would also support outgoing student mobility. It would also encourage students to be familiar with a greater range of research, much of which is published in English peer reviewed journals. Please also refer to areas of improvement about teaching staff below.

Education Sciences (3 Years /180 ECTS/Doctor of Philosophy)

5. The EEC recommend that the programme take measures to increase contact with (English speaking) international research (see area 6 below). See also areas of improvement about teaching staff (area 3) below.

Area 1: EUC Response:

We thank the EEC for these important recommendations, which we have taken into account effectively, as indicated below:

Early Childhood Education (4 Years/240 ECTS/Bachelor of Arts)

1. The Department is in full agreement with the EEC's recommendation that the students' mobility and internalization should be enhanced. According to the CY.Q.A.A., a programme offered in Greek **is not possible to include courses offered in English** (or other language). In light of this, the suggestion of the Committee to increase the English component of the programme following a staged introduction of compulsory courses in English in the Greek programme is not possible to implement – at least not currently - due to national regulations. Given these restrictions, the Department would be willing to proceed to a staged process of introducing courses in English, as suggested by the EEC, upon a formal approval or amendments in the national regulations by the CY.Q.A.A. Nevertheless, the internationalisation of the undergraduate programme and the enhancement of student and teacher mobility remains a priority for the Department and it will be promoted further through the following alternative actions:
 - a. Providing opportunities for students to attend seminars and lectures in English: As other programmes of the Department are currently offered in English, selected sections/lectures of courses will be open to all students, who will attend those in the form of a seminar as part of their programmes' coursework and assessment, as these will be scheduled and appear in courses' outlines.
 - b. Inviting Erasmus teaching staff from non-Greek speaking partners to offer guest lectures: We will increase incoming teaching mobility from institutions outside Greece, in order to provide opportunities for students in the undergraduate courses to have exposure to English language instruction and interaction during their studies, as soon as traveling restrictions imposed due to the current pandemic are eased to create more conducive conditions for international travel. As reported in the re-accreditation application (Document 200.3, Appendix D.5.) the Department already holds more than 30 Erasmus mobility agreements, which we aim to further expand and more intensively realize these over the next academic year, as a number of visits planned for 2020-2021 (e.g. Incoming faculty from University Paris 8 was arranged for both March and October 2020) had to be postponed due to the Covid-19 pandemic. The Erasmus teaching mobility also provides the opportunity to invite visitors to combine guest teaching/lecture and other seminars and presentation outside the classroom (see point (d) below).
 - c. Involving undergraduate students in international research projects where they will get opportunities to work collaboratively. As the EEC has already noted (information presented in the Research section of the re-accreditation application [Document 200.1], and Faculty CVs), the academic staff of the Department is highly active in EU and internationally funded projects. We will make an effort to further involve undergraduate students in these projects, and provide

opportunities for their exposure to English language, and the more international perspective of their field of study through research (e.g. through promoting student participation in project multiplier events organized in English, support in the organization of transnational meetings hosted by EUC, student involvement in projects' outputs). The newly established Centre of Excellence: SoScieATH provides a platform to enable this process.

- d. Offering English-medium seminars: The Department organizes a variety of seminars and events each year which are well attended by students. We will make a conscious effort to organize some of these in English (with guest international speakers or even combined with Erasmus teaching mobility opportunities). We will also encourage students to participate in research and dissemination events organized as part of funded international projects either at EUC premises or abroad (e.g. via live-streaming and online participation in multiplier events, conferences, seminars, etc.). The aim is to encourage undergraduate students to actively participate in these events, by directly connecting these to their programme of studies, courses, and assignments.
- e. Consciously strengthen the effort to expose students to academic literature in English so that they become familiar with fundamental English terminology in relation to Educational Sciences and Early Childhood Education. This is already a general practice mostly in courses implemented during the last year of studies, but we will implement it in earlier years as well (e.g. mandatory course readings in English; basic terminology provided in both languages; using English terminology for assignments which require online search for resources. See examples of course Syllabi in Appendices III & IV).

The strategy outlined in points (a)-(e) above, is informed by the following SWOT analysis, as suggested by the EEC, to identify obstacles and resources. Hence, action points are based on existing resources in terms of strengths and opportunities, aiming at removing identified weaknesses and barriers, to the extent that it is possible given the existing national policy and regulatory framework, and the local cultural context

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All members of the Faculty are involved in funded European research programmes. • All members of the Faculty publish mainly in English and are familiar with research production in international outlets. • The MA in Early Childhood Education concentration is already offered in English. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Based on the national Regulations by the CYQAA a programme offered in Greek is not possible to include courses taught in English (or other languages).

Opportunities

- The newly established Centre of Excellence: SOSCIEATH under which research and dissemination events are organised in collaboration with international organisations and institutions.
- PhD and MA students are already able to write their thesis/dissertation in English and may present their work in English to the public and other students.
- Erasmus agreements already in place through which guest English speakers are invited.
- Library resources building tool is available in the university's learning platforms, and hence students are facilitated in easily searching and identifying literature and course readings in English directly from course page.
- New library guidelines developed on the use of OpenAthens, and students are further facilitated to access online digital resources in international scientific literature databases.

Threats

- Most undergraduate students in local universities students may hesitate to participate in academic activities provided in English.
- Attending events of academic nature offered in English might be challenging for students not quite comfortable with following scientific work in English, and therefore may work to exclude certain students from participation in such events or activities.

Education Sciences (18 months/90 ECTS/Master of Arts in Education Sciences)

2. The Special and Inclusive Education Concentration of the MA in Education Sciences offers a professional qualification regulated by professional standards in Cyprus and Greece. The MA graduates can be appointed as educators in Special Education settings and services of the public education sector. The employability of the programme's graduates is currently very high, and this is one of the basic factors contributing to the sustainability and success of the concentration. Based on the employment regulations of the two countries from which our students originate, (e.g. Law for the Education and Training of Children with Special Needs 113(I) of 1999, Law 3699/2008 Special education of children with disabilities or special educational needs, ΦΕΚ 12/τ. ΑΣΕΠ/24-4-2019) and Employment Schemes for Special Educators (see <https://tinyurl.com/eeyspecial>), the modules of the study programme are inevitably

designed to reflect an extended curriculum related to theoretical and educational approaches to matters of disability and special educational needs, in order to make graduates eligible for employment. In addition, as the faculty's expertise and research interests are both in the field of Disability Studies in Education, as well as in the broader conceptualization of Inclusive Education, the programme was designed in a way that, on the one hand, would maintain the disability and special education curriculum required for the professional qualifications, and on the other hand, it would not hinder the focus on intersectionality and global perspectives on diversity and equality in Education. The Department, following the EEC's recommendations, decided to further enhance the broader perspective of Inclusive Education so that this is more reflected in the curriculum in the following ways:

- a. **Introduction of a New Elective Course:** Acknowledging the concerns of the EEC, an additional course '*EDI636 Intercultural Education*' has been added (see course syllabus in Greek and English in Appendix II), in order to include specifically issues of immigrant and refugee education among others. The revised MA Educational Sciences Programme Curriculum can be found in Appendix II (see Concentration Electives for Special and Inclusive Education, Table 2E, in Appendix II).
 - b. **A change in the compulsory courses of the MA in Education Sciences:** In order to ensure that all students (regardless of their previous academic backgrounds and choice of future elective courses during their studies) will have the opportunity to critically examine education as a social institution, a Core Compulsory Module titled '*EDU605 Sociocultural Issues in Education*' has been added, substituting the previous '*EDU610 Diversity and Education*'. The Core course '*EDU605: Sociocultural Issues in Education*' aims to provide students with theoretical and practical tools to critically examine education's relationship with society in light of the public school's mission for democratic education, equal opportunity and participation. This change avoids potential overlaps and operates in complementarity with the addition of the elective '*EDI636: Intercultural Education*' course which focuses specifically on cultural diversity and inclusion in education, looking particularly at issues such as immigrant education, refugee education, minority education, in line with contemporary theoretical and epistemological approaches in inclusive education that interrogate processes of otherization beyond solely (or in intersection with) the axis of disability (see respective syllabus for '*EDU605 Sociocultural Issues in Education*' in Greek and English, in Appendix III)
 - c. **Customized content of the Module: '*EDI616 Contemporary Issues in Inclusive Education*'** to include a broader understanding of inclusion (see Appendix IV: example of existing course outline encompassing issues of intersectionality and inclusive education, comparative approaches to inclusive education, bilingualism, etc.
3. We share the concerns of the EEC on the teaching burden on staff and the need to reduce their workload in order to support the programmes' innovations. To do so, instead of reducing the MA concentrations to three, as suggested by the EEC, which we fear might impoverish the MA in Education Sciences, the Department proceeded to enhance its functionality through plans for the addition of a new full-time member of faculty who will be able to support all four concentrations as well as other programmes

of the Department. The job opening has already been announced for the position of a Lecturer or Assistant Professor in Research Methods in Education, with a strong pedagogical background. The new position is anticipated to respond to the needs of all programmes which share Educational Research modules, as well as to support the PhD Programme, the PhD thesis supervision and the research profile of the Department in general. At the same time, as described in the position specifications, the new member of the academic staff will be able to support the programmes with respect to modules on innovative pedagogical approaches (https://galileo.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/european_university_cyprus_career_site/job/Engomi/FT-Academic-Position--Research-Methods-in-Education--Lecturer-or-Assistant-Professor- R-03300-3, also see in Appendix V the full-time faculty job position announcement). Additionally, and in the framework of strengthening our scientific collaborators team in the field of Early Childhood Education for both BA and MA, the Department proceeded with part-time positions announcements (Appendix VI).

4. The MA Programme was initially accredited in both Greek and English and was submitted for re-accreditation again in both its Greek and English versions. The Department is ready to support both versions of the programme, with the English programme being open to both international students, as well as Greek and Cypriot students who wish to study in English and fulfil the English language proficiency entry requirement. It is also noted that the MA Education Sciences: Early Childhood Education already successfully runs in English Language with a number of international students. In addition, students of the existing Greek programme already have the opportunity to submit an MA Thesis in English and to expose their own work to the international research and literature arena through relevant publications and participation in international conferences. The Department will continue to support such efforts by the students through also sustaining and increasing efforts for student participation in internationally funded research projects as well as attendance of events organized at the University and abroad in English (response in point 2 of this section on internationalisation of BA students, also relevant here). In addition, it is particularly highlighted that the teaching staff supporting the MA Programme will strengthen their effort to expose students to academic literature in English so that they become familiar with fundamental English terminology and discourse in relation to Educational Sciences in general, and the Concentration they are enrolled in in particular. This is already a general practice, as a great part of the scientific literature available and used at a postgraduate level is in English language (see syllabi in Course Descriptions, Annex 2 of the 200.1 MA Programme re-accreditation application document and new syllabi in Appendices III & IV of this response). With the recent introduction of the Library Resource Building tool in the Learning Management Systems used at the University (see [EUC Response in Area 5: Resources](#), below), exposure to international literature is further facilitated and easy to link to specific course content and assignments.

Education Sciences (3 Years /180 ECTS/Doctor of Philosophy)

5. The PhD Programme is continuously being updated and informed by current international research trends and publications in English. However, we acknowledge the EEC's concerns for further internationalisation of all of our programmes, including the

PhD Programme. Hence, following the EEC's recommendations on taking measures to increase contact with (English speaking) international research, the Department has decided to strengthen its efforts, by enhancing existing practices and taking new measures through the following:

- a. The major corpus of the readings in the PhD courses (see syllabi in Course Descriptions, Annex 2 of the 200.1 PhD Programme re-accreditation application document) as well as the literature reviewed by students during the composition of the PhD proposal and dissertation are in English. Some students already have or intend to write their PhD Thesis in English (a PhD graduate submitted her PhD thesis in English, Dr. Nayia Stylianidou; and a number of current PhD students are planning to submit theirs as well (e.g, Ms. Ilona-Elefteyja Lasica and Ms. Christina Vasou). In addition, the Department has planned to start offering the programme in English in the Fall 2021, in which two students have already been accepted and one existing student requested to transfer to the English PhD Programme. Within this initiative, the Programme will organize common research and academic colloquia and other activities offering opportunities for all of our PhD students (in both Greek-medium and English-medium programmes) to engage with international research outside their standard courses or programme requirements, as well as interact and share experiences. This development will also contribute to the diversification of the student body, thus promoting a more international outlook among students.
- b. As part of the standard activities of the PhD Programme, we organize colloquia four (4) times per academic year. In some of these colloquia, we invite experts and researchers in Education Sciences from non-Greek speaking universities (e.g., Cory T. Forbes, Associate Professor of Science Education, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Georgakopoulou-Nunes, Alexandra, Professor of Discourse Analysis & Sociolinguistics, Kings College London). Starting from Fall 2021, and following the Committee's recommendations, we will make sure we include at least one (1) international speaker per academic year.
- c. We also encourage students to participate in and/or present at international conferences in the area of their research interest. We expect their level of participation to increase further in upcoming years, after the end of the pandemic. In addition, the Department has recently launched an initiative to offer a fellowship covering expenses for PhD students who present in international conferences in their area of research interest (see Appendix VII: PhD Students scholarships).
- d. The Department has been collaborating with members of staff in universities outside Cyprus to provide support to our doctoral students as members of doctoral committees and will make efforts to further strengthen such efforts which provide our students with opportunities for network building beyond Cyprus. For example, in current PhD supervisory committees we have members affiliated with several international universities (please see table below).

Members of current PhD Supervisory Committees from universities outside	
Greece	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
	University of Crete
	University of Western Macedonia
	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
	University of Patras
USA	Teacher's College Columbia University
UK	St Mary's University
Estonia	Tartu University
Ireland	Mary Immaculate College

This kind of networking and collaborations comprises an essential ground for preparing students to enter academia as academic professionals with a more international perspective.

e. Lastly, several PhD students have already published in international journals and book volumes, and the Department will continue to support and promote such efforts. Some recent examples of these include:

- Tsouccas, L. F., & Meletiou-Mavrotheris, M. (2019). Enhancing In-Service Primary Teachers' Technological, Pedagogical and Content Knowledge on Mobile Mathematics Learning. *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning (IJMBL)*, 11(3), 1-18.
- Lasica, I.-E., Meletiou-Mavrotheris, M., & Katzis, K. (2020). Augmented Reality in Lower Secondary Education: A Teacher Professional Development Programme in Cyprus and Greece. *Education Sciences*, 10(4), 121.
- Savva, M. & Symeou, L. (2019). Parental involvement in Primary School Education in Cyprus: What do the main stakeholders say [Participación de los padres en la Educación Primaria en Chipre: ¿Qué dicen las principales partes interesadas?]. *Aula Abierta*, 48(1), 105-112. DOI: 10.17811/rifie.48.1.2019.105-112.

Following the EEC's recommendations, and in order to further empower PhD students in writing and publications, we have also scheduled to offer over the next academic year, among others, a seminar for PhD students on "How to Get Published".

2. Teaching, learning and student assessment (ESG 1.3)

The EEC has raised the following issues in relation to teaching, learning and student assessment for each programme. The EUC's corresponding response can be found below numbered according to the number of each point/issue in Areas of Improvement.

Comments by the EEC:

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Early Childhood Education (4 Years/240 ECTS/Bachelor of Arts)

1. We suggest the BA Programme enhance the opportunities for international students to participate and hence increase opportunities for student mobility (in relation to both incoming and outgoing students), through the staged introduction of more subjects and courses in English.

Education Sciences (18 months/90 ECTS/Master of Arts in Education Sciences)

2. Reduce the four concentrations to three concentrations. As previously stated, reducing to three concentrations may reduce the teaching burden on staff and support innovations in the remaining programmes, for example extending offerings in English. The EEC suggests that if the Departments pursues this option the following factors could be considered: 1) ensuring that staff research profiles sufficiently match and support the Masters offerings; 2) student enrolments; and 3) attractiveness to international as well as domestic markets.
3. Develop compulsory courses in English.
4. Communications regarding the MA Programme need to ensure that a clear distinction is made between the more research-oriented track (including the writing of a Masters thesis) or the content-oriented track (with extra elective courses from the concentration, or alternatively electives from another concentration) and that students are fully informed of the consequences of their choices.

Education Sciences (3 Years /180 ECTS/Doctor of Philosophy)

5. The EEC recommend that the programme take measures to increase the contact with (English speaking) international research.

Area 2: EUC Response:

We thank the EEC for these important recommendations, which we have taken into account effectively, as indicated below:

Early Childhood Education (4 Years/240 ECTS/Bachelor of Arts)

1. Please see response in corresponding issue in [Area 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development, EUC Response, point 1](#). Though due to national regulations currently in place it not possible to implement the EEC's suggestion – at least not currently – the Department is willing to take a number of measures outlined in [Area 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development, EUC Response, point 1](#) towards the internationalisation of BA Early Childhood Education Programme and students.

Education Sciences (18 months/90 ECTS/Master of Arts in Education Sciences)

2. Please see response in corresponding issue in [Area 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development, EUC Response, point 3](#). The Department shares the concerns of the EEC on the teaching burden on staff and the need to reduce their workload in order to support the programmes' innovations. To do so, rather than reducing the MA concentrations to three, as suggested by the EEC, which we fear might impoverish the MA in Education Sciences, the Department proceeded to enhance its functionality through plans for the addition of a new full-time member of faculty who will be able to support all four concentrations as well as other programmes of the Department. Further details are provided in [Area 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development, EUC Response, point 3](#).
3. We agree with the EEC that student mobility and internalisation should be enhanced. According to the CYQAA, a programme offered in Greek **is not possible to include courses offered in English** (or other language). In light of this, the suggestion of the Committee to increase the English component of the programme following a staged introduction of compulsory courses in English in the Greek programme is not possible to be implemented – at least not currently - due to national regulations. Given these restrictions, the Department would be willing to proceed to a staged process of introducing courses in English, as suggested by the EEC, upon a formal approval or amendments in the national regulations by the CYQAA. The MA Programme was initially accredited in both Greek and English and was submitted for re-accreditation again in both its Greek and English versions. So, the Department is ready to support both versions of the programme. This means that whilst the English programme will offer all of its courses in English, the students of the Greek programme will have the opportunity to audit if they wish courses offered in English. As the programme will be offered in both Greek and English, more academic events and activities will be offered in English in order to allow participation of all students and this will increase possibilities for interaction between international and Greek-speaking students, as well opportunities for participation in English-medium academic activities (e.g. research dissemination events, guest-lectures with international speakers, online participation in international events etc.). It is also noted that students of the existing Greek programme already have the opportunity to submit an MA Thesis in English as noted above. The measures outlined in response to the Committee's suggestions in [Area 1: Study programme and](#)

[study programme's design and development, EUC Response, point 1, are also relevant here.](#)

- The structure of the MA in Education Sciences as well as the path of studies is available on the University's website, for each one of the concentrations (e.g. see details here on MA Thesis tab: <https://euc.ac.cy/en/programs/master-special-inclusive-education/#program-page-tabs|2> (see Appendix VIII with selected translation). In addition, the officers of the Advising Centre as well as each concentration's coordinator are in constant communication with students during the course enrolment period, and they provide all necessary information, including consequences for further studies and/or employment, in order to facilitate students' choice between conducting an MA Thesis or completing a taught degree as an alternative. We will further enhance practices of communication of information through emphasizing this point to students during their orientation sessions which take place just before commencement of their studies.

Education Sciences (3 Years /180 ECTS/Doctor of Philosophy)

- Please see response in corresponding issue [Area 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development, EUC Response, point 5.](#) The PhD Programme is continuously being updated and informed by current international research trends and publications in English. We acknowledge the EEC's concerns of further internationalisation of all of our programmes, including the PhD Programme, and following the EEC's recommendations on taking measures to increase contact with (English speaking) international research, the Department has decided to strengthen its efforts, by enhancing existing practices and taking new measures. These are outlined in [Area 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development, EUC Response, point 5.](#)

3. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

The EEC has raised the following issues in relation to teaching staff for all three programmes under re-accreditation. The EUC's corresponding response can be found below numbered according to the number of each point/issue in Areas of Improvement.

Comments by the EEC:

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. The EEC has suggested an improved international profile, through implementing courses in English that can attract international students and improve student mobility. The academic full-time staff appear to have the experience and competence to do this. An issue may be a lack of time. A suggestion from the EEC is that more full-time academic staff are appointed, or scientific collaborators are leased, in order to make time for the experienced academic staff to work toward this development.

Area 3: EUC Response

We thank the EEC for these important recommendations, which we have taken into account effectively, as indicated below:

1. Responding to the concerns of the EEC on the internationalisation of the Department and programmes' profile, we would like to mention that in an effort to further develop its international profile, a significant number of Faculty members in the Department have numerous collaborations with international colleagues in the context of funded research programs, as well as participation in international peer-reviewed conferences and collaboration with international scholars in submitting research manuscripts for publication. The Faculty will continue to actively pursue international funding and collaboration opportunities and the newly established Centre of Excellence SOCIEATH is expected to support them in this endeavour. Through the employment of staff to assist with project obligations, the Centre will provide opportunities for academic staff to further focus on grant writing and academic publishing, and will host a space for collaboration across disciplines through the operation of its multiple units.

Nevertheless, we share the concerns of the EEC on the possible lack of time for the academic full-time staff to support the programmes in both English and Greek. To address this concern the Department is facilitating the work of the full-time staff in the following ways:

- a. *Hiring of new full-time member of Faculty:* As already mentioned, a new academic post has already been announced for the position of a Lecturer or Assistant Professor in Research Methods in Education, with strong pedagogical background. The new position is anticipated to respond to the needs of all programmes which share Educational Research modules, as well as support the

PhD Programme, the PhD thesis supervision and the research profile of the Department in general. At the same time, as described in the position qualifications, the new member of academic staff will be able to support the programmes with respect to modules on innovative pedagogical approaches (see Appendix V: full-time faculty job position announcement, https://galileo.wd3.myworkdayjobs.com/en-US/european_university_cyprus_career_site/job/Engomi/FT-Academic-Position--Research-Methods-in-Education--Lecturer-or-Assistant-Professor- R-03300-3). Required qualifications for new positions, among others, include the competence to teach courses in English. In addition, it is highlighted that during the preparation for the re-accreditation process, the Department had advertised and in the meantime has hired a new member of Faculty in the position of Lecturer in Disability Studies and Inclusive Education, Dr Maria Tsakiri (see Appendix D.9: full-time position advertisement).

- b. *Hiring of scientific collaborators:* New hiring positions for the appointment of scientific collaborators are announced every semester and especially at the end of each academic year based on the teaching needs of all programmes for the forthcoming academic year and the Teaching Hours Reduction (THR) obtained for the forthcoming academic year/semester for the full-time Faculty. As the THR is announced on a semester basis, additional hirings may take place at the end of each semester–beginning of the following (see Appendix VI: scientific collaborators job position announcement for Spring 2021). Required qualifications for these new positions, among others, include the competence to teach courses in English.

4. Students

(ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

The EEC has raised the following issue in relation to students for all three programmes under re-accreditation. The EUC's corresponding response can be found below.

Comments by the EEC:

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Early Childhood Education (4 Years/240 ECTS, 8/30, Bachelor of Arts) and Education Sciences (18 months/90 ECTS, 3/30, Master of Arts in Education Sciences)

1. Develop a procedure to recognize competencies that students have acquired elsewhere, e.g. in non-formal education settings and in the labour market.

Area 4: EUC Response:

We thank the EEC for this important recommendation, which we thoroughly discussed as indicated below:

1. In Cyprus, to this date, there are no legislated practices for the recognition in formal education of knowledge and skills acquired via non-formal and informal learning processes. Recognition is attributed only to titles awarded by formal education institutions. Although tertiary level institutions are autonomous and thus have in theory the discretion to decide what they recognise and how they recognise learning, in practice it is rare for non-formal and informal learning to be recognized in the Cypriot context, given the absence of said legislated practices or framework at a national level. However, we are hopeful that EUC will indeed be able in the near future to adopt the EEC's important recommendation for the development of procedures to recognize (through the granting of credits or exemptions from courses) of competencies that students have acquired in non-formal and vocational settings. This seems feasible due to the fact that the establishment of procedures for the validation of non-formal and informal learning has, in recent years, become a priority for the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport and Youth. A proposal for a Framework for the Validation of Non-formal / Informal Learning in adult education, youth and volunteering was developed during 2018, based on a mapping study commissioned during 2017 (EEO Group, 2017). The proposed national framework for validation was designed by experts and put to public consultation. The framework was finalized during the second half of 2018. The creation of mechanisms for the validation of non-formal and informal learning is currently under development and once finalized may provide a roadmap for the development of such procedures in EUC, especially through the Programme Evaluation Review procedure (PER, as this was presented in the re-accreditation application form 200.1 and Annex 14, of that application) through which relevant feedback and suggestions would be

collected by all involved stakeholders, including students, alumni and the Advisory Board as well as external experts panels.

2. In addition, we would like to mention that the basic principles of adult learning have been incorporated into our programmes' and courses' design. Students are offered a highly social and cooperative learning environment, with many opportunities for collaboration and sharing of experiences. Rather than adopting transmission of knowledge instructional models, our courses facilitate inquiry, problem-based learning, and the development of communities of learning. Students are responsible for their own learning, facilitated by an environment rich in challenges and interactions. Particular emphasis is been put on drawing upon and extending students' workplace experiences (e.g. utilizing the experiences of many of our graduate students who are in-service teachers, building upon the experiences of pre-service teachers during their practical training, and so forth). The Department commits to sustaining the emphases outlined above, revisited through its regular PER process and regular update and revision of course outlines, as well as through the provision and attendance of standards-based, technology-enhanced Faculty Professional Development Seminars on teaching and learning in Higher Education.

Finally, it is indicated that in the application form and instructions for our programmes (e.g. see application for Postgraduate Programmes at: <https://euc.ac.cy/el/admissions/how-to-apply/graduate/>) applicants are requested to submit any other evidence they consider important to support their application including prior experience and competencies, which can be taken into consideration during the selection process. For our PhD programme in particular, prior experience and competencies are already included as one of the formal evaluation criteria for the examination of each application and during the interview process. ([see EUC Response in Area 7: Doctoral Programmes, point 2](#))

5. Resources

(ESG 1.6)

The EEC has raised the following issues in relation to Resources for all three programmes under re-accreditation. The EUC's corresponding response can be found below numbered according to the number of each point/issue in Areas of Improvement.

Comments by the EEC:

Areas of improvement and recommendations

All programmes

1. Ensure students have easy access to the digital resources of the library (and other learning environments). The information seems to be available but for one reason or another this does not reach all students in ways that ensure their access. More detailed user information on the library services and how they are used could inform and deliver evidence, relevant to the further development of the library policies.
2. Although the library team is small, it might be useful for specific members of the team to be given remits to support particular Departments. This suggestion is not to override shared responsibility for the overall functions of the library, but to link staff to Departments in ways they can monitor and support the best use of resources appropriate to programmes.

Area 5: EUC Response:

We thank the EEC for these important recommendations, which we have taken into account effectively, as indicated below:

1. The Department acknowledges EEC's concerns for ensuring students' easy access to the digital resources of the library, especially for those who work mostly remotely. It is noted that access to digital library resources is currently very easy through the OneLogin policy of the University. OneLogin is a function allowing all EUC members (students and faculty) to access digital services (i.e. learning platforms, webmail, teleconferencing tools, library digital resources, etc.) through a single login process using the same credentials provided with their EUC digital account. Through this option students can access OpenAthens databases available at the EUC Library, which can be easily found on the Library webpage: <https://library.euc.ac.cy/>. In addition, following the EEC's recommendations the Library guides have been updated with versions showing step-by-step, with job-aids and screen shots, the process of not only accessing the digital library resources, but also of selecting and searching in the available databases of OpenAthens (Appendix IX: additional library guides in Greek and English). The Library website has been also updated accordingly:
 - a. Library guides: https://library.euc.ac.cy/library-guides/?et_fb=1&PageSpeed=off

- b. Library: <https://library.euc.ac.cy/>
- c. Online Transition and Exams Manuals: <https://euc.ac.cy/en/online-learning-transition-students/>

In order to enable better access to the digital resources of the library and the other learning environments, instructors of each course will upload relevant guides (i.e. Access to Library, Guidelines for the use of Moodle, Guidelines for accessing material and taking examinations online during the Covid-19 pandemic) on their course page in the Learning Platforms.

To further inform students regarding easy access to digital resources the Department will organize, in collaboration with the Library, a relevant webinar offered to all students (live and in recorded mode) at the beginning of each semester (starting in early Fall Semester 2021). A short virtual tour and tutorial for accessing digital library resources has also been developed and can be found here: <https://euc.ac.cy/en/academics/library/> (and here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PcAwm79-Yj8&feature=youtu.be>)

Access to digital resources for course material and readings is also facilitated by the content builder feature (Resources Building Tool) embedded in the Moodle and Blackboard platforms. The use of this feature allows instructors to connect students' coursework with particular readings drawn directly from the Library's resources and databases and accessed within each course section in Moodle and Blackboard. In this way, at least in relation to course readings or literature needed for their course requirements, students will not have to access the resources outside the platform. To further increase student access to digital resources, the University is currently providing all students with access to SPSS and NVivo through their own personal student licenses.

2. The number of students of the European University Cyprus and the Department of Education Sciences in particular, as well as the number of the library staff do not allow for the time being for assigning specific Departments to different members of library staff. However, the Department is in close collaboration with the Library staff in order to ensure student support based on disciplines, and when the Library staff recruitment will allow this, specific departments/disciplines will be able to be allocated among library staff. It is noted that several members of the Library are long-term university employees and have thus established close collaboration with the university departments, have an understanding of resource needs in different departments and are able to consult faculty and students accordingly. In addition, students are often employed at the Library, and hence are able to support fellow students from their own departments. The Library has a team of librarians that provide assistance to its users. The Department will additionally undertake an effort to host library orientation/familiarization seminars in collaboration with the Library as part of its orientation programme for new students, as mentioned above.

6. Additional for distance learning programmes
(ALL ESG)

N/A

7. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

The EEC has raised the following issues specifically in relation to the PhD in Education Sciences programme under re-accreditation. The EUC's corresponding response can be found below numbered according to the number of each point/issue in Areas of Improvement.

Comments by the EEC:

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. English is the lingua franca of the international research community. To foster the internationalisation of the research community (more specifically for the PhD students) English should become the standard for the courses taught during the PhD Programme and the requirement for candidates to master Greek at mother tongue level should be reconsidered. PhD students should be *stimulated* (if not obliged) to write their work in English. The international outreach of the students' work (and the work of the Department) is limited when Greek is chosen as language of written and oral communication. International exchange (both incoming and outgoing) should become the standard at this level of studies, both for students and supervisors. Utilisation of (existing) international networks can support this suggestion (e.g. the Utrecht Network).
2. Consider the establishment of a policy to recognize competencies that are acquired in non-formal contexts (e.g. the labour market) before students enter the PhD Programme, also for students that only hold a BA degree.
3. Make it possible for students to choose to submit a dissertation as a monograph OR a compilation/thesis by publication (submitted/published journal articles connected through an exigesis). This practice would increase the visibility of the students' work for the international research community at an earlier stage of their career. Guidelines can be developed regarding the standards required for each option and the Department can look to the practises of other universities. Of course, the final approval of the students' work remains in the hands of the adjudication committee.
4. During the panel meeting, the supervisors made clear that there are monthly meetings with the PhD-students. However, time for supervision is not formally provided for supervisors. This might lead to time being weighted toward competing activities and not to the supervision of the students - a danger that should be avoided. Therefore, the EEC suggest that measures may be necessary to further guarantee an adequate supervision process.
5. We propose that the Department develop a policy or guidelines regarding authorship of the students' work. This could be included in the research ethics framework. The Department could seek examples from other universities, or published guidance such as the Vancouver Protocol.

6. Develop a strong(er) community and network of PhD students to share their experiences regarding amongst others research methodologies, statistical packages, and the publication process. The Centre of Excellence in Research & Innovation in the Social Sciences, the Arts and the Humanities seems to cover many opportunities to establish a strong research culture and expertise sharing. The EEC suggests that the group of supervisors reflect on these opportunities and use these as much as possible, to foster the research community of PhD students.

Area 7: EUC Response:

We thank the EEC for these important recommendations, which we have taken into account effectively, as indicated below:

1. The PhD Programme is continuously being updated and informed by current international research trends and publications in English. We acknowledge the EEC's concerns of further internationalisation of all of our programmes, including the PhD Programme. Hence, following the EEC's recommendations on taking measures to increase contact with (English speaking) international research, we are aiming at strengthening these efforts by enhancing existing practices and taking new measures through the following:
 - a. The major corpus of the readings in the PhD courses (see syllabi in Course Descriptions, Annex 2 of the 200.1 PhD Programme re-accreditation application document) as well as the literature reviewed by students during the composition of the PhD proposal and dissertation are in English. Some students already have or intend to write their PhD Thesis in English. A PhD graduate already submitted her PhD thesis in English (Dr. Nayia Stylianidou), and a number of current PhD students are planning to submit theirs in English as well (e.g., Ms. Ilona-Elefteryja Lasica and Ms. Christina Vasou).
 - b. In addition, following the EEC's recommendations, the Department has planned to offer the programme in English in the Fall 2021. In January 2021, the new PhD application process was announced at its first phase, which resulted in the acceptance of one candidate and the provisional acceptance of two more candidates in the English-speaking programme. The application call is open not only for international students but also Greek-speaking candidates who may wish to pursue their PhD studies in English. It is noted that one of our current PhD students has already indicated her intention to move to the English speaking programme, immediately after its launch.
 - c. Within the above initiative, the Programme will also organize common research and academic colloquia and other activities offering opportunities for all of our PhD students (in both Greek-medium and English-medium programmes) to engage with international research outside their standard courses or programme requirements as well as to interact and share experiences. This development will also contribute to

the diversification of the student body, promoting a more international outlook among students.

- d. As part of the standard activities of the PhD Programme, we organize colloquia four (4) times per year. In some of these colloquia, we invite experts and researchers in Education Sciences from non-Greek speaking universities (e.g., Cory T. Forbes, Associate Professor of Science Education, University of Nebraska-Lincoln; Georgakopoulou-Nunes, Alexandra, Professor of Discourse Analysis & Sociolinguistics, Kings College London), Starting from Fall 2021, and following the Committee's recommendations, we will make sure we include at least one (1) international speaker per academic year.
- e. The Programme also encourages students to participate in and/or present at international conferences in the area of their research interest. We expect their level of participation to increase further in upcoming years after the end of the pandemic. The Department has recently launched an initiative to offer a fellowship covering expenses for PhD students who present in international conferences in their area of research interest (see Appendix VII).
- f. The Department has been collaborating with members of staff in universities outside Cyprus to provide support to our doctoral students as members of doctoral committees and will make efforts to further strengthen such efforts which provide our students with opportunities for network building beyond Cyprus. For example, in current PhD supervisory committees we have members affiliated with international universities (please see table below).

Members of current PhD Supervisory Committees from universities outside	
Greece	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
	University of Crete
	University of Western Macedonia
	National and Kapodistrian University of Athens
	University of Patras
USA	Teacher's College Columbia University
UK	St Mary's University
Estonia	Tartu University
Ireland	Mary Immaculate College

This kind of networking and collaborations comprise an essential ground for preparing students to enter academia as academic professionals with a more international perspective.

- g. Lastly, several PhD students have already published in some international journals and book volumes, and the Department will continue to support and promote such efforts. Some recent examples of these include:

- Tsouccas, L. F., & Meletiou-Mavrotheris, M. (2019). Enhancing In-Service Primary Teachers' Technological, Pedagogical and Content Knowledge on Mobile Mathematics Learning. *International Journal of Mobile and Blended Learning (IJMBL)*, 11(3), 1-18.
 - Lasica, I.-E., Meletiou-Mavrotheris, M., & Katzis, K. (2020). Augmented Reality in Lower Secondary Education: A Teacher Professional Development Programme in Cyprus and Greece. *Education Sciences*, 10(4), 121.
 - Savva, M. & Symeou, L. (2019). Parental involvement in Primary School Education in Cyprus: What do the main stakeholders say [Participación de los padres en la Educación Primaria en Chipre: ¿Qué dicen las principales partes interesadas?]. *Aula Abierta*, 48(1), 105-112. DOI: 10.17811/rifie.48.1.2019.105-112.
 - Following the EEC's recommendations, and in order to further support our PhD students' efforts to enter the publishing world, we will offer during the next academic year a workshop specifically targeting our PhD students on 'How to Get Published'.
2. Taking into account the Committee's recommendations we have updated the criteria for the evaluation of perspective PhD students to include potential competences acquired in non-formal contexts. The current evaluation criteria for perspective students now include:
- a. **Criterion 1a:** Description of their research interests and/or their potential research field;
 - b. **Criterion 1b:** Research experience, academic publications and/or **other professional experiences** related to the PhD Programme and their field of interest;
 - c. Criterion 2: Academic background;
 - d. Criterion 3: Greek (for students in the Greek-medium programme) and a second language (usually English)

Upon acceptance into the Programme, the PhD students' background is checked for previous experiences in educational research. PhD students who do not have any academic or professional related experience with qualitative and/or quantitative research are provided with the opportunity to enroll free of charge into foundation courses from MA programmes related to qualitative and/or quantitative research methods.

3. Taking into account the Committee's recommendations, the Department has considered providing the opportunity to PhD students to submit a compilation/thesis by publication (submitted/published journal articles connected through an exigesis). After careful deliberation in the Department's pertinent committees, the Department feels that at this stage, a gradual and staged process of introducing such change building upon the expected positive impact of the measures outlined in this Report to promote the

programme's internationalisation will benefit our students more. The reasoning for this is provided below:

- a. Our data show that many of our PhD students need support mostly during the proposal stage of their PhD work (time ranging between 2-4 semesters), and the most time-consuming stage of their PhD studies is the collection and analysis of data. Most of the PhD students go through the stage of writing up the proposal quite quickly (1-2 semesters). Although we acknowledge that the option for compilation of journal articles will help our PhD students enter the publishing world faster, we believe that, without building the support structure outlined above, this might increase their overall time in the program.
 - b. Given the fact that thus far the PhD programme has been offered only in Greek, we feel that it might be difficult for students to follow the route of compilation of publications in the absence of first establishing a support structure, as outlined above. At this stage of the PhD programme it might be more difficult for students writing in English to submit papers in peer-reviewed journals and get easily accepted so as to complete their studies in a timely manner. Rather, we believe that through a staged approach building upon the first steps for the internationalisation of the Programme described above, the Department and the Programme will be in a better position to introduce the compilation/thesis by publication option. In fact, we plan to revisit the issue during the next PER process that the Programme regularly undergoes when we will specifically reconsider this option and conduct a detailed investigation and consultation that will include our PhD students' and Advisory Board's opinions on the matter, a new SWOT analysis about the issue as well as an assessment of the impact the internationalisation measures described above will have made at that point.
 - c. We have enhanced opportunities for the PhD students to disseminate part of their research work through presenting at indexed conferences and/or publishing in academic journals (the University has launched a fellowship scheme for providing support to e.g. cover conference expenses, providing PhD students with opportunities to collaborate with Faculty who have experience with the publication process). The current Covid-19 pandemic has increased the options for students to participate and present in international conferences at a lower cost since they can do so without having to travel.
 - d. Since the compilation option represents a new academic culture in the area of Education Sciences in state and private Universities in Cyprus, we feel that it might affect our competitiveness with the rest of the Universities in Cyprus, if executed without the close and wide consultation process provided by the PER process.
4. Responding to the EEC's concerns that PhD supervision time might not be allocated effectively and to the danger of being weighted toward competing activities, we would like to first indicate that our policy indicates that none of the faculty supervises more than five (5) PhD students at one time. The mean average of supervision of PhD

students in currently 1,65 students per Faculty. In addition, in order to avoid such a danger the following strategies are employed:

- a. All the Faculty offer 6 hours of weekly office-hours, which are used for communicating and meeting with their students (including the PhD students they supervise).
 - b. Faculty that supervises PhD students receive an extra compensation from the University for their supervisory work.
 - c. We have updated the PhD guide to delineate the minimum frequency of contact between PhD students and their supervisor (once a month) and the minimum frequency of communication with their PhD supervisory committee (once per semester).
 - d. At least, once a year our PhD colloquium takes the form of a whole day event, during which PhD students have the opportunity to present their work thus far and get into conversations with participating faculty and students to receive feedback.
 - e. Lastly, as mentioned earlier, the Department has already announced a new hiring position in Educational Research Methods, which in turn will increase the number of Faculty who can supervise PhD students, but also provide access to PhD students to another faculty specializing in Research methods.
5. As the EEC has indicated in the Departmental Evaluation Report, the University and the Department hold a strong ethic of student centeredness. Hence, Intellectual Property and Authorship issues have been always resolved on the basis of this ethic and common understanding as well as mutual respect among Faculty and between Faculty and students. Nevertheless, acknowledging the EEC's concerns on having a more concrete policy and guidelines available to both students and faculty, especially in the framework of the research culture within a PhD Programme, the Department, in collaboration with the Vice-Rector of Research and External Affairs and the Intellectual Property Adjudication Committee has formulated such policy guidelines for the entire University. The Guidelines have been submitted for final approval by the Senate on March 2nd, 2021, and the submitted document can be found in Appendix X of this response.
6. Reflecting on the EEC's recommendation for grasping and exploding opportunities to further foster the research community of PhD students, we commit to enhancing our strategy through the following actions:
- a. Colloquia: Each semester, the Department organizes two (2) colloquia for our PhD students with themes that are related to their needs as these are gathered from our PhD students directly every semester. In these colloquia PhD students have the opportunity to present pieces from their research work, to get the perspective of others (peers and Faculty) on the issues they are dealing with, solve technical or practical problems they face etc. These colloquia are highly attended by students (average of 32 participants each time during the past 2 years). We use different formats each time, addressing particular needs of our students. We closely monitor the colloquia and ask participants to evaluate

them each time, so that we use that feedback to improve them. PhD students have often stated that these opportunities also work as support sessions – to hear others who faced the same difficulties with them and the ways in which they have addressed them, to get feedback from the faculty members beyond those in their supervisory team (usually a mean of 6 Faculty members are present in each colloquium).

- b. In the next few months, with the support of the University we will develop a PhD student email list – that way, PhD students can easily and openly reach out within their community to get help, ideas and support from their peers.
- c. Centre of Excellence: The Centre of Excellence in Research & Innovation in the Social Sciences, the Arts and the Humanities currently employs 5 (part-time or full-time) PhD students under the funded research scheme. In that way, a number of PhD students have the opportunity to grow from faculties' research network, research opportunities, research visits, and possibly collect data for their PhD within funded research programs. The University's priority towards research will expand these opportunities for the students in the near future (right now the Centre has an amount of research funds of running programs higher than 1,000,000 euros).

It is noted that, the PhD Programme Guide is included in the Appendix as some changes have been applied since the re-accreditation application was submitted. Please see revised PhD Programme Guide in Appendix XI.

8. Additional for joint programmes
(ALL ESG)

N/A

B. Conclusions and final remarks

The EEC has overall identified the following issues in relation to the three programmes of the Department of Education Sciences submitted for re-accreditation, which if confronted, could add significantly to the high quality of the programmes. The EUC's corresponding response can be found below numbered according to the number of each point/issue/comment below:

Comments by the EEC:

1. The suggestions for improvement mainly concern the issue of internationalisation: to create courses in English to increase the possibilities for teacher and student mobility (incoming and outgoing). The EEC recommends that all programmes provide at least one comprehensive course in English, followed at a later stage by a full semester of English courses for each programme. For the PhD-programme the EEC have suggested several steps that can be taken to increase the international profile in addition to providing English courses.
2. According to the EEC, the academic staff have the experience and expertise to implement such a shift towards increased internationalisation. The Faculty Professional Development programme could also support such a shift.
3. The EEC also suggest that the four concentrations in the MA Programme could be reduced to three. This would make the programme more focused in addition to creating some space in the teachers' schedules to engage in English courses.
4. As mentioned above, there is no policy regarding authorship of publications based on the work of the PhD students. Guidelines or principles would benefit both the doctoral students and their supervisors and prevent disputes or unethical behaviour. These guidelines could be included in the framework regarding research ethics and scientific integrity.
5. As mentioned above, make it possible for students to choose to submit a dissertation as a monograph OR a compilation/thesis by publication (published journal articles connected through an exigesis). This practice would increase the visibility of the students' work for the international research community at an earlier stage of their career. Guidelines can be developed regarding the standards required for each option and the Department can look to the practises of other universities. Of course, the final approval of the students' work remains in the hands of the adjudication committee.

EUC Response to conclusions and final remarks:

We thank the EEC for their important overall recommendations, which we have taken into account effectively, as indicated in the previous areas of evaluation of the response, as well as below:

1. Internationalisation of Programmes: The Department acknowledges the EEC's concerns for further internationalisation of all of our programmes. Some of the EEC's suggestions are not possible to be fully implemented at this time, due to national regulations. In any case, following the EEC's recommendations on taking measures to increase contact with (English speaking) international research, the Department has decided to strengthen its efforts, by enhancing existing practices and taking new measures. These are outlined in more detail in EUC response in:
 - [Area 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development, EUC Response, points 1, 4 & 5](#)
 - [Area 7: Doctoral Programmes, mainly point 1](#)
2. Following the Committee's suggestion, the Faculty Professional Development Programme for the Spring Semester 2021 will offer a seminar on the internationalisation of higher education (i.e. on challenges, strategies and opportunities) in collaboration with the Office of the Vice-Rector of Research and External Affairs, as well as a seminar on Open Science in Higher Education to be offered by our Faculty Professor Maria Meletiou-Mavrotheris. In addition, following a recent decision of the Faculty Professional Development Committee (Minutes 6.10.2020) to expand the content of its Programme beyond the provision of seminars on teaching and learning in higher education, the Spring 2021 programme and future programme series will include seminars on two additional axes: orientation and professional development related to research and developments in various fields. These axes together with the emphasis on teaching and learning will constitute the tripartite of the Programme's focus. Such an emphasis will also help towards supporting academic staff to make a more targeted shift to internationalisation. For instance, during the Spring 2021 semester in cooperation with the Office of the Vice-Rector for Research and External Affairs, the University will offer a seminar on research ethics centering on issues such as personal data management in research, research ethics, and the EUC Research Policy. Continuous efforts to keep staff abreast of developments and challenges in relation to research ethics and research integrity are conducive to supporting the staff's research activity in both national and international networks, particularly in the context of funded research projects, and therefore contributes to internationalisation efforts. To be sure, internationalisation does not pertain to research only but also involves mobility, collaboration, as well as education, among other dimensions, and these are issues that the seminar on internationalisation to be offered in the Spring 2021 is expected to cover (see preliminary schedule for the S2021 Faculty Development Programme which is to be finalized over the coming few weeks, Appendix XII). It is also noted that the Professional Development training sessions are offered to faculty and staff in both Greek and English Language.
3. MA Education Sciences reduction to three concentration: The Department shares the concerns of the EEC on the teaching burden on staff and the need to reduce their workload in order to support the programmes' innovations. To do so, rather than reducing the MA concentrations to three, as suggested by the EEC, which we fear might impoverish the MA in Education Sciences, the Department proceeded to enhance its

functionality and operational capacity through the addition of a new full-time member of faculty who is expected to support all four concentrations as well as other programmes of the Department. Further details are provided in EUC response in:

- [Area 1: Study programme and study programme's design and development, EUC Response, point 3](#)
 - [Area 2: Teaching, learning and student assessment](#)
 - [Area 3: Teaching Staff](#)
4. To this date, Intellectual Property and Authorship issues have been always resolved on the basis of this ethic and common understanding as well as mutual respect among faculty and between faculty and students. Nevertheless, acknowledging the EEC's concerns on having a more concrete policy and guidelines available to both students and Faculty, especially in the framework of the research culture within a PhD Programme, the Department, in collaboration with the Vice-Rector of Research and External Affairs and the Intellectual Property Adjudication Committee has formulated such policy guidelines for the entire University. The Guidelines have been submitted for final approval by the Senate on March 2nd, 2021, and the submitted document can be found in Appendix X of this response.
5. PhD Dissertation option for thesis/ thesis by publication: Taking into account the Committee's recommendations, the Department has considered providing the opportunity to PhD students to submit a compilation/thesis by publication (submitted/published journal articles connected through an exigesis). After careful deliberation in the Department's pertinent committees, we feel that at this stage, a gradual and staged process of introducing such change over a period of time and building upon the measures outlined in this Report to promote the programme's internationalisation will benefit our students more. Further details and the rationale of the Department's actions regarding the option for a compilation thesis have been explained in EUC response in [Area 7: Doctoral Programmes, point 3](#).

Overall, the Department of Education Sciences of the European University Cyprus would like to thank the EEC for the constructive feedback on the Department's Programmes, and would also like to reassure the Committee that the faculty will continue to work hard and stay committed in maintaining and further expanding the high quality and international perspective of its academic programmes, and research activities.

A. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Professor Marios Vryonides	Dean School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences	
Katerina Mavrou	Chairperson, Department of Education Sciences	
Maria Tsakiri	Program Coordinator Education Sciences: Special and Inclusive Education	
Maria Meletiou Mavrotheri	Program Coordinator Education Sciences: Technologies of Learning & Communication and STEAM Education	
Constadina Charalambous	Program Coordinator Education Sciences: Creativity and Play in Early Childhood Education	
Paraskevi Chatzipanagiotou	Program Coordinator Education Sciences: Educational Management and Leadership	
Loucas Louca	Program Coordinator Education Sciences (PhD)	

Date: 18/2/2021