

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 09/02/2026

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Nicosia

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

In Greek:

Δημοτική Εκπαίδευση (4 έτη/240 ECTS, πτυχίο)

In English:

Primary Education (4 years/240 ECTS, Bachelor's degree)

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

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

0. Introduction

We would like to thank the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for their thorough on-site evaluation of the BEd in Primary Education on 13th of November 2025. We also appreciate the opportunity to engage in meaningful dialogues with the Committee, which included meetings with faculty, students, administrative staff and external stakeholders.

We would like to also thank the EEC for their positive evaluation where **all 18 out of 18 quality indicators received the top rating of “Compliant”** (amongst the choices of compliant, partially compliant, non-compliant).

Moreover, we would like to express our appreciation to the EEC for identifying the following strengths, as highlighted by the EEC in their evaluation, which underscore the robust foundation of our Bed in Primary Education programme and serves as a basis for further aligning our strategic actions with these commendations:

- "Good alignment of the teaching staff with all programs of the Department, covering the school subjects of primary education and the pedagogical, psychological, and leadership aspects". (p.10)
- "The development of pedagogical content knowledge with respect to all school subjects receives substantial attention". (p. 9)
- "One of the main strengths is the connection between theory and practice. With reflection session students connect their practical experiences to what they learned at the institute and also bring back their teaching experiences into the institutional programme". (p.14)
- "Another strength is the small-scale teaching, which allows for student-centred teaching and learning, supported by the technology and tasks." (p.14)
- "The programme benefits from transparent and well-defined recruitment and promotion procedures, ensuring merit-based selection and career progression. The academic staff profile is strong: all full-time faculty members, as well as the majority of part-time lecturers, hold PhDs in areas directly aligned with the programme's disciplinary scope". (p. 17)
- "Faculty receive continuous support for teaching excellence through regular pedagogical training and university-wide seminars, which strengthen their skills in online pedagogy, assessment, and student-centred learning. The institution also actively encourages innovation and the integration of educational technologies in teaching, consistent with contemporary trends in higher education". (p. 17)
- "The Department demonstrates balanced coverage across key disciplines, including Pedagogy, Educational Technology, Psychology, Mathematics, Music Education, Philosophy, Physical Education, and Theology. Teaching responsibilities (typically 6–12 teaching periods per week) are generally well distributed, enabling effective curriculum delivery while allowing space for scholarly activity". (p. 17)
- "A significant strength of the programme is the alignment between faculty research and the course content, which contributes to academically rich and up-to-date

teaching. Staff show strong research productivity, with publications in recognised international journals and active engagement in externally funded projects. Participation in European research networks further enhances the programme's international dimension". (p. 17)

- "The teaching team effectively integrates research outcomes into teaching practice, particularly in the fields of inclusive education and digital learning. This reinforces the programme's evidence-based orientation and strengthens the connection between research, professional practice, and student learning". (p. 18)
- "The Department demonstrates a well-structured and transparent framework for student admission, with clearly defined and publicly accessible regulations across all levels of study. Students benefit from strong academic support, facilitated by small class sizes, accessible faculty, and multiple communication channels that enable personalised guidance. There is genuine support and understanding between students and professors, fostering strong bonds and a student-centred learning environment. Systematic procedures for monitoring student progression allow for the early identification of difficulties and timely intervention by academic advisors". (p. 22)
- "Assessment practices rely on a broad range of methods aligned with programme learning outcomes, ensuring balanced workloads and constructive feedback. Recognition procedures for prior learning, credit transfer, and external qualifications are well established and aligned with European standards, including the Lisbon Recognition Convention, and certification is supported by the use of the Diploma Supplement. " (p.22)
- "Students report high satisfaction with the quality of teaching and support received. Furthermore, students are actively involved in the Department's development strategy and governance processes, with student representatives communicating concerns or disagreements and contributing to the adoption of appropriate academic and administrative policies". (p. 22-23)
- "These services [*teaching and learning resources, physical resources, human support resources, student support*] are available to students and the quality of the infrastructures and resources available are excellent. ". (p. 26)

We appreciate the EEC's comprehensive and constructive feedback on our BEd in Primary Education programme. The Department is committed to continuous improvement and acknowledges the EEC's recognition of the programme's solid structure, rigorous monitoring mechanisms, and high quality processes.

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

The External Evaluation Committee highlighted the strong emphasis placed on the development of pedagogical content knowledge across all primary school subjects, noting this as a significant strength of the programme. The Committee also acknowledged the high academic level of graduates, evidenced by a considerable number who continue to postgraduate, often alongside their professional engagement as schoolteachers. Furthermore, the evaluation recognised the strong alignment and coherence of the teaching staff across all programmes of the Department, ensuring comprehensive coverage of subject-specific, pedagogical, psychological, and leadership dimensions of primary education. Building on these strengths, the following section addresses the areas for improvement and corresponding recommendations identified by the EEC.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Consider the possibilities of increasing the duration of the practicum (the school experience) in the Bachelor Primary Education.</p>	<p>The school experience duration has already increased in relation to the programme evaluated during the 2019 evaluation process and which is currently active. This is also reflected in the change of ECTS which increased from 5 ECTS to 10 ECTS for EDUD-398 and from 15 ECTS to 20 ECTS for EDUD-498.</p> <p>You can find evidence of the current ECTS here: EDUD-397 (to be renamed to EDUD-398): https://www.unic.ac.cy/ECTS_Syllabi/EDUD-397.pdf</p> <p>EDUD-497 (to be renamed to EDUD-498): https://www.unic.ac.cy/ECTS_Syllabi/EDUD-497.pdf</p> <p>The school experience is already delivered across three semesters: EDUD-298 during semester D, EDUD-398 during semester E and EDUD-498 during semester H. Furthermore, school experience is also embedded within the various method courses (i.e. Teaching Science in Elementary School) which are compulsory for all students.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

The External Evaluation Committee identified as key strengths the strong and systematic connection between theory and practice, supported by structured reflection sessions that enable students to integrate their school-based experiences with institutional learning and to feed practical insights back into the programme. The Committee also highlighted the benefits of small-scale teaching, which facilitates student-centred learning through the effective use of educational technologies and carefully designed learning tasks. In addition, the consistency of the student assessment structure across courses was recognised as a strength, providing a coherent and transparent framework for both students and teaching staff.

We would like to express our appreciation to the EEC for evaluating this area as fully compliant, with no comments for further improvement.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
No special recommendations	No actions needed	Choose level of compliance:

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

The External Evaluation Committee recognised the programme’s transparent and merit-based recruitment and promotion procedures, which ensure the appointment and development of highly qualified academic staff. The Committee highlighted the strong academic profile of the teaching team, noting that all full-time faculty hold doctoral qualifications closely aligned with the programme’s disciplinary scope. Continuous professional development through regular pedagogical training and university-wide seminars was identified as a key strength, supporting excellence in teaching, assessment, student-centred learning, and the effective integration of educational technologies.

Furthermore, the EEC acknowledged the balanced coverage of core disciplinary areas and the generally equitable distribution of teaching responsibilities, which enables both effective curriculum delivery and sustained scholarly activity. A significant strength of the programme lies in the close alignment between faculty research and course content, resulting in academically up-to-date teaching. Active participation in externally funded projects and European research networks enhances the programme’s international dimension, while the systematic integration of research outcomes—particularly in inclusive education and digital learning—reinforces the programme’s evidence-based orientation and strengthens the link between research, professional practice, and student learning.

Building on these strengths, the following section addresses the areas for improvement and corresponding recommendations identified by the EEC.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Given the high proportion of teaching delivered by part-time/adjunct staff, the Department should strengthen formal supervision and coordination mechanisms to ensure full coherence across courses, avoid unnecessary overlaps, and guarantee consistent adherence to course outlines and programme learning outcomes. Establishing structured monitoring processes—such as mandatory coordination meetings, peer review of course content, or central approval of assessment plans—would help maintain programme integrity.</p>	<p>In order to maintain programme integrity, the department has set up the following processes that have already been initiated as from Spring Semester 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Mandatory hybrid coordination meeting with all part-time faculty members and programme coordinator before the start of each semester. (b) Mandatory coordination meetings in subject groups (pedagogy courses, STEM courses, language courses, teaching methods courses, school experience) for full-time faculty members at the beginning of each academic year. 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>(c) Online coordination meeting between full-time faculty members and part-time faculty members teaching in same subject groups.</p> <p>(d) Monitoring of assessment plans in each semester from programme coordinators of the two undergraduate programmes of the Department. The process currently being tested is: before each semester faculty members have to submit their assessment plans, including workload and deadlines that will be reviewed by the programme coordinators and provide feedback.</p>	
<p>It is recommended that the institution develop more flexible and accessible training pathways for part-time instructors—such as asynchronous modules, alternative schedules, or condensed weekend workshops—to ensure that all teaching staff, regardless of employment status, receive the required preparation for high-quality e-learning delivery. Increasing participation among adjunct staff would strengthen the coherence of teaching practices, enhance methodological consistency across courses, and further support the programme’s overall quality.</p>	<p>The University of Nicosia maintains a strong institutional commitment to continuous professional development through its Faculty Training and Development Unit (FTDU), which offers structured training opportunities for all academic staff, including part-time and adjunct instructors.</p> <p>Both newly appointed and existing faculty members are required to participate in workshops, seminars, and related professional development activities that support pedagogical excellence, research advancement, and administrative effectiveness, including training related to e-learning methodologies.</p> <p>Annual engagement in training is expected and formally recorded through the staff self-appraisal process, ensuring that professional development is monitored and aligned with departmental and institutional quality assurance mechanisms. In line with the EEC’s</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>recommendation, the University will continue to enhance the flexibility and accessibility of its training provision—such as through asynchronous formats and alternative scheduling—to further support participation by part-time teaching staff.</p> <p>This framework fosters a sustained culture of lifelong learning, methodological coherence, and continuous improvement across the academic community.</p>	
<p>The University may also consider expanding its full-time faculty base to ensure greater stability, enhance long-term planning, and reduce reliance on adjunct instructors. Increasing the number of permanent staff would also support a more even distribution of teaching responsibilities.</p>	<p>While the University acknowledges the advantages of increasing full-time faculty base, current enrolment variability in the undergraduate programme and resource conditions indicate that a flexible staffing approach is more appropriate at the time. Full-time faculty base numbers will continue to be reviewed and adjusted in line with programme needs.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>To reinforce the programme’s research - teaching nexus, it is recommended to develop formal incentives for research-led teaching, such as small internal grants (seed funding), temporary reductions in teaching load, or competitive awards for innovative research-based pedagogical practices. Such measures would encourage staff to continuously integrate emerging research into course content and strengthen the programme’s scholarly profile.</p>	<p>Such incentives are already in place. Full-time faculty members receive up to six hours of workload reduction per academic semester depending on their research activities. The workload reduction is reviewed every year through a formal process coordinated by the Office of the Vice Rector of Faculty and Research.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

The External Evaluation Committee acknowledged the Department's well-structured and transparent framework for student admission, supported by clearly defined and publicly accessible regulations. The Committee highlighted the strong academic and pastoral support provided to students, facilitated by small class sizes, accessible faculty, and multiple communication channels that enable personalised guidance and foster a genuinely student-centred learning environment. Systematic procedures for monitoring student progression were recognised as a strength, allowing for early identification of difficulties and timely intervention by academic advisors.

In addition, the EEC commended the use of diverse and well-aligned assessment methods that ensure balanced workloads and meaningful feedback, as well as the robust recognition and certification procedures, which are fully aligned with European standards, including the Lisbon Recognition Convention and the Diploma Supplement. High levels of student satisfaction with teaching quality and support services were noted, alongside the active involvement of students in departmental governance and development processes, contributing to a culture of dialogue, transparency, and continuous improvement.

Building on these strengths, the following section addresses the areas for improvement and corresponding recommendations identified by the EEC.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Although the institution makes effective use of Learning Analytics and maintains comprehensive internal monitoring processes, aggregated indicators of student progression, retention, completion rates and entry profiles are not publicly available at programme level. This is an aspect that had already been highlighted in the 2021 external evaluation, yet it has not been fully implemented. It is therefore recommended that the University publish these indicators annually, in line with European transparency practices, in order to enhance accountability, support data-informed decision-making, and strengthen the programme's quality assurance processes.</p>	<p>Programme performance report has been added on the programme's website:</p> <p>https://www.unic.ac.cy/el/primary-education-bed-4-years/</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

The External Evaluation Committee commended the excellence of the teaching and learning resources, noting modern, well-equipped classrooms, up-to-date digital technologies, and hands-on materials that effectively support creative, student-centred learning and address diverse learner needs. The Committee also highlighted the high quality of physical resources, including premises, libraries, study facilities and IT infrastructure, which are more than adequate to support the programme, particularly given the limited number of on-campus BEd students and the institution’s strategic expansion in virtual provision. In addition, the EEC recognised the strength of human support resources and student support services, emphasising the vital role of the Centre for Research and Counselling Services (KESY) in providing individualised psychological and academic support, as well as targeted services such as Erasmus mobility support, which students reported as highly beneficial, especially for part-time, employed, international students and those with special needs.

We would like to express our appreciation to the EEC for evaluating this area as fully compliant, with no comments for further improvement.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
No recommendations	No action needed	Choose level of compliance:

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme)
 (ALL ESG)

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

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Establish formal coordination mechanisms for part-time and adjunct staff to ensure coherence across courses, avoid overlaps, and guarantee adherence to outlines and learning outcomes.</p>	<p>The department has set up the following processes that have already been initiated as from Spring Semester 2026:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Mandatory hybrid coordination meeting with all part-time faculty members and programme coordinator before the start of each semester. (b) Mandatory coordination meetings in subject groups (pedagogy courses, STEM courses, language courses, teaching methods courses, school experience) for full-time faculty members before the start of each semester. (c) Online coordination meeting between full-time faculty members and part-time faculty members teaching in same subject groups. (d) Monitoring of assessment plans in each semester from programme coordinator and additional faculty member. The process currently being tested is that before each semester faculty members have to submit their assessment plans, including workload and deadlines. 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Introduce mandatory coordination meetings, peer review of course content, and central approval of assessment plans to maintain programme integrity.</p>	<p>See response above</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
		<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>Develop more accessible training pathways for part-time instructors (e.g., asynchronous online modules, condensed weekend workshops) to ensure high-quality e-learning delivery and methodological consistency.</p>	<p>These opportunities are already available to part-time instructors. Almost all trainings for faculty and part-time instructors are scheduled at different times or on Saturday mornings to accommodate participants' diverse availability. Recent examples include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training on Evolve (UNIC's AI system) which was offered online on different times and days. • Training on Blackboard (on which UNIC is transitioning) which was offered online on different times and dates, including Saturday mornings. 	
<p>Consider increasing the number of permanent, full-time faculty to ensure great stability, enhance long-term planning, and reduce over-reliance on adjunct instructors.</p>	<p>While the University acknowledges the advantages of increasing full-time faculty base, current enrolment variability in the undergraduate programme and resource conditions indicate that a flexible staffing approach is more appropriate at the time. Full-time faculty base numbers will continue to be reviewed and adjusted in line with programme needs.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Develop formal incentives to encourage staff to integrate their research into teaching. These could include: (i) small internal grants or seed funding for course development; (ii) temporary reductions in teaching load for pedagogical innovation; or (iii) competitive awards for innovative research-based teaching practices.</p>	<p>Such incentives are already in place. Full-time faculty members received up to six hours of workload reduction per academic semester depending on their research activities. The workload reduction is reviewed every year through a formal process coordinated by the Office of the Vice Rector of Faculty and Research.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

C.

D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Prof. Elena Papanastasiou	Dean of School of Education	
Dr Marina Rodosthenous	Head of the Department	
Prof. Maria Evagorou	Programme Coordinator	

Date: 09.02.2026

