

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 2/12/2025

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Central Lancashire Cyprus (UCLan Cyprus)
- **Town:** Larnaca
- **Programme** of **study**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Ψυχολογία (4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο (BSc))

In English:

Psychology (4 academic years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor (BSc))

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

In Greek: N/A

In English: N/A



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.*

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Many QA processes are centrally administered, which may hamper the possibility of quick “light-touch” adjustments which can be made through more local feedback loops.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their valuable recommendation. The BSc (Hons) Psychology programme offered at UCLan Cyprus is a double-awarded degree, which is accredited by the CYQAA and also validated by the University of Lancashire, UK through the UK-QAA and Office for Students (OfS) framework. Due to the strong and complex QA requirements for this provision, the University will keep the main QA processes administrated by the Department of Academic Quality and Compliance.</p> <p>It is worth mentioning that the academic team under the guidance of the course leader is encouraged to enhance and update the curriculum provision and assessment following feedback provided by the students, external examiners, external stakeholders, professional bodies, etc.</p> <p>Furthermore, all adjustments or programme enhancements are then considered during the preparatory period for the re-accreditation of the programme and addressed formally as part of the 5-year UK Periodic Course Review or CYQAA re-accreditation.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

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<p>Some areas to consider include:</p> <p>It would be possible to expand opportunities for practical psychological lab work. A recommendation would be to consider developing alternative arrangements so that students can engage with a wider array of experimental methods.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their valuable recommendation.</p> <p>The course team has set its strategy accordingly.</p> <p>A first action is to further encourage students to become involved in a variety of research projects running in the Department. This has been successful so far with even joint publications, and we would like to extend it to include opportunities for even more students.</p> <p>Second, the course team is encouraged to amend the material and assessments by adding activities that engage the students to a wider array of experimental methods (especially in Quantitative and Qualitative Research methods modules).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Within the student meeting it was noted that some electives were not possible for students to complete. Consider reviewing elective module offerings to increase the likelihood that they are accessible to all students, even when class numbers are low. This could involve combining small groups or offering alternative delivery modes.</p>	<p>The EEC recommendation has been considered by the course team and the Head of the Department, which have put in place mechanisms to accommodate student optionality. The list of all optional/elective modules per year of study are available to the students for the selection of their optional modules early enough during the previous academic year (March) as part of the MRO (Module Registration Options) process. Once the MRO process is completed (end of April) the course team and the Head of the department evaluate the provision that should be budgeted for the next academic year. Optional modules with low number of students (fewer than 5 students) are considered first from a pedagogical point of view since for some modules a small class number would not be beneficial for the student experience and the</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>achievement of learning outcomes or the acquiring of specific soft skills. The provision of a qualitative learning experience is one of the vital element of higher education (see CYQAA announcement: Ελάχιστος αριθμός φοιτητών ανά μάθημα / ακροατήριο). With the increase of the student numbers during the last two years, the probability of selection of optional modules by fewer than 5 students decreases.</p> <p>Nevertheless, there are cases where a smaller audience do not jeopardise the quality of learning and the Department decides to offer the low audience optional modules, as it was already the case in the past.</p> <p>The Department and the course leader will continue to monitor this annually and to increase student opportunities to select any of the optional modules included in the programme of study.</p>	
<p>It is unusual to deliver 10 credit units over two semesters with examinations at the end of the academic year. A more typical pattern across European universities is for 10 credit units to be examined after the (single) semester in which they are delivered. This has advantages for students in spreading the examination load, and for staff in terms of being able to attend conferences, etc.</p>	<p>Taking into consideration the suggestion of the Committee, the structure of the programme was redesigned. Therefore, most of the modules across the years will be Semester long and students will be assessed on the material at the end of each semester. We chose to exempt only two modules which remain year long: Year 1 module “PS1720 Understanding Behaviour” that is related to Quantitative Research Methods and Year 4 “PS3900 Psychology Project” due to the research nature of the modules that can be more fruitfully conducted during an academic year.. More information about the distribution of modules per semester can be found on the updated version of TABLE 2 (see Appendix I).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

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<p>While the current teaching staff numbers clearly deliver an excellent Psychology degree programme, the management may consider whether further hires are now warranted, both in order to share teaching loads but also to offer broader expertise within the department for both teaching and research opportunities (e.g. in cognitive neuroscience, clinical psychology). This would also kickstart momentum for developing new Masters programmes in English that would provide options for non-Greek speaking students on Cyprus to continue their Psychology education without having to leave Cyprus.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their valuable feedback. We agree with the Committee that the teaching delivery needs of the programme are successfully and efficiently covered by the current academic team. As the Department will expand with the introduction of a new Master programme in its portfolio of study, employment of new staff with appropriate expertise will be planned.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
No suggestions for improvement.	We appreciate the positive feedback we received from the EEC on this section, and we would like to ensure the Committee that we continue to implement and monitor the current practices in terms of student admission, progression, recognition and certification.	Choose level of compliance:

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>Periodic upgrades to lab equipment will ensure alignment with international standards</p>	<p>Periodic upgrades to lab equipment are done annually. Following the official procedure, each member of the course team can request useful equipment to conduct research or/and provide the students with the appropriate equipment to complete their project. For instance, the lab equipment contains a skin galvanic conductance, eye tracking machine and other equipment which is useful for staff and students.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The committee noticed that print editions of psychology books in the library were quite limited. It could be worth expanding academic books within the subject areas as presumably there are still students who would like to read physical books.</p>	<p>While our library has an extensive collection of electronic books, we acknowledge the need for printed books too. Print editions of psychology books are requested annually. Taking into consideration staff and students' feedback and preferences, in combination with any updates in Psychology literature. Although our library has at least one or two copies of each book included in the modules' bibliography (reading list) and even though the feedback from the students with regards to library resources is very positive, we remain committed to enhancing our existing collection with additional copies and new teaching and research-related books.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The Department may consider implementing a more structured mechanism for work-placement or internships, supported by Department contacts and infrastructure.</p>	<p>The Department of Health and Wellbeing considers work placement opportunities at very high importance for the Programme and for the student education. The Department has already a strategy in place that will be further monitored and enhanced according to the student needs and placement providers' feedback. It is worth</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>mentioning that on one hand, the work placements are facilitated in an academically controlled manner via a specialized module which covers the needs of students for placement and enables them to reflect on the experience and their own skills and development needs in relation to future careers. Additionally, students are encouraged to pursue practical experience in the form of relevant summer internships.</p> <p>To further facilitate placements, the Department has already proceeded with collaborations and memoranda of collaboration with several relevant placement providers mainly based in Cyprus. These were reported in detail in Appendix 3 (Dept. of Health and Wellbeing application), and include providers such as SPAVO, PASYKAF, Red Cross Cyprus, ONEK, PASP, KOA, etc. At the same time, we are continuously working to expand this network with new partnerships.</p> <p>In the course of actions undertaken by UCLan Cyprus to increase its engagement with placement providers, the University Career Hub worked closely with the UCLan Cyprus Industry Liaison Office, which is part of the University Labour Market Liaison Offices, previously known as 2BeConnected project. The aim of this project is to facilitate university students' placements in Cyprus, with the purpose of enhancing student skills, understanding the requirements of the market and increasing student employability.</p>	
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

N/A

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

N/A

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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>This is a well-designed Psychology programme which has been operating for several years. The aim is to attract around 30 students in September 2026, with the result that there will be over 100 students on-programme at that point. All of the information that was available to the committee (in the submitted documentation and during our visit) leads us to believe that the programme of studies, the facilities available, and the QA and student-facing systems in place at UCLan Cyprus are entirely suitable for the task. As we have commented elsewhere, the close relationship with the University of Lancashire (and the joint programme design, accreditation, and award systems) militate for an excellent offering which should be highly competitive in the region. These impressions were borne out by the students that we met, who were very satisfied with their education and (where applicable) the career paths they had subsequently pursued. Given that some of the students arrived at UCLan Cyprus more-or-less by chance, this is a</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their valuable feedback. In addition, we would like to ensure the Committee that we will continue to work to achieve an excellent learning experience for our students.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>





<p>particularly impressive outcome.</p>		
<p>One aspect of the programme that did give us pause was the fact that it was largely delivered by four talented and dedicated academic staff (with two additional staff and 3 STCs playing a lesser role). Quite apart from the workload that this entails (we have commented elsewhere), this limits the student experience to a few teachers who cannot be experts in everything they teach. We appreciate that this is mitigated by a close relationship with teaching staff in Preston and by occasional (video-link) guest lectures, but given that workload considerations are also relevant, we would suggest hiring a new member of staff sooner rather than later, especially given that there are some plans to develop new Masters programmes (we see the development of additional English-language programmes in Cyprus as an interesting opportunity).</p>	<p>Please see our answer on page 7 section 3.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>We have a couple of suggestions concerning the programme content. One is to consider renaming modules to something less opaque: names such as “being a psychologist” or “topics in psychology” give little indication of what skills a student has, making transcripts hard to understand. They also sound less serious than more</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their recommendations that have been carefully taken into consideration. Therefore, the academic team have proceeded with the rename of the following modules: PS1050: Being a Psychologist has changed to “<i>Ethics in Psychology</i>” and PS3042: Kickstart your career: Psychology Placement Module has changed to “<i>Psychology Placement Module</i>”. Moreover, the module PS1060: Topics in Psychology (20 ECTS) has been split and renamed to “<i>Introduction to Contemporary</i></p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>straightforward module titles. We have also pointed out above that offering 10-credit year-long modules is unusual. It leads to strange combined modules (“social and developmental”), and results in a heavier end-of-year assessment burden for students, compared to examining single-semester modules at the end of each relevant semester. It would also provide staff with more flexibility (e.g., for travel) if 10-credit modules are delivered over single semesters, as is common practice elsewhere.</p>	<p><i>Psychology I</i>” (10 ECTS) and “<i>Introduction to Contemporary Psychology II</i>” (10 ECTS). Furthermore, building on the recommendation of single-semester modules by the External Evaluation Committee, the structure of the programme was redesigned. Therefore, almost all of the modules across the years will be Semester-long and students will be assessed on the material at the end of each semester.</p> <p>. More information about the new programme structure can be found in TABLE 2 (see Appendix I).</p>	
<p>Finally, a couple of thoughts: (1) there is (always) room for an expansion of research facilities, to help with the recruitment and retainment of an excellent staff, but also with the student experience (students should experience different experimental methods);</p>	<p>We appreciate the Committee’s recommendations regarding research facilities and equipment. We acknowledge the importance of this issue, and the expansion of research facilities remains one of the priorities of the programme. As part of the yearly procedure implemented for budget allocation, Departments and their programme teams make suggestions for enhancement of laboratory equipment and research facilities. These requirements are often met directly. In case the request involves a significant budget need which cannot be met immediately, this is split across a couple of years. For example, an expensive equipment for the Sports lab was requested a few years ago and was planned for, purchased and installed in the last academic year.</p> <p>In addition to the university sponsored facilities, the programme students also benefit from equipment purchased in the context of research projects. Moreover, for example, recent funded projects</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>sponsored the purchase of an EyeLink Portable Duo eye tracker and several latest spec VT headsets which are available for students projects too.</p>	
<p>(2) as we understand it, the mapping of the 4-year UCLan course to the 3-year Lancashire version is such that there are more introductory-level courses in UCLan Cyprus; it may be possible to add courses that are “more advanced” than a typical UG course instead, adding to the marketability of the degree.</p>	<p>We would like to assure EEC that the design of the BSc (Hons) Psychology programme has been undertaken by the academic team at UCLan Cyprus and the respective peers at the University of Lancashire UK. The proposed structure was further informed by the British Psychology Society (BPS) requirements and Cyprus stakeholders. The current structure is not an automatic addition of an introductory year 1 on the current UK provision, but rather a combination of modules offered at the University of Lancashire and new modules mainly tailored for the needs of the Cyprus market, including also “more advanced” modules in Years 3 and 4. It is worth mentioning that the programme offered at UCLan Cyprus is undertaking a separate and independent accreditation from BPS.</p>	
<p>We hope that these suggestions are taken in the intended spirit of helpfulness; we should make it clear that there was nothing about the programme that caused us concern. We saw a solid, serious, programme that has bedded in well; we hope that the next few years will see it flourish.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their valuable feedback and assure them that their suggestions will be taken into consideration by the academic team and the University. Our aim is to provide a great learning experience to our students and establish the excellence of the programme at national and international level.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

C.

D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Dr. Militsa Nikiforou	Course Leader of BSc (Hons) Psychology	
Prof. Kalypso Iordanou	Acting Head of the Department of Health and Wellbeing	
Prof. Nearchos Paspallis	Head of the School of Sciences and Chair of the School of Sciences Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee	
Dr. Cosmina Theodoulou	Chair of the UCLan Cyprus Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee	

Date: 2/12/2025

