

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 3/12/2025

Higher Education Institution's Response

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

In Greek:

Επιστήμη του Αθλητισμού και της Άσκησης (4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο(BSc))

In English:

Sport and Exercise Science (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>While the quality assurance policy is robust, continuous enhancement could include more frequent and broader stakeholder consultations to strengthen inclusivity and responsiveness.</p> <p>The programme's global perspective would benefit from deeper collaboration with international institutions, complementing the existing structural partnership with the University of Central Lancashire.</p>	<p>The Department academic team considers it vital to build and sustain a strong network of partners and long-term collaborations with depth and breadth. Since the introduction of the programmes of study - that will be now part of the new Department of Health and Wellbeing – in the portfolio of UCLan Cyprus, the respective course teams managed to develop a large network of national and international collaborators, including professional bodies, academic and research partners, industry stakeholders, Alumni, etc, who have been informally engaging with the programmes in terms of providing advice on curriculum development, placement/ internships opportunities, guidance on industry knowledge/skill needs and student employability aspects. Moreover, our industry partners have been engaging in other educational activities, such as guest lectures, field trips, real case studies, real life student projects, student internships, student competitions, student awards and many more.</p> <p>We agree and acknowledge the importance of an in-depth and meaningful network with international institutions. UCLan Cyprus holds an Erasmus + Charter from 2015 and has established multiple inter-institutional agreements for the mobility of staff and students. Please find here the list of our University's active agreements. A series of collaborative agreements are already signed with partners in the field of sport and exercise science, and the programme team has already taken action to expand their international exposure and their network of collaborators. Indicatively, an application for institutional membership in the World Physical Education Alliance (WPEA) was submitted following the November 2025 conference in Egypt. This membership will enhance our network with institutions that offer similar courses of study, allowing us to conduct research and engage in knowledge exchange. This collaboration has established a network with academics from East China University in Shanghai, which has expanded to Asia, Australia, New Zealand, Europe, Africa and the USA. The ongoing collaboration and staff involvement with the International Joint Research and Knowledge Exchange Centre for University Physical Education and Sports Training (CUPEST) also lays the groundwork for deeper collaboration, capacity building, and international cooperation. Collaboration with institutions in India, e.g., Symbiosis International University and Lakshmibai National Institute of Physical Education, has led to research collaborations and outputs that we aim to develop.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>Building on this extensive global engagement, academics from the department are also part of a major international consortium, comprising organisations such as UNESCO Chairs, WHO, AIESEP, CEREPS, EUPEA, FIEPS, ICSSPE, PHE Canada and ACHPER, working collectively to support the inclusion and testing of physical literacy in the next OECD’s PISA cycle, scheduled for 2029. This initiative represents the depth of global collaboration, with leading experts and international institutions and networks.</p>	
<p>The program will benefit from the planned structural change into semesters instead of full year courses. It may be considered to align achieved education merits more closely with the `UK system.</p>	<p>We agree and appreciate the support for this decision. The programme will indeed benefit from the transition from full-year to semester-long module delivery. This structure enhances pacing, improves the distribution of assessments in line with the compulsory requirements of the CYQAA final exam, and provides more consistent feedback, thereby supporting student engagement and progression. As an EU university, UCLan Cyprus will also benefit from the potential and highly requested semester-long student mobility opportunities. The redesigned semesters also align more closely with established EU and UK higher-education practice which prioritises focused learning periods and agile curriculum design. Where academically appropriate, such as the Double Research Project module, a year-long format has been retained to preserve the integrity of the research process.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

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<p>We see no reason for any major concerns or necessary adjustments to current practices. However, the university could further strengthen its future readiness by fostering students' competencies for more self-regulated learning within blended learning environments, that is, teaching formats that intentionally combine in-person and online elements, using each mode where it is most effective.</p>	<p>We appreciate the reviewers' suggestion and agree that strengthening students' self-regulated learning competencies is essential for future-ready education. While the programme is accredited by CYQAA as a fully face-to-face course, we intentionally incorporate learning approaches that promote autonomy, reflection, and self-management within this delivery framework. The module leaders scaffold self-regulated learning through guided study plans, formative checkpoints, goal-setting exercises, and reflective assignments linked to practical sessions. These activities take place around the face-to-face teaching core, supporting students in planning their work, monitoring their learning, and taking increasing ownership of their academic development. Besides, we provide digital learning resources that allow students to review content, explore examples, and test their understanding at their own pace outside of classroom hours, always in complementarity with module requirements (E.g. ePhyLi and XS1004).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>In discussions with external stakeholders, it was suggested that students might benefit from additional opportunities to gain practical experience in professional settings, such as internships in private fitness studios or teaching placements in private schools</p>	<p>We welcome this suggestion and fully agree that practical experience in diverse professional settings is crucial for enhancing students' employability and confidence. The programme already offers structured placement opportunities (Year 4 module: Professional Development and Employability in Sport, Exercise and Physical Education) in a variety of environments, including fitness centres, private sports organisations, and private schools, allowing students to apply their learning in real-world practice contexts. To further improve this provision, we have recently begun formal processes to extend placements into public primary and secondary schools, broadening the range of real-world experiences available to students. This development directly responds to stakeholder feedback and ensures that students gain exposure to different teaching, coaching, exercise provision and physical activity settings. Moreover, beyond curriculum, students are provided with additional opportunities to engage with placement and internships with our partners (summer internships, Erasmus trainings, etc.).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

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<p>Whilst the CIMPSA accredited vocational programmes which are embedded within the curriculum was an excellent addition to the programme. Further consideration around how successful achievement is recognised and aligned with the UK system should be explored so students do not have to repeat assessments.</p>	<p>We appreciate the reviewers' positive feedback regarding the integration of CIMSPA accredited vocational programmes within the curriculum. These awards significantly enhance students' professional readiness and employability. To clarify, the module assessment requirements and the CIMSPA assessment requirements are intentionally designed as two separate components. It is worth mentioning that in order to safeguard compliance for the provision of double-awarded degree, CYQAA requirements in terms of assessments should be also taken into consideration. The CIMSPA assessment is optional and operates as an additional professional certification opportunity rather than a requirement for academic credit. This distinction ensures that academic standards are maintained while still enabling motivated students to gain valuable vocational accreditation. Regarding alignment with the UK system, all processes related to CIMSPA linked provision are developed in close collaboration with the corresponding module leaders at the UK campus, ensuring consistency in expectations, assessment design, and recognition of achievement across the University of Lancashire. This liaison ensures that the professional competencies assessed through CIMSPA map onto the learning outcomes of the relevant modules without duplicating academic assessments.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>To strengthen teaching quality and programme sustainability, the institution should expand structured mentoring programmes to support early-career academics and increase opportunities for international mobility and collaborative research to enhance its global outlook.</p>	<p>We welcome the EEC recommendations and agree that structured mentoring, professional development, and international engagement are essential to sustaining teaching quality and enhancing the programme's global outlook. The University already offers a robust framework to support early-career academics. The Research and Innovation Mentoring Team (RIMT) at UCLan Cyprus plays an important role in identifying both formal and informal learning opportunities available to staff. Through targeted mentoring, RIMT broadens developmental pathways in areas such as research planning, grant writing, dissemination strategies, and networking. This initiative has proven particularly valuable for early-career colleagues as they build confidence and capability within the academic environment. In addition, the University's Teaching Observation Scheme provides a structured and developmental process for enhancing teaching practice. The Teaching Observation Scheme has been designed and is periodically monitored by the Teaching and Learning Enhancement Committee (TLEC) of the University, it is considered during the academic's yearly appraisal by the Head of the Department and furthermore consists of an integral part of the HEA assessment coordinated by the Centre for Collaborative Learning, at the University of Lancashire. As part of the Teaching Observation Scheme, all academic staff are observed delivering learning and teaching on a biannual basis, with observations conducted by experienced Teaching Observers. This system encourages reflective practice, supports pedagogical</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>improvement, and ensures the ongoing enhancement of learning and teaching quality across the programme.</p> <p>The Teaching and Learning Enhancement Committee (TLEC) provides teaching and learning training and support for all members of academic staff. Throughout the academic year, beyond interactive seminars and trainings offered TLEC organises forums (such as the monthly Teaching and Learning Enhancement Bulletin and the quarterly tea and coffee academic staff meeting for sharing experiences, among others, on best pedagogical practices) for the exchange and sharing of information among academics.</p> <p>As mentioned in section 1, pages 3-4, international engagement is also actively supported. The Erasmus+ KA131 teaching and training mobility scheme and KA171 International Credit Mobility (ICM) enable staff to undertake short-term teaching or professional development visits to partner institutions across Europe and also partner countries outside the EU. These opportunities enrich staff expertise, promote intercultural exchange, and encourage the formation of collaborative research and teaching partnerships. Members of the programme team are already engaged in international initiatives, such as the Fulbright Visiting Scholar scheme, the UNESCO Chair network, and the CUPEST partnership with Hunan Normal University, which further strengthen our global network and research profile.</p>	
<p>Monitoring workload distribution is essential to prevent imbalances and maintain high standards, while strategic recruitment in emerging disciplines will foster innovation.</p> <p>Periodic reviews of staff to student ratios should be formalized to anticipate enrolment trends and ensure long-term adequacy. It is a likely that the program will soon face challenges in its core staff base. It is advised to identify key objectives of near future activities and consider further recruitment in this area.</p>	<p>We thank the external evaluation committee for its constructive feedback. The programme team recognises that balanced workload allocation and adequate staffing are essential to maintaining high academic standards and supporting long-term programme growth. Workload distribution is closely monitored through the university's workload allocation model, which is reviewed annually to ensure a fair and transparent distribution of teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities. This process is part of the annual appraisal, during which individual staff members' workloads, performance, development needs, and future action plans are formally discussed. Appraisal outcomes feed directly into academic promotion pathways, with an effort to ensure that staff are supported in progressing their careers through recognised achievements in teaching, research, and service, while also highlighting areas where additional staffing may be required to maintain balance and quality.</p> <p>Staff to student ratios are reviewed annually as part of the quality assurance cycle, enabling the Department to anticipate enrolment trends and plan accordingly. We acknowledge that, as the programme continues to develop, pressures on the core academic team may increase. In response, the Department monitors closely the student recruitment trends in order to identify any need for enhancing the academic team in the most beneficial way.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Partnerships with additional international institutions should be strengthened to broaden collaborative opportunities, and mechanisms to</p>	<p>The programme and the new Department already benefit from a strong international network, which includes Fulbright, the UNESCO Chair, the CUPEST partnership in China, and multiple international sports associations. These collaborations provide rich opportunities for joint research, mobility, and knowledge exchange, and we remain committed to expanding partnerships</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>monitor and optimize the balance between teaching and research time should be developed to support both academic rigor and innovation. Support of the emerging externally funded research activity could be an area of growth. If possible, part-time staff members should be encouraged to participate in research activities and projects to further enhance their skills and knowledge, and make them feel more engaged with departmental research activities.</p>	<p>with additional global institutions to broaden collaborative and developmental opportunities. We fully recognise the importance of maintaining an effective balance between teaching and research to ensure academic rigour and innovation. The mechanisms to support this balance are already in place, including the annual appraisal process, which helps monitor commitments and ensure that staff have realistic opportunities to engage in research activities within their allocated workload. As externally funded research activity continues to grow, we expect these structures to become even more critical in supporting sustainable academic development. We also agree that, where possible, part-time staff should be encouraged to participate in research activities to enhance their skills, strengthen their connection to the department, and contribute to a richer academic environment. Part-time colleagues already bring valuable professional expertise that complements the programme’s applied focus, and we will continue to involve them in research meetings, seminars, and collaborative activities when their primary employment commitments allow. At the same time, we recognise that part-time staff often have substantial professional obligations outside the University, which may limit the extent of their research participation. To ensure continuity and sustained research development, the Department already provides opportunities to part-time staff to engage with funded research projects, for additional income. There are already several examples where this was done with success across the university. We will continue to develop and further enhance these opportunities with the goal of enabling as many part-time staff who wish to engage with research to do so.</p>	
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

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<p>Alignment with international accreditation standards and evaluation processes, particularly in coordination with the UK-based parent institution, should be carefully developed to ensure global recognition and student mobility. A special focus on international students' possibilities for working in Cyprus seems warranted. Outreach initiatives could be strengthened to attract a broader pool of qualified applicants, both nationally and internationally. A more competitive applicant group would allow for admission cut-offs based on prior academic achievement, which could raise the overall academic level of the programme.</p>	<p>We would like to express our appreciation to the EEC and its forward-looking comment. Ensuring global recognition of our awards is a key priority and the fundamental pillar of our University academic provision. All our programmes of study are double-awarded degrees validated by the University of Lancashire through the Office for Students and QAA frameworks and further accredited by CYQAA. The programme structure is aligned with UK and EU standards strengthening mobility opportunities for our students.</p> <p>We also recognise the importance of providing clear guidance on international students' work opportunities in Cyprus. While employment regulations are determined at the national level, the University continues to advise students on available pathways and to explore partnerships with organisations that can offer practical experience within the regulatory framework. Strengthening this support will further enhance the programme's attractiveness to international applicants. Relevant MoUs are already in place for this purpose. E.g. LesMills, HNFC, etc.</p> <p>Regarding outreach and recruitment, the course is committed to broadening its applicant base both nationally and internationally. Ongoing initiatives include participation in international fairs, targeted digital outreach, and strengthening relationships with schools, sports organisations, and international partners. As applicant interest grows, we anticipate that increased demand will allow for more selective admissions thresholds, which, in turn, will raise the overall academic profile of future cohorts.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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>As the department continues to grow and enhance its reputation on a national scale, laboratory space should be enhanced, grown and developed to distinguish between disciplines, for example, separate physiology and biomechanics labs. Likewise, further investment in lab spaces could also lead to the development of separate teaching and research labs which would mean that concurrent lab activities could be happening at the same time. Also, further human resources as the labs grow would be to invest in a dedicated laboratory technician whose role is to set up labs, clean and service equipment, and monitor student activity. This would free up academic staff to focus on research and other teaching activities.</p>	<p>We appreciate the EEC insightful feedback regarding the development of laboratory infrastructure and technical support. As the programme continues to grow and gain national and international visibility, we fully agree that further enhancement of laboratory space would significantly strengthen both teaching quality and research capability. The department recognises the potential value of establishing dedicated teaching and research laboratories, which would allow concurrent practical activities and support the expansion of externally funded research projects. With the expansion of the laboratories, the Head of Department will consider the appointment of a laboratory technician who would substantially improve the efficiency of laboratory operations, enable regular maintenance of equipment, and allow academic staff to focus more on teaching, supervision, and research. These developments align with the programme's and the Department's long-term vision.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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
N/A	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
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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>We wish to thank the team for their hospitality and wish them well as the BSc Sport & Exercise Science programme continues to grow and enhance its reputation in the future. We consider that our recommendations above should be viewed as adding to an already well functioning fundamental undergraduate programme in Sport & Exercise Science, and we wish the team nothing but the greatest of successes in the future.</p>	<p>We are grateful for the External Evaluation Committee’s thoughtful feedback, encouraging remarks, and positive recognition of the programme’s strengths. It was a pleasure to host the panel, and we sincerely appreciate the constructive nature of the recommendations provided. The team views the comments not simply as an evaluation, but as valuable guidance that will support the continued development and refinement of our programme. We are committed to building on the strong foundations already in place and to implementing enhancements that contribute to the programme’s national and international reputation. Many thanks to the EEC for its support and well wishes, and we look forward to continuing to develop a high-quality, student-centred programme that reflects the evolving needs of the field and the broader mission of the University.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Efstathios Christodoulides	Course Leader	
Kalypso Iordanou	Acting Head of the Department of Health and Wellbeing	
Nearchos Paspallis	Head of the Department of Sciences and Chair of the Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee of the Department of Sciences	
Cosmina Theodoulou	Chair of UCLan Cyprus Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee	

Date: 2/12/2025

