

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 07/07/2025

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
UNIC Athens (Campus of the University of Nicosia)

- **Town:** Athens, Greece

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

In Greek:

Ψυχολογία (4 έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

In English:

Psychology (4 years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Science)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek & English
- **Programme's status:** New
- **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.*

Introduction

We refer to the report of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for the evaluation–accreditation of the BSc in Psychology at UNIC Athens program of study, which was prepared following the onsite visit of the members of the EEC on 3 and 4 June 2025. We would like to thank the EEC for their professional and thorough work during the evaluation and to express our appreciation for the collegial and constructive approach with which they conducted the evaluation. The program was found to meet all criteria in all areas. The EEC did not identify any shortcomings in the quality indicators.

We highlight a couple of statements from the Introduction of the Report.

“The BSc in Psychology at UNIC Athens is delivered within a clearly defined academic and administrative structure that supports quality assurance and ongoing programme development.”

“The design of the curriculum mirrors, by law, the curriculum that is already successfully implemented at UNIC. Given the extremely positive stakeholder and student feedback heard by the ECC at the site visit, replication of this program at UNIC Athens will surely produce more excellent graduates in Athens.”

We have carefully considered their report and set out below our response to each of the points raised by the EEC. Under each assessment area, you will find our comments on the findings and strengths outlined in the report. In response to the areas for improvement and recommendations made by the EEC, our response and actions taken are set out in column 2 of the table in each section.

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

The EEC found that the BSc in Psychology at UNIC Athens benefits from a clearly defined academic and administrative structure, with robust internal mechanisms for ongoing quality assurance and programme development. They also highlighted the strength of the multi-level quality assurance framework, noting specifically the involvement of both student and staff representatives in decision-making committees. Additionally, the EEC commented positively on the programme's clearly articulated learning outcomes, ECTS allocation, and effective integration of contemporary research by active faculty into the curriculum. They particularly commended the planned bilingual delivery mode, which enhances the programme's accessibility to international students. However, the committee noted areas requiring further development, specifically formalizing external stakeholder involvement, enhancing transparency of academic progression data, and expanding career-path considerations beyond traditional psychology roles. The EEC found the program to be Compliant in all four subareas.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
1. While there is evidence of multiple levels of quality control, it is unclear how this will be communicated to students and stakeholders. Consideration could be given on how to actively communicate these procedures (e.g., through online platforms).	We appreciate this recommendation and will implement clear communication strategies. Specifically, detailed information about our quality assurance processes will be displayed on our programme webpage and communicated through regular student orientation sessions and on the student portal.	Choose level of compliance:
2. External stakeholders do not seem to be formally and consistently involved in the programme's design and review. We recommend formalising their involvement.	As pointed out, the department utilizes external stakeholder involvement for feedback regarding the program. We fully agree with the necessity of formalizing stakeholder involvement. We will establish a structured curriculum advisory board comprising of industry professionals, employers, alumni, and community stakeholders, who will participate in curriculum review meetings and contribute formally to programme updates.	Choose level of compliance:
3. Ensure that the website includes key performance indicators such as employment	The recommendation is well received. As the programme launches and graduates emerge,	Choose level of compliance:

outcomes and academic progression data to enhance stakeholder trust.	we will systematically collect, analyze, and publish key performance indicators such as graduate employment rates, average graduation time, and progression data on our programme webpage to enhance transparency.	
4. Implement a data management system at the programme level to collect, review, and act upon key academic indicators which can then feed into the annual programme review.	We acknowledge the importance of systematic data management. A comprehensive data management system will be implemented to routinely track student progression, retention, performance, and outcomes, and this data will directly inform our annual programme review cycle and strategic planning processes.	Choose level of compliance:
5. While there is clear evidence of consideration of career paths for graduates, these are very much in traditional career paths for psychology graduates. Given UNIC Athens research agenda is focused on research for the 21st century (e.g. AI, blockchain etc.), it may be a valuable opportunity to consider how the UNIC Athens version of the BSc Psychology could also play a role in career paths that are less traditional. For example, while HR was cited as a common career path, the advent of AI may make these traditional career paths increasingly obsolete. It may be beneficial to consider the 'brand' of the BSc in Psychology as supporting alternative career paths that are not catered for by more traditional universities, thus making UNIC Athens BSc an attractive alternative for students.	This recommendation aligns closely with our strategic vision. We will actively integrate emerging interdisciplinary areas such as AI, behavioral data analytics, and technology-enhanced psychological practice into the curriculum, positioning our graduates for innovative, non-traditional psychology careers and distinguishing our programme in the evolving job market. The results of this endeavor are expected to materialize by the next accreditation cycle.	Choose level of compliance:

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

The EEC found that teaching, learning, and assessment within the BSc in Psychology are grounded in a clear, structured framework that links diverse assessment methods to well-defined learning outcomes. They also highlighted as notable strengths the thoughtfully designed compulsory practicum, which guarantees meaningful professional experience, and the multiple avenues—through electives and thesis modules—for students to engage in research early and throughout their studies. The committee found the program to be Compliant in all three subareas.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
1) While some digital methods are described, the ECC suggests additional consideration of the use of AI in teaching and how it can be provided for the benefit of students on the BSc.	We will pilot AI-enhanced learning activities (e.g., adaptive tutorials, AI-generated formative feedback) in selected Year-2 courses during 2025-26, supported by targeted staff development. To this effect we are currently running faculty workshops on ethical AI in education and in the process of producing a brief “AI in Teaching” guidance manual for lecturers.	Choose level of compliance:
2) There is no clear system of internal moderation or external examiners to ensure that the performance of students is aligned with international standards. It could be worth considering employing moderation (internal or external) for a subset of courses with the BSc.	We thank the EEC for this valuable recommendation. Beginning in academic year 2025-26 we will implement a formal moderation framework whereby, each year, a random sample of assessments from approximately one-quarter of all BSc Psychology courses will undergo internal cross-moderation and, where appropriate, external examiner review. By rotating the sampled courses annually, every module will be reviewed at least once within a four-year cycle, ensuring that grading standards remain consistent and aligned with international benchmarks.	Choose level of compliance:
3) As it is mentioned in the Department report, the EEC recommends having a teaching methodology strategy at a	We agree with this recommendation and will develop a comprehensive teaching methodology strategy, including	Choose level of compliance:

program level that guides the selection of teaching methodologies, assessment activities, feedback implementation (how and when should be provided during the courses).	explicit guidelines for selecting teaching methods, assessment activities, and structured feedback processes.	
4) Research opportunities are currently optional: not all students engage in supervised research or thesis work unless they choose the relevant electives. This is not typical of a BSc in Psychology and the department could consider whether it may be beneficial to make a period of research mandatory. This isn't only important for students who want to go into research-focused careers, but for all students who are engaged in reading empirical papers as part of the degree course.	We share the EEC's view that hands-on research competence is essential. In fact, every student already completes five compulsory research-focused courses (30 ECTS in total): (i) PSY-145 Research Methods & Statistics I, (ii) PSY-195 Research Methods & Statistics II, (iii) PSY-299 Statistical Analysis in Psychological Research, (iv) PSY-395 Experimental Psychology – where each student conceptualizes and writes an individual research proposal, and (v) PSY-451 Research Experience – where in small teams of 2-4 students they conceptualize, design, collect and analyze data, and write a scientific report on a full empirical study. These compulsory components guarantee that all graduates design and conduct research before completion, while an optional thesis offers further depth for interested students.	Choose level of compliance:
5) During the site visit, it was noted that students' opportunity for engagement in research is limited at UNIC because of limited access to different methodologies in Cyprus. Given its position in a capital city, UNIC Athens has a clear opportunity to expand student involvement in research to different methodologies (e.g. neuroimaging methods or access	We value this recommendation and will leverage our location by establishing collaborative partnerships with local and international institutions to broaden research methodology exposure and internship opportunities, including ERASMUS exchanges.	Choose level of compliance:

to AI collaborators). The ECC recommends that the BSc in Psychology take advantage of this opportunity by investing considerable time in creating research opportunities for students through collaborations with other universities in Athens and expanding contact with a wide variety of stakeholders that could host practicums and internships. This could also include international psychology departments that could host ERASMUS visits.

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

The EEC noted that the BSc in Psychology at UNIC Athens will replicate the already successful UNIC programme and will be delivered by experienced teaching-and-research staff recruited through a transparent, multi-level process. They also highlighted as key strengths the rigorous hiring procedures overseen by a Faculty Selection Committee and Governing Board, the strong institutional support for staff development (Research Time Release, sabbaticals, mentorship), and the generous workload model that devotes up to 50 % of faculty time to research—well aligned with UNIC Athens's ambition to be research-led. The committee found the program to be Compliant in all three subareas.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
1) Currently, there are limited plans for faculty hirings associated with the programme. It may be beneficial to consider whether the breadth and plurality of the field of psychology can be adequately taught with only 8 planned faculty, or whether a healthy visiting professorship program could be set up to supplement the core faculty.	We agree that breadth is critical. Staffing needs analysis will be reviewed annually. Where specialist coverage is limited, we will introduce a Visiting Scholars Programme to complement core staff until permanent posts are becoming possible as the program grows in student numbers to justify an increased number of faculty.	Choose level of compliance:
2) While academic freedom and research training are emphasized, formal pedagogical training for teaching methods is less visible. The EEC recommends providing spaces for discussions between faculty staff to share different approaches in Psychology and assessment practices and criteria. This would guarantee coherence to the programme and, especially, the achievement of learning outcomes.	We thank the EEC for drawing attention to this point, and we acknowledge that we did not emphasize it sufficiently during the visit. Pedagogical development is already embedded institution-wide through the work of the e-Learning and Pedagogical Support Unit (ePSU), which delivers mandatory training leading to the University Teaching Certificate for all new and existing faculty.	Choose level of compliance:

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

The EEC found that the BSc in Psychology employs clear, inclusive and legislatively compliant policies for student admission, progression, recognition of prior study and certification, aligned with Greek, Cypriot and international standards. They also highlighted the strength of transparent admissions criteria that cater to applicants from varied educational backgrounds, robust tracking of progression via GPA and ECTS, formal mechanisms for credit transfer from foreign institutions, and probation policies that support under-performing students while safeguarding academic standards. The EEC found the program to be Compliant in all four subareas.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
1) While formal academic transfer is clear, recognition of alternative relevant experience is not recognized in the admissions process. This could be considered as an additional means of admitting students from diverse backgrounds.	We recognize the value of prior experiential learning (PEL) in widening access and will consider relevant professional or vocational experience when evaluating applicants especially from diverse backgrounds. In accordance with national regulations and University policy, PEL will be used solely for admission decisions and will not confer any academic credit or exemption within the 240-ECTS degree structure.	Choose level of compliance:
2) There is limited description of the expected standards of international qualifications (e.g. what are the minimum scores required for IB, or the minimum grades required at A-level?). For transparency, consider publishing these.	We fully agree with the committee's opinion on transparency and publishing equivalencies of international qualifications. However, we are currently limited by Greek legislation as admissions criteria vary every year. Once this is finalized with the Greek authorities it will be published on our website. As an indication the general admission criteria of UNIC are at level 4 or higher of the IB Diploma.	Choose level of compliance:

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

The EEC noted that UNIC Athens has planned a comprehensive physical and digital infrastructure, complemented by strong student-centred support services. They also highlighted the dedicated psychology laboratory—poised to underpin cutting-edge research—and the presence of faculty with active clinical and supervisory roles, which together promise rich experiential learning and mentorship for students. The EEC found the program to be Compliant in all three subareas and partially compliant in one subarea.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
1) Although the documentation refers to some relevant software for Psychology students, it could be considered outdated. The programme coordinators could consider updating the requirements to ensure that students are provided with the most cutting-edge tools for studying psychology. This would include access to software such as R, and relevant training in R and coding for the behavioural sciences.	We thank the EEC for this valuable observation. Students will receive hands-on R training in the compulsory course PSY-299 Statistical Analysis in Psychological Research, where datasets are analyzed using SPSS, R, and JASP. Building on this foundation, we will refresh our software suite, ensuring campus-wide R installation.	Choose level of compliance:
2) Additional investment in psychology-specific software, lab resources for experiments, and psychometric testing resources would be highly beneficial. Given that the psychology laboratory has yet to be built, the faculty should have involvement in how it is designed, and the equipment that will be housed, and the EEC urges that they consider pushing for cutting-edge facilities (e.g. neuroimaging, eye-tracking) commonly used for experiments in psychology.	We thank the EEC for this guidance. Faculty have already co-designed the planned Behavioral and Human-Factors Lab. The lab will launch with 32-channel EEG, 120 Hz eye-tracking, EMG, VR, NIR facial-capture, and modular infrastructure that can readily accept future upgrades such as portable fNIRS and motion-platform pods. We remain committed to constantly reviewing emerging technologies and updating our infrastructure.	Choose level of compliance:
3) Greater consideration should be given to career pathways that will face students graduating in the next decade, where the possibility of AI advances may render some traditional	We fully agree and thank the EEC for this forward-looking recommendation. Beginning in 2025-26 we will establish an Industry & Futures Advisory Board—comprising faculty,	Choose level of compliance:

<p>psychology career paths obsolete (e.g. HR). The EEC urges the teaching staff to creatively think about alternative career pathways, particularly in light of the overall aims of UNIC Athens, where psychology graduates could offer unique skills in a changing world.</p>	<p>alumni, and AI/ASI specialists—to evaluate emerging threats and opportunities from advanced AI and to guide curriculum updates that prepare graduates for new roles in tech, health, behavioural data science and digital mental-health.</p>	
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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)



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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>The EEC was impressed by the commitment of the existing staff to the development of the BSc in Psychology at UNIC Athens, and the possibility for a programme - clearly considered to be of high calibre both by graduates and external stakeholders - to be replicated in Athens where far greater opportunities for student involvement in research exist, and where the possibility to exist at a brand new campus, embedded within the forward-thinking vision of the CEO, offer unique opportunities. The EEC urges the programme organizers to consider how the current programme can be adapted to the needs of students who will graduate into a different career environment, and to consider how the BSc in Psychology can contribute to the broader university vision (e.g. in AI, medicine etc.) and similarly, how they can harness the broader vision to creatively develop their curriculum, research pathways and teaching methods</p>	<p>We fully embrace this forward-looking guidance. Our programme team will integrate emerging interdisciplinary themes—AI, digital mental-health, behavioural data science, and health-psychology interfaces—into curriculum design, research opportunities and teaching practice, ensuring graduates are equipped for evolving career landscapes while directly contributing to UNIC Athens's strategic vision.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Klimis Mastoridis	Dean of School	
Marios Adonis	Head of Department	

Date: 07/07/2025

