

# Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education

## Republic of Cyprus

### External Evaluation Report Program of Study

**Institution:** ...University of Cyprus.....

**District:** .....Nicosia.....

**Name of the Program of Study in Greek:**

.....

**Name of the Program of Study in English:**

.....Masters in Political Science.....

**Department:** ...Department of Social and Political Studies.....

**Language/s of instruction:** .....Greek.....

**Faculty:** .....

**Program Status (check  where applicable):**

- New Program of Study: .....
- Currently operation Program of Study: .....
  - Registered but not evaluated .....
  - Evaluated and accredited by SEKAP X.....
  - Evaluated by the Cy.Q.A.A. and did not get accreditation .....

**Program Category (check  where applicable):**

- Conventional .....X...
- Distance Learning .....
- Inter-university (Name of collaborating university/ies) .....



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## **INSTRUCTIONS:**

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 2016” [N. 136 (I)/2015].

**The document is duly completed by the External Evaluation Committee for each program of study. The ANNEX (Doc. Number 300.1) constitutes an integral part of the external evaluation report for the external evaluation accreditation of a program of study.**

**EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE:**

<b>NAME</b>	<b>TITLE AND RANK</b>	<b>UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION</b>
Michael Bruter	Professor	London School of Economics
Dimitris Papadimitriou	Professor	University of Manchester
Annika Björkdahl	Professor	Lund University
Revekka Ioannou	Student	Cyprus University of Technology

## INTRODUCTION:

### I. The External Evaluation procedure

- Short description of the documents that have been studied, of the on site visit meetings, and of the on site visit to the infrastructures.

### II. The Internal Evaluation procedure

- Comments concerning the quality and the completeness of the application submitted by the institution of higher education (Doc. Number 200.1), as well as concerning the overall acceptance of and participation in the quality assurance procedures, by the institution in general and by the program of study under evaluation in particular.

The Department provided the Panel with all the documents that are required diligently and comprehensively, including programmes of study, description of material sent to students, course descriptions, and CVs of the academic staff. Both the University and the Department provided the Panel with detailed descriptions of facilities, programmes, students' figures and other relevant material. The Panel met the rector, vice-rector, Head of Department, Programme directors where applicable, Departmental administrative staff, library director and departmental liaison officer and students (5 undergraduate, 5 Masters and 3 PhD). The visit included onsite visit of the campus, department, and library. Where the Panel asked for further documents (student feedback questionnaire, MA dissertation guidelines, research methods syllabus, etc) this would provided effectively and immediately.

On the whole, the Panel considered the responsiveness of the Department outstanding as well as the liaison role of the Agency representative who ensured perfectly efficient pre-arrival and post-arrival circulation of documents and openness of the on site visit.

## **FINDINGS:**

### **1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES**

The masters programme is run professionally and embedded within a good academic governance structure. On the academic side, the MA coordinator provides a visible reference point for students and the administrative support for the programme is professional and helpful. Teaching and learning facilities in terms of university infrastructure are excellent.

The teaching material made available to the Committee appear to be in line with international practice. The same is also true with regards to the contact hours between staff and students and the main teaching methods for the delivery of content. Student satisfaction with the course (and the quality of teaching in particular) is very high, as reflected in the student evaluation returns.

Teaching staff enjoy considerable freedom over all aspects of their modules. Although this is, in principle, a very positive reflection of the trust that the University places upon them, some degree of standardization of teaching practices would help shape students' expectations in a clearer manner. This could include a small insert in all module guides, in which generic information and department-wide practices are communicated to students (see, also, below).

The Department needs to review the way in which feedback (both formative and summative) is provided to students. At present practices vary considerably and lack formalization. Although staff are open and accessible, students do not receive written feedback regularly and are not always clear how their work is evaluated and what they need to do in order to improve their performance. This, inevitably, hampers their academic development.

The teaching is of very high quality and student evaluations evidence this. Yet, many students stress that the teaching activities tend to be "professor centric" rather than "student centric", some candidly mentioning that the students find themselves in a position to have to adapt (their expectations, behaviour, and approaches) to the individual professors rather than the other way round.

The quality of teaching staff is excellent and there is clear evidence of their enthusiasm for teaching and commitment to their students. Given the constantly changing thinking of what constitutes excellent teaching, the University should do more to develop the pedagogical skills of its staff. The Department should also encourage staff to engage with such training throughout their career.

A significant component of the Department's MA teaching provision is delivered by Adjunct Lecturers and all evidence suggests that their quality and professionally is very much valued within the Department, by both permanent staff and students. However, the University needs to ensure that these types of contractual relations are used sensibly and that Adjunct Lectures are remunerated adequately and are given fair opportunities for career progression. In line with international best practice the Department (and the University who manages appointment centrally) should adhere to a written policy equality and diversity and actively encourage the appointment of

underrepresented groups, such as women, people with disabilities and minority groups within Cyprus.

In terms of learning, the University and the Department should be encouraged to enhance the incentives for the teaching personnel to continuously develop their pedagogical skills by providing opportunities for pedagogical training, courses and workshop on such matters as well as take pedagogical expertise and teaching skills into consideration for new appointments and promotions. It would be important to ensure that faculty members are incentivized to avail themselves of opportunities given to rejuvenate their teaching approaches and qualifications and that those who make such an effort be rewarded for it. The Committee notes that teaching prizes have been introduced but this remains a limited ad hoc effort at this stage.

Finally, since a particular issue raised by the students pertains to dissertation support and supervision, to encourage colleagues to do this as well as possible, it would be good for the University and Department to formally recognize the work committed by faculty members who supervise students in their dissertations at all levels.

## **2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS**

Although the two MA programs offered by the Departments are academically coherent, their learning outcomes and objectives should be communicated more clearly to students. The panel strongly encourages the Department to review its strategy on how student expectations are managed and communicated. This will become critical as the Department and its student intake grows (and, hopefully, diversifies) in the future. Students would benefit from greater clarity on the mark classification (i.e. what is needed to progress across the scale); the number of hours of independent learning required for the successful completion of each module; the type of academic and generic skills they should expect to develop in each module; the rationale behind the various assessment forms and some basic information on plagiarism, referencing etc. Although some of these aspects may be discussed in individual modules in an informal way, ensuring some harmonization across the Department would improve the coherence of the programme and improve the students' learning experience.

The academic rationale of both MA programmes (International Relations and European Politics) is clear and reflects well the range of specialism within the Department. The structure of the programme provides significant flexibility (i.e. over sequencing of module selection) for students to tailor their studies according to their own needs. This is a strong asset of the programme. The timetabling of the modules (all running in late afternoon) also facilitates the uptake of the programme by the significant number of students who have work and study at the same time.

Although both MA programmes cover some of the key aspects of their respective sub-disciplines, the range of elective modules is limited. Although we recognize the inherent limitations associated with the Department's small size, we note that the attractiveness of both programmes would be significantly enhanced by a broader suite of modules. Given the level of study, some thought needs to be given to the depth at which modules pitch their key subjects. The offering needs to be distinctive to that of

the UG level and challenge students to engage more meaningfully with the available literature.

The weight of dissertation within the overall structure of the programme is in line with international best practice. However, students should be encouraged to think about their dissertation earlier than the fourth semester and within a more formalized context. This, for example can take the form of a separate 'dissertation design' module, within which students are taught some skills of independent research writing (e.g. choosing topics, developing research questions, thinking of research design methods, critically engaging with the literature), before been allocated ('centrally') supervisors. The course could also communicate to students' expectations on dissertation supervision (i.e. min/max hours of contact with supervisor)

In addition, students should also be exposed to rigorous research training early in their MA studies, to mitigate some of the barriers to independent/critical thinking and learning inherited by the Cypriot secondary education system and, partially, the UG programme. The current Research Design course could be enhanced with more references to qualitative methods.

The placement provision of the MA programme is excellent and much valued by students. It is a strong asset of the programmes which, if possible, can be expanded.

Teaching staff should be encouraged to reflect on equality and diversity issues affecting the curriculum (e.g. are reading lists reflective of a wide range of views?, do they contain 'structural' biases?).

The governance structures of the programme are good and do ensure a reasonable level of accountability (within an embedded culture of strong academic independence) and student participation in Department decision making bodies. Entry requirements are robust and student progress is monitored in a fair way.

The quality assurance of the program of studies is developed to measure the student satisfaction with the program. The courses are evaluated online by the students. The department presented the aggregated results and this demonstrated very strong course evaluations well above 4 on a scale 1-5. These excellent evaluations indicate a very high degree of student satisfaction with the course and the teaching activities. However, additional questions could be added to the questionnaire that the university develops, such as questions about feedback, assessment schemes, and contact, all of which seem to be areas where students would like to see improvement whilst they are overwhelmingly satisfied with the seriousness of the teaching and quality of the instructors for instance. This could provide opportunities and space to develop independent assessment of the courses.

The programmes are well supported organisationally. Although there is a positive culture of staff-student interaction, pastoral care for students should be better systematised and not be completely informal. The role of personal tutor/advisor is not very well defined and not clearly communicated to students. There is a strong case for formalising a couple of staff-student meetings per year to deal with pastoral care. Currently, the University offers some limited counselling service to students, but these could be made more visible. A greater availability of work/life balance training sessions

for students should also be explored, particularly as the size of the University increases and greater economies of scales are created.

The Department needs to pay greater attention to its internationalisation agenda. The use of Greek as the, nearly exclusive, language of instruction is damaging the potential for its growth. It should be considered as an essential learning outcome of the program that local students are able to read, write and research in English. Given the excellent quality of academic staff in the Department, the delivery of significant parts of the curriculum in English should be a key priority, which will also create very positive synergies for their research agendas and international collaborations. The exposure of students to more international speakers/researchers/practitioners should be considered as an important aspect of their learning experience.

Current University regulations on the language of instruction and on visiting academics represent a major impediment for the Department and its strategy for a more extrovert profile. The new proposed programme on Conflict Resolution will be an excellent vehicle for greater internationalisation and should be supported by the Department and the University (this is significant growth area for attracting high quality international students).

There is currently only anecdotal evidence for the career trajectories of MA graduates. The Department would benefit from the development of a more detailed database of alumni and make visible in its website the career opportunities that its programmes offer.

Individual members of the Department are making an excellent contribution to local society through their research and outreach activities. The organization of the Summer School is an excellent example of the staff's commitment and their engagement with the local (and international) community. This initiative should be supported and highlighted as best practice. The University as a whole needs to think more clearly its social responsibility agenda and what does this mean for the Department of Social and Political Sciences. The panel found that the Turkish Cypriot community (and other minorities) are underrepresented on all aspects of the Department's teaching provision and student intake. As a state-run institution, the University of Cyprus should develop active policies to rectify this shortcoming.

### **3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING**

The Committee considers that the Department has a strong research active profile especially given its relatively limited size. Whilst the headcount means that by nature, the Department cannot comprehensively cover the whole of political science, strategic existing and future recruitment plan offers significant coverage and quality.

In this context, the Committee found that the Department could perhaps do more to offer students research-led teaching, notably courses that involve fieldwork. There is very significant demand from students in that direction, and a lot of the students met were interested and intrigued by research – indeed explicitly asking for more research-intensive teaching – either out of intellectual interest or to improve their chances to be

accepted in international doctoral degrees or apply for research-based jobs in the public and private sectors. It seems a shame not to meet that demand as research based assignments would prove very popular.

Students also expressed a lot of interest in “in the field” teaching and this could be also encouraged in this context. Students noted that a few such opportunities were offered occasionally and overwhelmingly welcomed so this could be identified as best practice and encouraged, especially given the great opportunity provided by the local context and the university’s capital location.

The other natural area where research led education should be boosted is through MA dissertation provision and training. The Committee praises the effort made by the MA coordinator to provide students with a helpful handout, but believes that the students would benefit from the offering of appropriate departmental dissertation training and clarifying expectations both on what is expected in an undergraduate dissertation and what students can expect from potential dissertation supervisors, which the handout does not address very much.

As mentioned elsewhere, facilitating the venue of visiting professors able to offer a small group course focused on their research specialisation would greatly benefit research led teaching and offering more flexibility for the department to organise that would be a critical improvement.

Finally, research-teaching synergies could be significantly boosted by developing ad hoc research events where some undergraduate students could be invited (seminars, colloquia) which would expose undergraduates to research in the making as well as increase audiences and a sense of departmental life.

#### **4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK**

The Committee found a lot to praise when it comes to administrative services and infrastructure. The Committee could witness that the Departmental administrative team are enthusiastic, efficient, and supportive and a significant asset to the department despite an extensive range of duties. Tuition is reasonable which should be praised, options such the possibility of summer placement should be praised and the Department encouraged to develop them and make them available to more students in coming years.

The quality of the infrastructure should also be praised. The library facilities are excellent, the buildings and environment are world class. It would only be good to ensure that students also have good access to data as it seems that the library does not have access to databases directly (though some limited data seems to be held in the economics department). It would be good to clarify and facilitate access to such data for students who wish to use datasets for their Masters dissertation in particular.

However, the Committee was more worried about the provisions for welfare and pastoral support at both university and departmental level.

At the university level, whilst there technically is a provision for psychological, personal, and emotional support, the vast majority of the students the Committee talked to were unaware of it, and the two students who knew about it and reported trying to use it explained both that they had had to make significant efforts to find out about the support available and had been unable to receive the support that they needed when they contacted them. Almost all of the students whom the Committee talked to knew of friends or colleagues undergoing wellbeing and mental health issues such as depression and severe anxiety, and they overwhelmingly felt that there was no satisfactory help to be found from the university on those matters. Given what we know of students being a particularly vulnerable category when it comes to mental health and well-being issues, this situation, whilst undoubtedly compounded by a cultural context where those experience such issues may often worry about being stigmatised, is worrying and problematic.

While it is clear that the main responsibility for well-being infrastructure is at the university level, the Committee also felt that the departmental provisions in that matter were not very effective. Yet, several students were explicit that they would prefer to have a Departmental point of contact that they would be encouraged to approach when they feel that they are experiencing personal, emotional, or psychological issues rather than something at the university level.

The Department assigns each student with an Academic Advisor. However, neither faculty members nor student seem entirely clear about the role of the Advisors and the purpose of Advisor-Advisee meetings. As a result, almost none of the students we talked to had seen their academic advisor in the previous year.

The Committee finds that there may be a need to clarify the role of the academic advisor to the students (i.e. first point of contact, friend within the system, letter of recommendations, support students, clarify what they can do to get better grades, guide them to counselling services) in order for them to make better use of this service provided for them and also to clarify the pastoral expectations. In recent months, the Department moved to a system when it is now compulsory for academic advisors to meet their advisees when they are failing their courses. Whilst the Department should be praised for a good intention, the measure seems to have paradoxically sent the wrong signal as students may largely associate advisor advisee meetings with “trouble” and a potentially punitive context even though this is absolutely not the intention of the Department. Students were also left feeling that they cannot and should not expect help from their Department or University if and when they experience personal and psychological issues and that is a worrying situation.

To resolve those issues, the Committee strongly encourages the Department to make it compulsory for all students to meet with their academic advisor on a regular basis, at least once a term and to clarify the role of Academic Advisors to both faculty members and students emphasizing its positive contributions and the fact that all students – whether experiencing problems or not – can benefit from such regular interaction (ie students not doing well academically can discuss how to progress, those experiencing personal or psychological issues can benefit from a sympathetic hear and be directed to some help, those who are not experiencing any problem at all can get advice from great academics on what to do next in terms of postgraduate studies or jobs.) Such regular meetings would also ensure that the Department can detect

problem cases a lot more effectively. The Committee fears that without them, a number of students experiencing significant personal, psychological, and/or social issues may be going under the radar as long as they are passing their course. The Committee noted that there is overwhelming research showing that a very large proportion of students experiencing personal and psychological problems, that many are unlikely to actively seek help and are likely to worry about stigma or disappointing others, and that even personal problems that have nothing to do with academic life at first can either be compounded by academic stress or ultimately affect a student's academic performance (though not necessarily in the form of failing courses) and experience.

In short, the Committee would strongly encourage the University and Department to be significantly more pro-active in ensuring the personal and psychological well-being of their students and determined in checking that they are doing well, and that they are made aware of the help and support that they can get and made as comfortable as possible to seek it if needed. The Committee believes that this is a pre-requisite to ensure that students' academic environment effectively provides them with the level of support and serenity that they should be entitled to.

This pastoral priority does not detract from the fact that on the vast majority of other aspects, the Committee feels that the Department and University provide excellent infrastructure and administration and technical support to their students, especially given the limited size of the institution and should truly be praised for that. It should also be noted that the students are keen to point out that some specific faculty members are very helpful and responsive to their personal needs but the Committee would like to see at least a minimal standard and more pro-active efforts to ensure that the students are aware of what they can expect and ask, and the many ways in which the Department and School wish to be here for them.

## **5. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS**

**NA**

## **6. DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY**

**See separate report**

## CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE

The Committee is generally very satisfied with the efforts made by the Department to ensure a high quality, well structured, and well delivered education to its Masters students. The Committee considers that the Department is very competently managed, that its members are clearly devoted to providing very good education to their students, and that the Department offers a programme that fully meets international standards in terms of design despite its limited size. Additionally, the University offers world class building and library facilities and an excellent campus.

The students are proud of their University and their Department, they are bright and well-educated, and satisfaction scores are high. The Masters students feel well-integrated in the Department and praise the dedication of the Programme Director. Moreover, the Committee noted the importance of recent efforts to improve diversity and representation (including gender) through recent recruitment, increasing internationalization, and individual efforts to improve and diversify teaching assessment and delivery. Nevertheless, the Committee has made a number of suggestions in this report and would like to particularly encourage the Department to consider the following recommendations:

- 1) Clarifying students' expectations – the Committee recognizes the advantages of flexibility but currently, the students perceive the system as too “professor centric” and feel that they are the ones having to establish what they can expect from each individual faculty and course. The Committee would recommend that minimal standards be clarified and clearly communicated to students, preferably in writing. It would be good for students to have a better sense of what they can and cannot expect from their professors, their courses, different forms of assessments, etc. as well as what is expected from them so that they can achieve their potential and be more adventurous in exploring the diversity of the teaching and expertise offered to them.
- 2) Helping students to improve and achieve their best – the Committee believes that more should be done to provide students with feedback and guidance on how to improve, regardless of how good they already are, and to ensure the early teaching of fundamentals such as essay writing, bibliographical presentation and basic methods. More should also be done to make support students' progression throughout their degree, notably by offering more small group and research-oriented teaching and the students' third and fourth years, introducing more non-exam based assessment (essays, research papers) from the beginning of the degree, and improving guidance and support for the undergraduate dissertation.
- 3) Internationalisation – the Committee considers that there is an opportunity to significantly develop through internationalization that should not be missed given the University's geographical, infrastructural, and strategic advantages. Given the very international nature of most courses and reading lists already, the Committee recommends that the Department considers the possibility of

switching to English as the teaching language at Masters level and to significantly strengthen its Visiting Professors' scheme if possible. This would also require an effort by the University to be more flexible on Visiting Professors' conditions but would be well worth it, especially as such a scheme would also benefit PhD and Undergraduate Students.

- 4) Continuing the existing effort to emphasise diversity and accessibility – be it through recruitment and teaching.
- 5) Being more pro-active in ensuring that students benefit from a personally and academically supportive and fulfilling environment – this includes provisions for pastoral support, being more pro-active in identifying cases of students facing personal, psychological, or emotional difficulties, clarifying students' pastoral expectations and support options as well as the role of Academic Advisors and systematizing a minimum contact between them and their students regardless of academic performance.
- 6) Clarifying the mechanisms in place where something goes wrong – the Committee acknowledges the advantages of informality and that problems are rare, but nevertheless, it is important that both staff and students be given a clear sense of what routes are available to them when something is going wrong, which does not yet seem to be clear to the students.

With such changes, the Committee believes that the University and Department have the team, infrastructure, and tools in place to continue developing and already excellent programme.

**Doc. Number: 300.1**

**Quality Standards and Indicators**  
**External Evaluation of a Program of Study**

Institution: ...University of Cyprus.....
Program of Study: ...Political Science (MA)...
Duration of the Program of Study: ...2 years.....
Evaluation Date:....January 2019.....

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 2016”.

The document describes the quality standards and indicators, which will be applied for the external evaluation of programs of study of institutions of higher education, by the External Evaluation Committee.

**DIRECTIONS:** Note what is applicable **for each quality standard/indicator**.

1. Poor
2. To an unsatisfactory degree
3. To a satisfactory degree
4. Best practice

5. Excellent

It is pointed out that, in the case of standards and indicators that cannot be applied due to the status of the institution and/or of the program of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the institution's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality standard or indicator.

#### Members of the External Evaluation Committee

NAME	TITLE AND RANK	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION
Michael Bruter	Professor	London School of Economics
Dimitris Papadimitriou	Professor	University of Manchester
Annika Björkdahl	Professor	Lund University
Revekka Ioannou	Student	Cyprus University of Technology

**Date and Time of the On-Site Visit: ...January 2019....**

**Duration of the On-Site Visit: .....5 days.....**

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES						
1.1	Organization of teaching work	1	2	3	4	5
1.1.1	The student admission requirements to the program of study, are based on specific regulations which are adhered to in a consistent manner.					X
1.1.2	The number of students in each class allows for constructive teaching and communication, and it compares positively to the current international standards and/or practices.					X
1.1.3	The organization of the educational process safeguards the quality implementation of the program's purpose and objectives and the achievement of the learning outcomes. Particularly, the following are taken into consideration:					X
1.1.3.1	The implementation of a specific academic calendar and its timely publication.				X	
1.1.3.2	The disclosure of the program's curricula to the students, and their implementation by the teaching personnel				X	
1.1.3.3	The course web-pages, updated with the relevant supplementary material				X	
1.1.3.4	The procedures for the fulfillment of undergraduate and postgraduate assignments / practical training				X	
1.1.3.5	The procedures for the conduct and the format of the examinations and for student assessment				X	
1.1.3.6	The effective provision of information to the students and the enhancement of their participation in the procedures for the improvement of the educational process.			X		
1.1.4	Adequate and modern learning resources, are available to the students, including the following:					

	1.1.4.1	facilities						X
	1.1.4.2	library						X
	1.1.4.3	infrastructure						X
	1.1.4.4	student welfare			X			
	1.1.4.5	academic mentoring			X			
1.1.5	A policy for regular and effective communication, between the teaching personnel and the students, is applied.						X	
1.1.6	The teaching personnel, for each course, provide timely and effective feedback to the students.				X			
1.1.7	Statutory mechanisms, for the support of students and the communication with the teaching personnel, are effective.				X			
1.1.8	Control mechanisms for student performance are effective.						X	
1.1.9	Support mechanisms for students with problematic academic performance are effective.						X	
1.1.10	Academic mentoring processes are transparent and effective for undergraduate and postgraduate programs and are taken into consideration for the calculation of academic work load.				X			
1.1.11	The program of study applies an effective policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism.						X	
1.1.12	The program of study provides satisfactory mechanisms for complaint management and for dispute resolution.				X			
The procedures on feedback and clarification of student expectations should be improved.								
<b>1.2</b>	<b>Teaching</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	
1.2.1	The methodology utilized in each course is suitable for achieving the course's purpose and objectives and those of the individual modules.					X		
1.2.2	The methodology of each course is suitable for adults.							X

1.2.3	Continuous-formative assessment and feedback are provided to the students regularly.			X		
1.2.4	The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance, are clear, adequate, and known to the students.			X		
1.2.5	Educational activities which encourage students' active participation in the learning process, are implemented.				X	
1.2.6	Teaching incorporates the use of modern educational technologies that are consistent with international standards, including a platform for the electronic support of learning.				X	
1.2.7	Teaching materials (books, manuals, journals, databases, and teaching notes) meet the requirements set by the methodology of the program's individual courses, and are updated regularly.					X
<p>The use of a broader range of pedagogical techniques and tools and teaching activities could be increased for more effective student learning. Model UN and Model EU are great examples of such activities already in use at the department. A broader variation in assessing learning outcomes beyond exams would enhance independent and critical thinking and research papers and essays would equip the students for writing BA- and MA-thesis. A transparent and clearer assessment schedule, highlighting the criteria and expectations for the different grades would make clear to the students how to improve and progress. In addition, there is a need for more streamlined and systematic feedback to students. More attention could be paid to the diversity of the bibliography.</p>						
<b>1.3</b>	<b>Teaching Personnel</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1.3.1	The number of full-time academic personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, and their fields of expertise, adequately support the program of study.				X	
1.3.2	The members of teaching personnel for each course have the relevant formal and fundamental qualifications for teaching the course, as described by the legislation, including the following:					
1.3.2.1	Subject specialization, preferably with a doctorate, in the discipline.					X
1.3.2.2	Publications within the discipline.					X
1.3.3	The specializations of Visiting Professors adequately support the program of study.					X

1.3.4	Special Teaching Personnel and Special Scientists have the necessary qualifications, adequate work experience and specialization to teach a limited number of courses in the program of study.					X
1.3.5	In every program of study the Special Teaching Personnel does not exceed 30% of the Teaching Research Personnel.				X	
1.3.6	The teaching personnel of each private institution of tertiary education, to a percentage of at least 70%, has recognized academic qualification, by one level higher than that of the program of study in which he/she teaches.					
1.3.7	In the program of study, the ratio of the number of courses taught by full-time personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, to the number of courses taught by part-time personnel, ensures the quality of the program of study.				X	
1.3.8	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching personnel is adequate for the support and safeguarding of the program's quality.				X	
1.3.9	The academic personnel's teaching load does not limit the conduct of research, writing, and contribution to the society.					X
1.3.10	Future redundancies / retirements, expected recruitment and promotions of academic personnel safeguard the unimpeded implementation of the program of study within a five-year span.					X
1.3.11	The program's Coordinator has the qualifications and experience to efficiently coordinate the program of study.					X
<p>The permanent faculty is engaged, enthusiastic and well qualified exceeding the academic requirements for permanent staff, and they are supported by adjuncts that are well qualified and committed. The teaching personnel and the coordinators have the necessary administrative capacity and pedagogical experience to ensure a high quality of teaching and that the students achieve the course objectives.</p>						

2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS						
2.1	Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.1.1	The purpose and objectives of the program of study are formulated in terms of expected learning outcomes and are consistent with the mission and the strategy of the institution.					X
2.1.2	The purpose and objectives of the program and the learning outcomes are utilized as a guide for the design of the program of study.			X		
2.1.3	The higher education qualification and the program of study, conform to the provisions of their corresponding Professional and Vocational Bodies for the purpose of registration to these bodies.					X
2.1.4	The program's content, the methods of assessment, the teaching materials and the equipment, lead to the achievement of the program's purpose and objectives and ensure the expected learning outcomes.			X		
2.1.5	The expected learning outcomes of the program are known to the students and to the members of the academic and teaching personnel.			X		
2.1.6	The learning process is properly designed to achieve the expected learning outcomes.				X	
2.1.7	The higher education qualification awarded to the students, corresponds to the purpose and objectives and the learning outcomes of the program.					X
The dissertation training could be improved and more systematic.						

2.2	Structure and Content of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.2.1	The course curricula clearly define the expected learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the method of assessing student performance.				X	
2.2.2	The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied and there is true correspondence between credits and workload per course and per semester for the student either he / she studies in a specific program or he/she is registered and studies simultaneously in additional programs of studies according to the European practice in higher education institutions.					X
2.2.3	The program of study is structured in a consistent manner and in sequence, so that concepts operating as preconditions precede the teaching of other, more complex and cognitively more demanding, concepts.				X	
2.2.4	The higher education qualification awarded, the learning outcomes and the content of the program are consistent.					X
2.2.5	The program, in addition to the courses focusing on the specific discipline, includes an adequate number of general education courses.					X
2.2.6	The content of courses and modules, and the corresponding educational activities are suitable for achieving the desired learning outcomes with regards to the knowledge, skills, and abilities which should be acquired by students.			X		
2.2.7	The number and the content of the program's courses are sufficient for the achievement of learning outcomes.				X	
2.2.8	The content of the program's courses reflects the latest achievements / developments in science, arts, research and technology.				X	
2.2.9	Flexible options / adaptable to the personal needs or to the needs of students with special needs, are provided.			X		
Dissertation training should be improved and more systematic. The qualitative parts of the methods training could be developed further.						
2.3	Quality Assurance of the Program of Study	1	2	3	4	5
2.3.1	The arrangements regarding the program's quality assurance define clear competencies and procedures.				X	

2.3.2	Participation in the processes of the system of quality assurance of the program, is ensured for						
	2.3.2.1	the members of the academic personnel				X	
	2.3.2.2	the members of the administrative personnel				X	
	2.3.2.3	the students.				X	
2.3.3	The guide and / or the regulations for quality assurance, provide detailed information and data for the support and management of the program of study.				X		
2.3.4	The quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not restricted by non-academic factors.					X	
<p>The quality assurance is online and measure student evaluation of the courses. The student evaluations are outstanding. There is however room to further develop the questionnaire to include questions concerning feedback and assessment schemes as well as open space for independent evaluation. There is no mentioning of teacher self-assessment and reflection on delivering of teaching.</p>							
<b>2.4</b>	<b>Management of the Program of Study</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
2.4.1	Effective management of the program of study with regard to its design, its approval, its monitoring and its review, is in place.					X	

2.4.2	It is ensured that learning outcomes may be achieved within the specified timeframe.			X		
2.4.3	It is ensured that the program's management and development process is an academic process which operates without any non-academic interventions.					X
2.4.4	The academic hierarchy of the institution, (Rector, Vice-Rectors, Deans, Chairs and Programs' Coordinators, academic personnel) have the sole responsibility for academic excellence and the development of the programs of study.					X
2.4.5	Information relating to the program of study are posted publicly and include:					
2.4.5.1	The provisions regarding unit credits					X
2.4.5.2	The expected learning outcomes				X	
2.4.5.3	The methodology					X
2.4.5.4	Course descriptions				X	
2.4.5.5	The program's structure					X
2.4.5.6	The admission requirements					X
2.4.5.7	The format and the procedures for student assessment				X	
2.4.6	The award of the higher education qualification is accompanied by the Diploma Supplement which is in line with the European and international standards.					X
2.4.7	The effectiveness of the program's evaluation mechanism, by the students, is ensured.				X	
2.4.8	The recognition and transfer of credit units from previous studies is regulated by procedures and regulations which ensure that the majority of credit units is awarded by the institution which awards the higher education qualification.					X

Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.

It is somewhat difficult for students to complete their degree in the default two year period due to the late start on the dissertation. Consequently, only a minority of students complete their programme of studies in two years. It is recommended that dissertation thinking takes place earlier and that a formal dissertation training be offered to support it. The provisions for working students to still be able to study at the same time are excellent.

<b>2.5</b>	<b>International Dimension of the Program of Study</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
2.5.1	The program's collaborations with other institutions are compared positively with corresponding collaborations of other departments / programs of study in Europe and internationally.				X	
2.5.2	The program attracts Visiting professors of recognized academic standing.			X		
2.5.3	Students participate in exchange programs.				X	
2.5.4	The academic profile of the program of study is compatible with corresponding programs of study in Cyprus and internationally.					X
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>Also, comment on the degree the program compares positively with corresponding programs operating in Cyprus and abroad in higher education institutions of the same rank.</p>						
<b>2.6</b>	<b>Connection with the labor market and the society</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
2.6.1	The procedures applied, so that the program conforms to the scientific and professional activities of the graduates, are adequate and effective.				X	
2.6.2	According to the feasibility study, indicators for the employability of graduates are satisfactory.				X	
2.6.3	Benefits, for the society, deriving from the program are significant.					X
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p>						

<b>3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING</b>						
<b>3.1</b>	<b>Research - Teaching Synergies</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
3.1.1	It is ensured that teaching and learning have been adequately enlightened by research.				X	

3.1.2	New research results are embodied in the content of the program of study.			X		
3.1.3	Adequate and sufficient facilities and equipment are provided to support the research component of the program of study, which are available and accessible to the personnel and the students.				X	
3.1.4	The results of the academic personnel's research activity are published in international journals with the peer-reviewing system, in international conferences, conference minutes, publications etc.					X
3.1.5	External, non-governmental, funding for the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.				X	
3.1.6	Internal funding, of the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.					X
3.1.7	The policy for, indirect or direct, internal funding of the academic personnel's research activity is satisfactory.					X
3.1.8	The participation of students, academic, teaching and administrative personnel of the program in research activities and projects is satisfactory.			X		
3.1.9	Student training in the research process is sufficient.			X		
<p>The research methodology course is well developed particularly the basic quantitative part, but the qualitative research methodologies could be strengthened further as most of the students seems to have an interest in these types of research methodologies. While there is a handout given, the Department should offer a dissertation training course in addition to individual supervision. Students could be more involved in departmental research activities.</p>						
<p><b>4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK</b></p>						

<b>4.1</b>	<b>Administrative Mechanisms</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
4.1.1	There is a Student Welfare Service that supports students with regards to academic and personal problems and difficulties.			X		
4.1.2	Statutory administrative mechanisms for monitoring and supporting students are sufficient.			X		
4.1.3	The efficiency of these mechanisms is assessed on the basis of specific criteria.			X		
<p>There is a student welfare service, but students are not aware of it, have difficulties finding it and unsure how to use it. More information and communication about this service seem to be needed. The Academic Advisor relationship is under-used and meetings should be more systematic to pro-actively detect and help resolve issues. Students are not aware of where to go in case something goes wrong and they experience a serious problem. Those routes need to be clarified to them.</p>						
<b>4.2</b>	<b>Infrastructure / Support</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
4.2.1	There are suitable books and reputable journals supporting the program.					X
4.2.2	There is a supportive internal communication platform.				X	
4.2.3	The facilities are adequate in number and size.					X
4.2.4	The equipment used in teaching and learning (laboratory and electronic equipment, consumables etc) are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate.					X
4.2.5	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are adequate and accessible to students.				X	
4.2.6	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are updated regularly with the most recent publications.					X
4.2.7	The teaching personnel are provided with training opportunities in teaching method, in adult education, and in new technologies on the basis of a structured learning framework.				X	
<p>Library provisions are excellent but access to empirical databases for students is not entirely clear. There are opportunities for teaching personnel to participate in pedagogical seminars, but the incentives to do so seem limited. The teaching part of our profession is not upgraded and not seriously considered or given equal attention in the appointment of new staff and in promotion procedures.</p>						

<b>4.3</b>	<b>Financial Resources</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
4.3.1	The management and allocation of the financial resources of the program of study, allow for the development of the program and of the academic / teaching personnel.				X	
4.3.2	The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters, is the responsibility of the relevant academic departments.				X	
4.3.3	The remuneration of academic and other personnel is analogous to the remuneration of academic and other personnel of the respective institutions in Cyprus.					X
4.3.4	Student tuition and fees are consistent to the tuition and fees of other respective institutions.				X	
<p>More resources could be devoted to turn adjunct staff into permanent faculty and to limit the number of students in class to make more small group learning and student oriented learning practices possible. Visiting professor programmes should be developed further.</p>						

**The following criterion applies additionally for distance learning programs of study.**

<b>5.</b>	<b>DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
5.1	Feedback processes for teaching personnel with regards to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.					
5.2	The process and the conditions for the recruitment of academic / teaching personnel, ensure that candidates have the necessary skills and experience for long distance education.					
5.3	Through established procedures, appropriate training, guidance and support, are provided to teaching personnel, to enable it to efficiently support the educational process.					

5.4	Student performance monitoring mechanisms are satisfactory.						
5.5	Adequate mentoring by the teaching personnel, is provided to students, through established procedures.						
5.6	The unimpeded long distance communication between the teaching personnel and the students, is ensured to a satisfactory degree.						
5.7	Assessment consistency, its equivalent application to all students, and the compliance with predefined procedures, are ensured.						
5.8	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) comply with the requirements provided by the long distance education methodology and are updated regularly.						
5.9	The program of study has the appropriate and adequate infrastructure for the support of learning.						
5.10	The supporting infrastructures are easily accessible.						
5.11	Students are informed and trained with regards to the available educational infrastructure.						
5.12	The procedures for systematic control and improvement of the supportive services are regular and effective.						
5.13	Infrastructure for distance education is comparable to university infrastructure in the European Union and internationally.						
5.14	Electronic library services are provided according to international practice in order to support the needs of the students and of the teaching personnel.						
5.15	The students and the teaching personnel have access to the necessary electronic sources of information, relevant to the program, the level, and the method of teaching.						
5.16	The percentage of teaching personnel who holds a doctorate, in a program of study which is offered long distance, is not less than 75%.						
Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.							

If the following apply, note “√” in the appropriate space next to each statement. In case the following statements do not apply, note what is applicable:

The maximum number of students per class-section, should not exceed 30 students.	
The conduct of written examinations with the physical presence of the students, under the supervision of the institution or under the supervision of reliable agencies which operate in the countries of the students, is compulsory.	
The number of long distance classes taught by the academic personnel does not exceed the number of courses taught by the teaching personnel in conventional programs of study.	

**The following criterion applies additionally for doctoral programs of study.**

6.	DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY	1	2	3	4	5
6.1	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through Doctoral Studies Regulations.					
6.2	The structure and the content of a doctoral program of study are satisfactory and they ensure the quality provision of doctoral studies.					
6.3	The number of academic personnel, which is going to support the doctoral program of study, is adequate.					
6.4	The doctoral studies’ supervisors have the necessary academic qualifications and experience for the supervision of the specific dissertations.					

6.5	The degree of accessibility of all interested parties to the Doctoral Studies Regulations is satisfactory.					
6.6	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the academic personnel, is apt for the continuous and effective feedback provided to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.					
6.7	The research interests of academic advisors and supervisors are satisfactory and they adequately cover the thematic areas of research conducted by the doctoral students of the program.					
<p>Justify the answer you have provided and note the additional comments you may have on each standard / indicator.</p> <p>Note the number of doctoral students under the supervision of each member of the academic personnel of the program and the academic rank of the supervisor.</p>						

### FINAL REMARKS – SUGGESTIONS

Please note your final remarks and suggestions for the program of study and/or regarding particular aspects of the program.

See conclusions

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**Names and Signatures of the Chair and the Members of the External Evaluation Committee:**

<b>Name:</b>	<b>Signature:</b>
Michael Bruter	
Dimitris Papadimitriou	
Annika Björkdahl	
Revekka Ioannou	

Date: .....