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Date: 01/06/2025

External Evaluation Report

(Programmatic within the framework of Departmental Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Education and Social Sciences
- **Department:** Department of Psychology
- **Programme(s) of study - Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
Programme 1 – BA
In Greek:
Πτυχίο στη Ψυχολογία
In English:
Bachelor in Psychology
Language(s) of instruction: Greek
Programme 2 – PhD
In Greek:
Διδακτορικό στη Ψυχολογία
In English:
PhD in Psychology
Language(s) of instruction: Greek
Programme 3 – [Title 3]
In Greek:
Programme Name
In English:
Programme Name
Language(s) of instruction: Language(s)



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. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The committee visited the University of Cyprus on 29th May 2025. We participated in a series of meetings, with the Rector, the Dean of the School of Social Sciences of Education, the Deputy Head of Department, the BA and PhD course leaders, and teaching staff. Three further meetings allowed us to meet students and graduates of the Department, the administrative staff, and two stakeholders. We were very warmly received, and the discussions were informative and constructive. We would like to record our thanks for a very positive experience, and add particular thanks to the academic and administrative staff who spent considerable effort preparing the documentation, patiently answered all our questions, and ensured that the visit ran smoothly.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Martin CORLEY	Academic member and Chair	University of Edinburgh
Christina ATHANASIADES	Academic member	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Patricia BIJTTEBIER	Academic member	KU Leuven
Fontini DEMETRIOU	Professional Body member	Psychologist
Nicoletta MICHAEL	Student member	Cyprus University of Technology

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
 - sub-areas*
 - standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding each programme of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

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

Sub-areas

- 1.1. Policy for quality assurance
- 1.2. Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
- 1.3. Public information
- 1.4. Information management

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
 - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
 - *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*

- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Findings for Bachelor in Psychology

The programme is subject to continuous monitoring and revision to adapt to the needs of the labour market, society, and technological advancements. The Department has a Departmental Undergraduate Committee, dealing with teaching quality issues, learning outcomes and the content and the structure of the curriculum.

The Bachelor in Psychology programme is a 4-year full-time programme (240 ECTS), with a compulsory part (166 ECTS) and an elective part (74 ECTS). The compulsory part consists of 134 ECTS courses from the Psychology Department, 10 ECTS courses from other departments, 12 ECTS compulsory thesis and 10 ECTS language courses. The elective part consists of 59 ECTS constrained elective courses and 15 ECTS free electives.

The UCY website contains information on the profile of the programme, key learning outcomes, curriculum structure, course breakdown per semester, conditions of study and occupational profiles of the graduates.

Information for effective management is systematically collected and analysed, including key performance indicators, student population profiles, progression, success, and drop-out rates, and data on learning resources. Information on student support and graduate career paths is also gathered. Students and staff are involved in providing feedback through evaluations and participating in various committees that monitor and evaluate the programmes.

Findings for PhD in Psychology

The programme is subject to continuous monitoring and revision to adapt to the needs of the labour market, society, and technological advancements. The Department has a Postgraduate Studies Committee, dealing with teaching quality issues, learning outcomes and the content and the structure of the curriculum.

The PhD in Psychology programme has 255 ECTS, to be acquired in 4 to 8 years, with a compulsory part (210 ECTS) and an elective part (45 ECTS). The compulsory part consists of 15 ECTS courses, 120 ECTS research stages, 15 ECTS comprehensive examination and 60 ECTS writing stages. The elective part consists of 6 elective courses, organized in two groups. In the first group, students choose either Advanced Research Methods II or Qualitative Research Methods in Psychology. In the second group, students choose 5 courses out of 17 options. The Comprehensive Examination in the 4th semester of study is an important milestone; it consists of an open-book written exam on three of the courses from the first three semesters of study (with questions tapping the extent to which students can relate the insights from these courses to the research focus of their own PhD project).

The UCY website contains information on the profile of the programme, key learning outcomes, curriculum structure, course breakdown per semester, conditions of study and occupational profiles of the graduates.

Information management involves monitoring student numbers, profiles, progression, and success throughout the different stages, such as the comprehensive examination. Details on available learning resources, including research labs, and various forms of student support are provided. Students and staff are involved in the process through evaluations, committee participation, proposal presentations, and dissertation defences.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Strengths for Bachelor in Psychology

- The Department has a culture of continuous improvement.
- The newly proposed Bachelor's program has an even stronger research focus than the former programme, due to the mandatory thesis.

Strengths for PhD in Psychology

- The PhD programme is a high quality programme, delivering strong graduates with good career prospects in academia (which is evident from the fact that many former students have ended up as postdocs or faculty members in high-ranked international universities).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Bachelor of Psychology

- Courses are weighted differently according to the expected workload (e.g., 5 ECTS vs. 6 ECTS) but neither the course documents nor the conversations with staff made clear which factors determined allocation of ECTS.
- There is room in the syllabus for somewhat more emphasis on topics related to motivation and emotion.
- In many international Bachelor's programmes, a course on psychological testing and psychometrics would be mandatory rather than optional.
- UCY regulations require a minimum of two assessments per course, but many courses are assessed more frequently, adding to staff and student workload.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Phd of Psychology

- The Qualitative Research Methods course can be avoided by taking a Quantitative course instead. In many international psychology programmes, advanced study of both is mandatory.
- Students take electives in two groups (Group 1, consisting of two methodological courses and Group 2, consisting of 17 psychology courses). Former students of the programme indicate that, at least for PhD students working in some domains, these options can be quite limited. The programme committee may consider opening up (at least part of) Group 2 to courses in other disciplines, relevant for the specific research topic of the students.

- Current and former students of the programme strongly advocate for a redesign of the Comprehensive Evaluation. They indicate that in its current form, the evaluation is not only very stressful (three exams on two successive days) but also of limited relevance to the progress of the PhD work. The EEC is also in favor of designing the Comprehensive Examination in such a way as to maximally contribute to the student's PhD project. One way to do this would be to conceive it as a systematic literature review on the student's planned research topic plus an oral progress review.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BA</i>	<i>PhD</i>	[Title 3]
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
1.3	Public information	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
1.4	Information management	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer

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

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*

- *The criteria for and method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*



Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Findings for Bachelor of Psychology

Practical application is integrated through courses like "Applications of Psychology in the Field," which includes volunteer work experience, and a compulsory undergraduate thesis that can be either literature-based or experimental. Students can further deepen their research skills through optional Research Experience courses. To support students, each is assigned an Academic Advisor for guidance, and faculty maintain office hours for consultations. Student feedback, gathered through course evaluations and satisfaction surveys, is deemed crucial for enhancing student-centred learning.

Assessment in the BA programme is multifaceted. Each course employs at least two evaluation methods, one being a final examination which cannot exceed 60% of the total grade. Common assessment methods include midterm and final written exams, assignments, teamwork, quizzes, oral examinations, and student presentations. The grading system is numerical, ranging from 0 to 10 (with 0.5 increments), with a minimum passing grade of 5. A student's final degree grade is a weighted average of all successfully completed courses, based on their ECTS credits. The assignment of a thesis topic and academic supervisor is based on students' expressed interest from a list provided by faculty, with the Department making the final allocation. Thesis progress is assessed as satisfactory or unsatisfactory by the supervisor at the end of the first semester of work. The final thesis evaluation is conducted by the supervisor and a second assessor from the Department faculty, potentially including an oral presentation. Evaluation criteria for the thesis encompass the quality of work, achievement of objectives, student's understanding of the field, and presentation quality.

Findings for PhD in Psychology

From the PhD programme's outset, students are immersed in research through "Research Stages Courses" and mentorship within their supervisor's research lab/team. A specialized Doctoral Seminar (PSY 790) supports dissertation proposal preparation, and students have the option to write their dissertation in English, offering flexibility.

Assessment methods for PhD courses include midterm/final exams, case studies, projects, and presentations, with at least two methods per course and the final exam capped at 60% of the grade. Key doctoral milestones such as Research and Writing Stages, the Comprehensive Examination, and the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal are graded on a Success/Failure basis. The final Doctoral Dissertation is graded as Excellent, Very Good, or Good. The dissertation process begins with securing a faculty supervisor upon admission. The Research Advisor, appointed by the Department Board, guides the student's research. The research proposal is presented to a three-member committee chaired by the supervisor. The final dissertation defense is conducted before a five-member examining committee, which includes external examiners. Quality assurance for the dissertation is rigorous, demanding extensive international bibliography, clear scientific contribution and originality, a strong theoretical foundation, and adherence to specific structural and formatting guidelines.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Strengths for Bachelor in Psychology

- Processes of learning and teaching are individualized.
- The fact that the internship is optional and bears no credit weighting emphasizes the fact that students are not entitled to practice psychology already after their first degree.
- A variety of course evaluation methods is used.

Strengths for PhD in Psychology

- The courses and doctoral seminar are well-designed to support the development of the PhD.
- Allowing students to submit published papers as part of the PhD thesis encourages their academic skills.
- Allowing students to write in English enhances the likelihood of international recognition for their work.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Bachelor in Psychology

- The Department does not have an appropriate workload model, bearing the risk that some faculty may experience overload in teaching and supervising hours. The EEC's suggestion would be to create a system that records the hours they spend on teaching and supervising the thesis. Having a tool that allocates thesis supervision according to each teacher's workload would be useful too.
- The fact that students are allowed to repeat a course to improve their grade is highly unusual and bears the risk of grade inflation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD Psychology

- Eight years is a relatively long period of study for a PhD.



Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BA</i>	<i>PhD</i>	[Title 3]
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
2.2	Practical training	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

- 3.1. Teaching staff recruitment and development**
- 3.2. Teaching staff number and status**
- 3.3. Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1. Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2. Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3. Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*
- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*

- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Findings for Bachelor in Psychology and PhD in Psychology

The Department takes several initiatives in the domain of professional development and training of teaching staff. Faculty members can make use of sabbaticals either every 3 years (6 months off) or every six years (1 year off). New faculty members get a starting grant, enabling them to take part in conferences or conduct research visits and providing them with a personal research stipend. Also starting staff gets a reduction of administrative duties. All teaching staff is supported by the Centre for Teaching and Learning in the process of development of courses.

The Department has 19 faculty members (9 professors, 4 associate professors, 4 assistant professors, 2 lecturers) and 2 practicum leaders working full-time and on a permanent basis. The ratio of permanent vs non-permanent staff (in this case special scientists) is 80:20. The EEC is not aware of any current visiting professors.

Teaching staff is very research active and get the opportunity to teach in the domain of their research expertise for at least part of their teaching assignments. Students routinely participate in research activities at all levels of their curriculum and learn important research skills there.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Strengths for Bachelor in Psychology and PhD in Psychology

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

- It is clear that during the past five years, the Department has managed to downsize the ratio of permanent to temporary staff in the programs, which is a good thing. It seems that the reduction of elective courses across the programs has ensured that the number of courses to be organised is more or less inline with staff capacity.
- Teaching staff have strong research profiles and show a great amount of commitment to the Department and its programmes. Recent hires with strong profiles further add to the strength of the Department.
- The teaching staff team is cohesive and seems to collaborate well with administrative staff.
- The fact that in the newly proposed Bachelor program the undergraduate thesis is mandatory further adds to the strong research orientation of the program.
- The Department provides continuous opportunities for student involvement in research, which seems to pay off. Students have received Cyprus Youth Organization awards for their research.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- There is room to build further on the strength of the staff by expanding the Department with new hires.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BA</i>	<i>PhD</i>	[Title 3]
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer

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

Sub-areas

- 4.1. Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2. Student progression
- 4.3. Student recognition
- 4.4. Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Findings for Bachelor in Psychology

The admission process is multifaceted, primarily relying on highly competitive Pancyprian Examinations. Published criteria also exist for admission based on Special Criteria (14% of Cypriot admissions), Panhellenic Examinations (10%), International Examinations (3% of Cypriot admissions for specific groups, requiring good Greek language knowledge), Turkish-Cypriot graduates, and transfers/second degrees. These criteria and procedures are described in the sources as published and known to students.

Progression involves completing a relatively structured four-year, full-time course requiring 240 ECTS credits, including mandatory and elective courses, a mandatory thesis, and courses from other departments and a foreign language. Student assessment involves various methods such as midterm/final exams, assignments, presentations, and practical exercises, with specific weighting criteria determined by the instructor. The University provides academic advisors to monitor progress and offer guidance.

Recognition of prior studies and credit transfers is handled by the Departmental Undergraduate Committee based on specific criteria.

Certification leads to a Bachelor of Arts in Psychology, with detailed study rules published, and transcripts are issued.

Findings for PhD in Psychology

Admission is highly competitive, with 5-7 places available annually for 15-20 applications. Published eligibility criteria require a Bachelor's degree, a relevant Master's degree (or equivalent), English language competency, and securing a faculty member's commitment to supervise. Applicants submit documents including a CV, transcripts, letters of recommendation, a statement of goals, and a preliminary research proposal. Evaluation by a three-member committee is based on academic excellence, references, research experience, and a personal interview.

Progression involves completing 255 ECTS over a minimum of 6 semesters, including academic coursework, research stages, a comprehensive examination, a dissertation proposal presentation, and writing stages culminating in the doctoral dissertation and public defense before a five-member committee (including external members).

Recognition of prior postgraduate credits or external transfers is possible under specific conditions, evaluated by the Departmental Council and Graduate School.

Certification results in a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Psychology. The dissertation must provide a significant and original contribution to scientific knowledge and adhere to detailed published guidelines and quality assurance requirements. Postgraduate students also receive transcripts and a Diploma Supplement.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Strengths for Bachelor in Psychology

- There are well-defined and well-documented processes in all categories.

Strengths for PhD in Psychology

- There are well-defined and well-documented processes in all categories.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Bachelor in Psychology

- N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD in Psychology

- N/A

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BA</i>	<i>PhD</i>	[Title 3]
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
4.2	Student progression	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
4.4	Student certification	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1. Teaching and Learning resources

5.2. Physical resources

5.3. Human support resources

5.4. Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Findings for the Bachelor in Psychology and the PhD in Psychology

Teaching and learning resources at the UCY appear to be adequate and available to students. Teaching methods incorporate lectures, discussions, laboratory practice with software, case studies, group work, presentations, and empirical projects. The learning and teaching processes

demonstrate a focus on being student-centered. Every student is assigned an Academic Advisor, plus academic staff members maintain regular office hours where students can meet with them to discuss matters related to their studies. Students are also involved in the Department's quality assurance processes and contribute feedback through evaluations.

The Department provides classrooms, computer laboratories, and various specialized labs such as those for psychophysiology and neuroimaging techniques. Moreover, the "Stelios Ioannou" Learning Resource Centre serves as the University library, offering extensive collections of printed books, scientific journals, electronic books, and databases, along with numerous study spaces and informational seminars.

The Academic Affairs and Student Welfare Service provides administrative support, assistance with housing, scholarships, and general student welfare. Free psychological support and counselling are available through the University Mental Health Center, which also offers diagnostic assessment, workshops and awareness campaigns on mental health. Further support is offered by the Centre for Teaching & Learning for developing study skills and the Career Center, which provides guidance, appointments, and resources for careers and postgraduate studies.

The Academic Affairs and Student Welfare Service includes a Social Support Office specifically for students with disabilities, health issues, or socio-financial challenges. Faculty also provide individual support through supervising student research and practical training.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Strengths for Bachelor in Psychology and PhD in Psychology

- Teaching is student-centered and students are getting regular feedback from academic staff.
- Overall, the University's facilities are new and modern, meeting most of the needs of the staff and student population.
- UCY has arranged for many student support services to be provided centrally.
- A valuable resource is the University Mental Health Center, which operates under the Department of Psychology. It is staffed by Department graduates and doctoral level trainees in Clinical Psychology.
- The Department indicates that the Mental Health Center and the University Field Research Centre have scope for sustainability, growth and expansion into specialised service units capable of generating income, which is a good thing.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Bachelor in Psychology and PhD in Psychology

- Some assessments need to be rethought in the advent of generative AI.

- The academic staff pointed out the need to find more space for the development of the Department and its programmes, as well as the support on behalf of the central management for the purchase of necessary laboratory equipment.
- The Department needs to model faculty workload in a more appropriate way.
- Administrative support capacity needs to be safeguarded (and eventually increased in case of further growth of the Department).

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>BA</i>	<i>PhD</i>	[Title 3]
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
5.4	Student support	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

6.1. Selection criteria and requirements

6.2. Proposal and dissertation

6.3. Supervision and committees

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *the minimum word limit*
 - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*

- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*
 - *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
 - *support for writing research papers*
 - *participation in conferences*
- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Admission and earlier stages of the PhD are covered in previous sections.

Following successful completion of the Comprehensive Examination (from the third to seventh semester), the PhD process focuses on the doctoral dissertation. Students must then present their research proposal for approval to a three-member committee, having two opportunities to pass.

The dissertation must present a significant and original contribution to scientific knowledge. It requires an extensive bibliography and correlation of findings with the scientific field, with explicit reference to the dissertation's scientific contribution and originality summarized in the abstract and detailed in the main body. The expected structure includes standard sections like a Title Page, Declaration, Abstract (in Greek and an international language), Acknowledgements, Dedication, Table of Contents, lists of figures/tables, Chapters, Conclusions, and References, followed by Appendices.

Detailed specifications govern the dissertation's presentation: it must be hardbound in dark brown leather, follow specific formatting rules for margins, spacing, font, and pagination, and include a validation page signed by the Research Supervisor and Evaluation Committee Chairperson, among other required prologue pages. The minimum word limit is 10,000 words, though scientific competence is prioritized over length. Adherence to these published guidelines and quality assurance requirements is mandatory. Finally, the dissertation must be publicly defended before a five-member examination committee, including external members from other universities or research centres.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

- The thesis is a well-specified document, at the culmination of a thorough research training.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- We note that in many institutions, bound hard copies of PhD theses are no longer required (submission is typically electronic, in pdf format).

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-areas		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Compliant
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Compliant
6.3	Supervision and committees	Compliant

D. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks, which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of each programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

The BA and PhD programmes are mature programmes, offering a research-rich experience to undergraduates and a thorough research training to postgraduates. They are offered by a talented staff of international calibre, and are revised and updated on a continual basis. Psychology Graduates of UCY will have a solid foundation in the domain.




The **BA Programme** has been recently updated to include a stronger focus on methodology and research, and to reduce the number of electives offered. In addition, an optional internship has been developed, in response to student demand. These are positive developments, although it is possible that the savings in staff time due to the reduction in the number of electives will be more than offset by the costs of the administration and delivery of the dissertations and internship. We have commented on the need to recognise the changes in workload in our separate review of the Department; we note here that in terms of ambition, the plans are impressive, and we believe that they are major improvements to the degree. We have included a couple of more detailed suggestions concerning the curriculum in section 1, but these are suggestions only, offered in the hope that they are helpful.

The **PhD Programme** offers training for researchers with a clear developmental trajectory, including courses and checkpoints along the way. It is an excellent programme. Nonetheless we gather that there are constant discussions about improvements, and we have two suggestions of our own. The first is to allow students to take more than one course from outside Psychology, so that the training for those with interdisciplinary research plans maps better to their interests. The other concerns the Comprehensive Exam, described to us by students as a “pain point”. We think this exam might be replaced for example by a written literature review plus oral progress review, which is the standard in many comparable international institutions. If our understanding is correct, this would correspond to the practice in the Department’s other (Clinical) PhD programme.

Taken together, we were highly impressed with the degrees we reviewed. Two members of the committee were members of the previous CYQAA and were thus able to compare the present programmes with those that were offered in 2020. We are impressed with the improvements to an already-strong offering, and on the basis of the documentation we have read and our conversations with colleagues at UCY, we expect the Department and its students to go from strength to strength.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Martin CORLEY	
Christina ATHANASIADES	
Patricia BIJTTEBIER	
Fontini DEMETRIOU	
Nia MICHAEL	
Martin CORLEY	

Date: 01/06/2025

