Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 17.2.2023

External Evaluation Report

(Conventional-face-to-face program of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  University of Cyprus
- **Town: Nicosia**
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES AND EDUCATION
- **Department/ Sector:** DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
- **Program of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

  In Greek:

  ΔΙΔΑΚΤΟΡΙΚΟ ΣΤΗΝ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΤΙΚΗ ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΑ

  In English:

  Programme Instructional Technology (6-16 semesters/ 273 ECTS, Ph.D.)
- **Language(s) of instruction: Greek**
- **Program's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the "Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws" of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

In English: Concentrations

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The relevant documentation was delivered well in time before the evaluation, with the exception of some relevant additional documentation that we required from the program management at the end of the site visit (especially student works (PhD theses) and program evaluations). The material was very comprehensive but already rather old (almost four years); we received some actualisations in time after the visit. The self-report (in the original application) was not very informative, and many parts were probably of a uniform text provided by the University. A site visit was conducted on the 16th of February 2023. The personnel and students were well prepared, and the atmosphere was very positive and constructive. In addition to the material provided in advance, the in-site presentations and discussions were interesting, detailed, and convincing, offering up-to-date insights into both the Department of Education and the programs to be evaluated. A tour of the premises gave further insights.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	*Position*	*University*
Hans Hummel	Member, professor	Open University of the Netherlands
Hanno van Keulen	Member, professor/director	Delft University of Technology
Patrik Scheinin	Chair, professor emeritus	University of Helsinki
Mantalena Tsoukka	Student member	Open University of Cyprus

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:*
  (a) *sub-areas*
  (b) *standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
  (c) *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 program of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the program of study as a whole.*
- ***The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.***

1. Study program and study program'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 program 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 program of study:*
  - *is designed with overall program 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 program 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 program 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 program*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the program 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 program 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 programs*
  - *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 program and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study program'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 program remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study program are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the program correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study program 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 program?*
- *How does the study program 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 program (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 program analogous to other European programs 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 program (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the program 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 program 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.

In its strategy the University of Cyprus (UCY) aims at excellence and distinction in the broader Euro-Mediterranean area. The vision is to "establish itself as one of the best universities in the world…"

The Department of Education and the two programs that are now evaluated are well positioned to help the UCY get closer to this aim. (This is evident in international by-subject rankings such as QS and THE.) Looking at the rankings in Education, the aim of "excellence and distinction in the broader Euro-Mediterranean area" is possible to achieve – the Department is actually already there or at least close to achieving the goal. Within the Greek speaking world they are first or second depending on the ranking used.

The research results of the Department are quite impressive in international comparison. However, the rankings show that reviewing employers and peers do not know about this quality (i.e., the quality of their results are still something of a well-kept secret).

Three of the six main priorities mentioned in the strategy of the UCY are internationalization, recruitment of high-calibre academic staff, and attracting students of high academic level.

In view of this, having the evaluated program also in English would enhance reputation and visibility and help in international recruitment of academic staff and doctoral students - if the goals expressed in the UCY strategy are to be taken seriously.

The university senate and council should take decisions on a number of issues. However, demands, quality and expertise vary between disciplines. If, e.g., the decisions of the senate tend towards micromanagement of practical matters, consensus on things outside of the expertise of most members will tend to drive the university towards the traditional, good enough – but not excellence.

So, responsibility for funding and decisions concerning personnel, premises, programs, and curricula could and where possible should be taken closer to the field of expertise, i.e., at the Faculty and Department level. This would be more in line with modern University leadership/governance: Give those with the expertise and responsibility also the resources and power to carry out necessary changes. Otherwise, there will always be an atmosphere of "we would if we could". (Naturally, some changes will prove to be less effective than expected. Then they need to be changed again by those who live with the consequences. The point here is, that the University level decision-making should concern strategy, resources, and guidelines, while the responsibility and resources for the practicalities of academic life should be at the Faculty and Department level.)

And if laws, statutes, and practices prevent the UCY from optimal development, then these too need to be changed. Having goals that are unrealistic in the given circumstances is wasteful and frustrating at best.

The UCY has admirably and succinctly pointed out these weaknesses in the SWOT of its strategy.

In addition, the EEC is pleased to note that the focus and methods of evaluation provided by the Cyprus Higher Education Quality Assurance and Certification Body (DIPAE) have clearly improved over the years. However, there is still some overlap in the evaluation form.

Would it be possible to have the program/Department directly fill in all the essential information the EEC is supposed to find? (So: not only a confirmation of doing so-and-so, but also explaining how it is done. Now, this information is rather spread out and not necessarily available – even though systematically thinking through these issues would be healthy for the programs.

The procedures for quality assurance seem to be effective but rather implicit or informal. Evaluation data are not made available, apparently because the policy is that they should only be used for improvements, but this makes formal and external evaluation problematic.

The program could clearly benefit from the input of external stakeholders (from IT, from schools), but if there is an explicit procedure for this was not made explicit.

Staff members have academic freedom to design their own course. The program is an intrinsic part of the Faculty of Education: staff members are active in other programs as well, and most courses taught in this program are also accessed by students from other programs.

Graduates collaborate with staff members in follow-up research and publishing.

Doctoral students come from various directions and often have done a master's outside of Cyprus.

The program has a very low enrolment (nine this year in the Master; two in the Doctoral).

The staff and the courses cover a large domain: methods of educational research; curriculum innovation; developing and using instructional technologies; doing interventions; interdisciplinary connections with philosophy of education, mathematics education, science education, special education, arts education, computer science.

The program emphasises instructional technology as a way of solving problems through innovative approaches with instructional technology. It also values investigating these innovations through educational research and technology.

Staff is active in many international projects.

Policy for quality assurance of the program of study is in place and has a formal status and is publicly available. It guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff. It also supports the involvement of external stakeholders. Specifically established collaboration with the Ministry of Education and several large companies were mentioned.

The program has objectives that are in line with the University strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes. It is designed by involving other stakeholders. It is not quite clear how they have involved students in this.

It is designed so that it enables smooth student progression. There is flexibility in organizing the courses' structure according to student's background and previous knowledge.

The program is designed so that the exams and assignments correspond to the level of the program and the number of ECTS.

The expected student workload is described in the information provided to the students. The EEC was pleased to hear that there are no drop-outs so far.

The program includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate. Most students are part time and already work in the education sector. It was mentioned that teaching opportunities are given to doctoral students to teach at undergraduate or postgraduate level. This is warmly applauded by the EEC. It is a splendid opportunity for present and future doctors to learn good job practices in a safe environment, it helps the students in many ways and gives them a deeper perspective on their studies and research generally – and it helps the teachers.

The program is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders.

Information for the effective management of the program of study is collected, monitored and analysed. E.g. the student feed-back goes only to the responsible teacher and head of department. It is not reported to the students what the changes are based on. Also, this information could not be shown to the EEC, which partly negates the process of external evaluation.

Strengths

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

The personnel (academic and administrative staff) of the Department is clearly dedicated and well qualified. They have the capacity for running the program at a high level of quality, for interesting and good research and important societal impact. The site-visit showed that the teachers of the program were enthusiastically innovative in their approach, and that their efforts in the different courses were coordinated to an impressive degree. The students interviewed were very positive about the programs.

The program is what the times require and has a strong potential to attract students. It could be attractive to a much larger body of potential students if plans on having the programs in English and on distance could be fulfilled.

Staff works together very well and combine their various disciplinary backgrounds (philosophy, computer science, language, etc). In this way, a wide variety of societal and theoretical problems in a variety of settings (kindergarten, secondary school, large professional companies) can be taken as a starting point for a wide variety of innovative approaches.

Highly qualified and dedicated staff with impressive research output.

Highly motivated students; a very high pass rate.

The project coordinator is a leading academic personality.

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.

Taking decisions at the Faculty and Department level could help when the questions involve content specific expertise which is often the case in universities. Such questions concern recruitment of international academic staff and students, courses, or programs in English etc.
Consider being more flexible than the current "one size fits all" approach of curriculum design (with all courses of the same size), and more flexible about maximum student numbers allowed in the courses (1.2).
The current study guide information about courses does not do justice to the interactive and practical approach followed in practice (which is a strong suit), so public information can be improved on this aspect. (1.3)

Programs in English would enhance openness, bring visibility to the University, and maybe further raise the number and capabilities of the new students.

- With English programs, recruitment of students could be global.
- International recruitment of academic staff would also bring new expertise. (Is there any analysis of how attractive the Department could be for international scholars, if Greek was not an absolute necessity?)
- As it is, the teaching staff of the program is adequate for the small number of students. This in turn make it vulnerable to changes in personnel. The students clearly expressed the need for a second professor on the topic of instructional technology.
- Why is there no parallel program in English? It is maybe the old situation of doing the wrong - or less than optimal - thing very well… rather than focusing efforts where they will bring the best (being efficient in promoting the achievement of the strategic goals of the University).

What has been done to find out what the students at the beginning of their studies know, and are capable of learning?

- How is the field levelled for students in the beginning of their studies? I.e. what is done to ensure that the students have the skills and knowledge to cope with the program? This remains somewhat unclear. The EEC did not receive information on how the criteria of the student selection are operationalized. However, since the drop-out rate is so far 0%, it seems that the selection of the students ensures an entry level sufficient for the courses of the program.
    - Is there an in-depth analysis of what a PhD from the program needs to know, is this firmly linked to an analysis of employability?
        - Potential big employers have been contacted and support the programs.
        - The EEC's comparison with similar programs in other countries shows that the courses are on par. The site-visit revealed that the instruction of the courses is impressively innovative and engaging, and that the challenges for the students are demanding but also realistic given the strong support of the academic staff.
        - We often plan courses and programs based on what is popular, interesting etc. In this program, the focus is rather narrow – specialists rather than generalists. In a relatively small country, a generalist approach is usually chosen. But if the intention is to prepare students for the European job market, then having the program in English would be logical.
    - Is there an analysis of how much work goes into each course? Is the workload (and the cognitive level of the content) realistic given the starting skills and knowledge of the students? The answer given by the students was positive.
    - Is the 12 ECTS modular structure of the curriculum optimal, i.e. does every type and level of content need an equal time frame? The EEC has not found this to be the case. Naturally it makes planning technically easier – but should this be the main concern? Is it at the cost of the quality of instruction of the program as a whole?

- Should there be a follow-up on the plans to have the programs in English, some thought needs to be given on how this affects potential applicants and selection pressure.

The number of students that is allowed to enter is very low. This program serves both society (contributes to solving problems) and to the academic community (research output; international collaborations). Allowing more students to enter the program would also contribute to the quality of the program (larger classes means more diversity regarding interests, problems that are tackled, interaction between students) and to the sustainability of the program (less vulnerable).

The program has a strong leader (Charoula Angeli-Valanides) but she is rather alone. This program deserves a second teacher on the same level. This would also guarantee continuity in the long run.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Partially compliant
1.3	Public information	Partially compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

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 the 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 program? 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.

Although the EEC had some concerns about the administrative setup of the program with equal building blocks (one size fits all), see comments in the previous standard 1 section, we were positively impressed by the didactical approach taken on the program as a whole and its constituent courses.

Although the title Instructional (Systems) Technology sounds like the program restricts itself to problem solving and improvements with existing software systems (a computer science orientation), during our discussion with the program leader (Charoula Angeli) we came to find out the program also entails many aspects of design thinking on developing new solutions for education, so called Educational Technology (an educational science orientation). We agreed on the differences between IT/ET. Where IT is rooted more in the Northern American research tradition, ET would be a more common denominator according to the European research tradition. We understand the final decision for the program name but like to point out it might appear too selective and be somewhat confusing, especially in the international context.

It was -during that same discussion- that we came to understand that two subtopics (with specific target groups) are to be distinguished under this program title:

a. Instructional Technology solutions for company training. Main clients here would be large consultancy firms (like PWC, KPMG) that are facing enormous digital transition challenges and their ICT staff. Most ('founding') courses seem to have a focus on this first subtopic, like EDU 580 (Theory of IT), 581 (Data Analytics in IT), 582 (Development of Dynamic Systems), where other are more ambidexter (or even generic) in their use, like EDU 524 (New literacy in a digital age) and EDU 583 (Research statistics).

b. Educational Technology innovations for educational teaching and learning. Main clients here would be primary and vocational education schools and their teachers. Some courses are more specifically aimed at this second stream, like EDU 601 (Philosophy of Education), EDU 662 (TEL in natural sciences), EDU 676 (TEL in Mathematics), EDU 631 (School effectiveness). These latter courses are also used in other curricula but will be 'coloured towards' the topics of IT/ET.

Before and after the site visit, we did not receive much concrete evidence on the quality of learning outcomes, like reports on learning tasks, prototypes of simulations or applications. We would have liked to see "the proof of the pudding". We specifically asked for PhD theses (in English) but did not receive them in time.

We were not presented with students' work nor with examples of tests.

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 and very evident in our discussions.

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. Some questions remain: Is there a procedure for students to complaint about the process of teaching and learning? Is there a procedure for assessment of a tutor's performance?

Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.

The practical training, if applicable supports the achievement of planned learning outcomes.

Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures. It is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner. The criteria for the 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. An informal 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.

Each doctoral student performs an individual research project that is tailor-made to the research question and the context.

Strengths

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

Combining the computer science and educational science perspectives, as described above, in this program can be considered as a strength when each are given equal weight. The courses' main learning aim is not just to acquire knowledge on Instructional Technology, but rather to acquire the adequate competences and attitudes towards how to use that knowledge in actual practice. The ambition of many (and especially the core) courses is that students not only receive information, but very actively and personalised apply this knowledge in authentic contexts.

The program leader -on our request- provided the didactical approach of the EDU 582 course. In this course, first, students individually take an actual program from an educational context and analyse this to see the problem aspects. These aspects are then first implemented in a simulated environment before arriving at a solution. Next, the intervention is implemented in the actual educational context to be tested out on effectiveness.

There are various laboratories at the disposition of teachers and students. The tooling is diverse with a focus on the use of robotics and computational thinking. The occupancy of these rooms seems satisfactory. Tools for immersive learning (like Serious Gaming) and XR (VR, AR and MR) applications are clearly more limited in presence, but we understand the Faculty cannot do everything and has to be somewhat selective. Overall, the program facilitates practical interventions. Because of the very small group size, the personal assessment can be guaranteed, according to an apprenticeship model.

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.

Placement of the IT program within the Education Faculty would assume that the computer science and educational science approaches and models are at least equally represented. We have become more convinced, after speaking various stakeholders, that this is actually the case. The program leader mentioned at some point that she "did not want teachers but computer scientists", but we later came to understand that actually many teachers follow this program. If not the case, it would be our recommendation to have both sides of the same medal represented in both the program content and students.

The one size fits all approach to courses might not be most adequate and the maxima imposed on PhD candidates (currently 2 yearly) did not make much sense to / hold much logic to the evaluation committee. Although from an administrative approach we see the benefit of this equal Lego blocks structure, from a didactical approach we strongly suggest there should be room for more tailored and personalised setups of the curricula. Especially for an educational science program that advocated personalised learning. The Faculty should "teach as they preach". Especially doctoral students may benefit from flexibility.

In the course descriptions there is mention of lots of references and books. Although there is a distinction between mandatory and recommended literature, it is not always clear what is what and for which learning activities it should be studied. The course descriptions were not very inspirational. It was stated that descriptions on paper are never passionate, but we feel there could be better mention of the didactical approach in the study guides, which after all is a strong point in this program.

We specifically asked for at least one representative PhD thesis (preferably worked out and accepted in English) but did not receive them in time.

The curriculum has a rather rigid format of 12 EC courses which are taught in a weekly schedule of three-hour meetings. Many topics in instructional technology and education research require attention, but not on a 12 EC scale. Introducing smaller modules would make the programming more varied and flexible. Also, more intensive formats (e.g., a one week with 18 hours of active participation of students) could be considered.

Qualitative methodology seems to receive less attention. It is either a small part of an integrated course with a strong emphasis on quantitative methods, or an elective. Qualitative research often rests on other paradigms than quantitative research; discussing these requires a more independent point of view.

Recommendations on improving the format and the procedures for student assessment. The methodology and evaluation of each course is announced in public but without specific details. Detailed information is given to students at the beginning of each course.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

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 program, 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 program.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the program of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality program 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 program'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.

The EEC was impressed by the quality of teaching staff. They are characterised by having strong didactical hearts pounding and by maintaining strong connections to the research community, which of course is an excellent combination (esp. for the PhD program).

All teachers have h and i10 citation factors ranging around 35 and 60, and citations between 564 and 9018, which is the highest we have seen for Cypriote staff so far. Their involvement in many European research project gives ample opportunity for doctoral student participation and use of data and experiences.

Strengths

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

We saw that the main staff of 7 fully contracted teachers (4 full profs and 3 associate profs) have published amply on their domains, which offer various other perspectives (on IT/ET) ranging from philosophy to mathematics and literacy. That multi-disciplinarity is a strong point of the program, because just looking at IT from a computer science perspective would be too limited. One student actually commented she had done a computer science Master elsewhere just learning to program without knowing any theory behind, which did not work.

On top of that the leadership and vision of the passionate program leader is inspiring. We very much enjoyed the profound discussions and motivating exchange of ideas on the content of the program. The staff seems highly receptive to take aboard the suggestions made but appear seriously hampered by university regulations and political restrictions. A lot of good initiative might be nipped in the bud. Our recommendation therefore goes out to the Rectorate to get out of their administrative boxes and give such more leeway to innovative initiatives and innovations in their offerings.

The Faculty of Education has organized their various programs in such a way that teaching staff can teach students from various programs (not just Instructional Technology) in the same course. This puts the qualities of the staff to good use and also stimulate cooperation between staff member, both in teaching (supervising students in multidisciplinary projects) and in research.

Teaching staff is well-supported through the University's Teaching and Learning Center.

Staff members are very active in joint and international projects, especially Erasmus+ Key Action 2 projects.

Research output is high and of high academic quality. Staff members review for and are co-editors of international journals.

Teaching Staff is dedicated, and they are good role models for (prospective) students: many have a background in (primary or secondary) teaching.

The combination of teachers with a background in various disciplines and domains, such as Computer Science, Philosophy of Education, Science/Mathematics/Language Education; Educational Research Methodology allows for innovative interdisciplinary projects and guarantees a critical attitude towards one-sided approaches ('hypes') in instructional technology.

We have no information on the workload for teachers.

We have received no information from quality assurance systems in time on how students evaluate the courses and their teachers. The doctoral students and graduates we spoke with all were positive with regard to their teachers.

The Department ensures the competence of its 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 program, 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 program.

The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the program of study. There is, however only one professor on the key topic of IT – which worries both staff, students, and the EEC.

Otherwise, the teaching staff status is appropriate to offer a quality program of study.

The visiting staff number is much smaller than that of the permanent staff.

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 current leadership is an important strength but at the same time a potential risk. The committee feels that without the leader this program would not be sustainable. PhD students can only be trained to lecture to some extent, and there should at least be another staff (second) position on the topic of IT/ET in the program. The teaching staff seems highly receptive to take aboard the suggestions made by the EEC (combining with other programs, flexible curricular setup, opening up to English), but appears hampered by university regulations and political restrictions. We observed some interesting 'shift of responsibility mechanisms' with teachers pointing at the department regulations, the department pointing at new agency restrictions, and feel that some interference on the governmental level might be counterproductive. We sincerely feel this vicious circle should somehow be broken.

Our recommendation therefore goes out to the Rectorate to give some more leeway for innovative initiatives and offerings. Such a first step could be to allow an online version of this program in English. The growth of the program might also be a risk in the sense that than no longer the same personal attention and supervision can be provided without increasing the staff.

Promotion procedures seem to value research output the most. This influences the efforts of the staff: they have many publications, which is good of course. However, Instructional Technology also is an area of innovation, problem solving and design of technological solutions to problems in areas like robotics, virtual reality, gaming, hybrid teaching, big data, and artificial intelligence. Contributions to these areas seem not to be valued explicitly in the staff evaluation and promotion procedures. This may affect the program: staff will be biased towards research and not towards innovation.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

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 program 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.

Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place. They are published in the university's website. The student admission requirements to the program of study are based on specific regulations which are adhered to in a consistent manner.

Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner. Policies, admission processes, and criteria are implemented consistently.

Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place. They are published on the university's website (horizontal University's' Postgraduate Study Rules).

Processes and tools to collect, monitor, and act on information on student progression, are in place. Information for each student's progression is uploaded in the student information system (BannerWeb).

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 in place.

Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:

- 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.

Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place. They are in line with European and international standards.

Students receive a certificate explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.

The award of the higher education qualification is accompanied by a Diploma Supplement which is in line with the European and international standards.

The admission requirements for the study program are appropriate. Students' prior preparation/education is assessed during the personal interview that is conducted with the applicant.

Applicants have to submit letters of recommendation. Also, applicants are assessed through a personal interview, where they have the opportunity to refer to prior learning and work experience.

Strengths

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

Nice campus with good lecture halls and student dormitories. Facilities seem to become more concentrated on two campuses, improving transportation issues in Nicosia. Still room for further improvement though.

Procedures associated to the student life appear to be well defined, published and consistently implemented. The conditions for admission are published in an accessible and clear manner. Assessment of student progress is facilitated through the use of tools like Blackboard (for uploading materials), student forums 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.

Programs pretty much follow standard university student regulations and procedures which seem to be well in place.

Apart from some minor concerns on the financial aspects of the program from some students, we did only receive positive information and experiences (good practices) from the student perspective during our site visit.

Since the program consists of very small numbers of students, everybody pretty much knows each other. So, the need for centralized platforms for student monitoring is not that high. However, we would suggest that to Learning Management System (LMS) holding study materials and monitoring of progress (i.c. Blackboard) will be linked to the student information system used by the supportive staff (i.c. Bannerweb), in such a way that progress and completion of courses is automatically signalled towards the student info system.

The student's portal does not create and send any automatic notifications in the case of a student getting low grades. A recommendation would be that the portal notifies in that case the academic advisor or the tutor of the student in order to intervene.

Also, there is no mechanism/procedure in place for giving students the chance to complain about the process of teaching and learning or to assess a tutor's performance.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

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 program.*
- *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 program.*
- *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 program.*
- *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 program 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 program, 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.

There are various laboratories at the disposition of teachers and students. Overall, the program allows for practical application of what is learned in context, also thanks to these facilities. Because of the very small group size, the personal assessment during practical work can be guaranteed according to an apprenticeship model.

The university is rather proud of its library facilities, which are considered to be its flagship. We believe they have the second largest collection in Cyprus, although only some members have visited that premises. However, students state they hardly used these library facilities since they can study literature online mostly.

For this program, resources with respect to instructional technologies such as robotics, educational software, virtual reality, are important. The program has a computer hall that is equipped with software that can run on pc's and tablets, and with other educational hardware.

Students have an appointed mentor, which is a member of the teaching staff. Small numbers allow for direct and personal contact.

All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them. The small but competent and motivated administrative staff provides help to the students within the field of educational studies.

Doctoral students are encouraged to participate in programs like Erasmus.

The equipment used in teaching and learning (laboratory and electronic equipment, consumables etc) are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate. Furthermore, teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are adequate and accessible to students. Based on student feedback on support services, statutory administrative mechanisms for monitoring and supporting students are sufficient.

Strengths

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

Documentation shows the university has various facilities for student support and welfare (both in terms of human support during and counselling during study and in terms of leisure activities). To the extent that students have used these facilities, they are positive. There were some complaints heard about the registration fees causing financial concerns.

The tooling in the laboratories is diverse with a focus on the use of robotics for computational thinking. The occupancy of these rooms seems very satisfactory according to oral information received. Tools for immersive learning (like Serious Gaming) and XR (VR, AR and MR) applications are clearly more limited or absent in presence, but we understand the Faculty of Education has no resources for everything and has to be somewhat selective.

The computer hall is especially well-equipped with robotics systems, that students can take to places where they do an intervention.

Students have good contact with teaching staff. Problems are noticed and dealt with at an early stage.

Students can combine their studies with a job and with family obligations.

Student support is provided in a human-centered approach. Administrative staff is keen to help the students and process any requests from the students or give instructions, e.g., for requesting an extension or in the case of a special need.

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.

Tools and development approaches for immersive learning (like Serious Gaming) and XR (VR, AR and MR) applications should be further explored (both in the course content as lab facilities) since these are very timely ET applications for a variety of vocational learning solutions nowadays.

There were some complaints heard about the registration fees causing financial concerns under some students.

It was claimed (by oral communication) that the dropout was 0%. It would have been nice to have seen some actual statistics of student numbers, dropout rates, and throughput times (speed of study).

We have asked for student evaluations (both on the program and course level) but we were told that student evaluations were not for external communication and only for internal use. Evaluations on the program level were available on faculty level, but not provided to the committee on their request.

Resources seem to be good with respect to open-source software and robotics systems but lack other materials (Arduino's; Virtual Reality). The small number of students that enrol in the program may influence the available budget negatively. Perhaps closer cooperation with the Department of Computer Science and IT-companies may result in sponsorships for these resources.

The university's mechanisms for counselling for the postgraduate students need to work as good as for undergraduate students. Even though the majority of doctoral students study part time because they work, a mechanism / procedure should be in place in order to track any student problems on time, like financial problems.

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

Sub-area		***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

6. Additional for doctoral programs *(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 program, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree program are analysed and published:*
  - *the stages of completion*
  - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the program*
  - *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 programs 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.

This program enrols two doctoral students per year.

Doctoral students can take courses from the same set of courses as master's students. This is efficient and the students are satisfied with this arrangement. The consequence is that there is no clear learning progression.

All doctoral students from the period under evaluation have graduated.

All staff members have experience supervising doctoral students from the Faculty of Education.

The staff covers a wide research area in educational science and instructional technology: computer science, research methodology, mathematics and science education, language education, philosophy of education.

We have spoken to graduates, but we did not receive actual PhD theses in time to assess their scientific quality. We noticed, however, that doctoral students are authors or co-authors in many peer reviewed papers written with staff members.

Strengths

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

The PhD research is really in line with the potential of IT/ET, that is, students are taught to design, develop, implement, and evaluate new systems in authentic contexts. They design interventions and evaluate them in experimental setups. Although experiments are most prominent setup, there is also room for mixed method design and more qualitative research.

The pass rate is 100%.

Students and graduates are well prepared through the courses and can do their own individual research project with the interdisciplinary input and help from various staff members.

Students are dedicated and feel supported.

Dedicated, inspiring and highly competent project coordinator and PhD-supervisor.

Research projects of the doctoral students address relevant societal problems.

The research projects combine an innovation in the field of instructional technology with an intervention in educational practice. Doctoral students combine contributing to the academic scholarship on instructional technology with contributing to solutions of societal problems (e.g., digital literacy; distance education).

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 could not assess the final quality of reports and theses, since these were not provided in time to the committee.

There are assessment committees in place to assess both the PhD plan (internal) and final thesis (internal and external members). Students deliberately opt for a PhD on IT at this University and in this program while it is more demanding but also more satisfying.

Because we only received positive but oral praise, and no proof of final quality on paper, we can only rate standard 6.2 as partially compliant.

One wonders why the management of the university allows only two students per year to enrol. Enrolling more students makes better use of the qualities of the staff and will make the program more sustainable.

The program could be in English, as well as include a distance education version. This could attract more students.

The explicit selection criteria for enrolment and the learning outcomes of the doctoral program focus predominantly on research. The role of innovation and skills for innovation remain implicit. Staff member and graduates state that being able to do, and actually designing (and not just investigating) an innovation, is part of the doctoral program: it is recommended to make this more explicit.

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

Sub-area	***Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant***

6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Compliant
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Partially 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 the program of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

The EEC is thankful for the trust placed in it. The opportunities to observe and talk with the students and staff of the Department have been frank and eye opening. We have learned a lot.

The context of the assessed program is good, the program is timely and is clearly attractive for potential students - and the future is definitely promising.

The facilities provided by the University are of good quality and suited for their purpose. Academic staff, administration, and students have good cause for their positive assessment of the present situation. The EEC encountered good instruction, enthusiastic staff and students, as well as infrastructure relevant for the program.

The evaluation of the program has shown that:

- the present curricula provide a robust basis for the scientific qualification of students with regard to their respective professional activities in research and other areas of the education system;
- the individual curricular components of the program has been composed so that they allow flexibility in terms of content and timing to meet the respective needs of the students and provide a high-quality fit;
- both lecturers and students show a high degree of identification with the content and methodology offered by the courses, so that a high performance expectation prevails, which has an strong positive effect on motivation and the results achieved;
- the program attracts high-performing students who find favourable employment opportunities in their academic or professional careers, but who must (initially) seek appointments abroad in the academic field, as the opportunities for an academic career in Cyprus are limited;
- the program is competitive compared to similar programs at home and abroad.

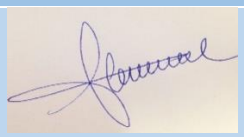
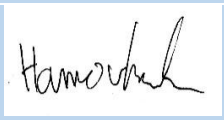
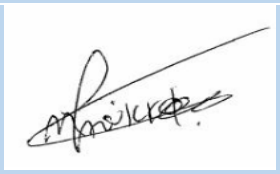
We recommend that the program is supplemented or extended with an English-language version of the program. Opening up an international English Doctoral program would provide ample opportunities for more students, external funding, and thereby development of the personnel (larger, more varied and more international). This would further enhance the visibility and reputation of the University, Department and program.

Much is changing in instruction and research. Universities around the world have to adapt with flexibility to how resources are allocated, enabling innovative solutions.

The expertise needed in the quality assurance involved in e.g. assessing doctoral dissertations is to be found locally rather than at the administrative level of the University Senate. Many universities take such decisions on the Faculty level or in doctoral schools.

These recommendations inform how the present program can be enhanced and at the same time make the University more competitive in the international arena.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	*Signature*
Hans Hummel	
Hanno van Keulen	
Patrik Scheinin	
Mantalena Tsoukka	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 17.2.2023