

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Feb. 8, 2023

External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:** University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Experimental Psychology
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Κλινική Ψυχολογία (5 έτη, 345 ECTS, Διδακτορικό)

In English:

Clinical Psychology; 5 years, 345 ECTS, Doctor of Philosophy

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek, English (minor)
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):** N/A



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

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) met remotely with the education officer of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education to plan the onsite visit. The EEC then visited the University of Cyprus and had a full day of informational meetings and discussions with the vice rector for academic affairs of the university, the teaching staff and both graduates and current students of the programme, as well as the administrative staff of the Department of Psychology. The visit also included a guided tour of the library and the laboratories of the department. The teaching and administrative staff and current and past students were welcoming, helpful and responsive.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Paul Salkovskis	Professor	Oxford
Mary Kosmidis	Professor	Aristotle University, Thessaloniki
Jon Fridrik Sigurdsson	Professor	University of Reykjavik
Phivos Phylactou	Doctoral student	Cyprus University of Technology
Ioanna Katsounari	Professional Body representative	University
Name	Position	University

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 programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the 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.

In our meeting with the Senior Team from the University, it was clear that the QA processes were being diligently and effectively carried out, and there was a clear awareness of the relevant frameworks. We were able to clarify the distribution of ECTS across components of the programme. It is in the nature of this five year programme that large numbers of credits are being given, distributed across research and taught components, placements and summative assessments. We were satisfied that the programme regularly reviewed its alignment with contemporary standards in the field of clinical psychology, and that there was student involvement in key areas of curriculum governance. Both specific and transferable skills are well provided for and tailored to the needs of the learners.

Outward facing information is well delivered, and it was clear that current and past students considered that the information they received prior to admission was entirely consistent with the reality of their studies.

Governance in terms of ethical, academic and research integrity is good and well-integrated with the programme.

We note that the programme in general is not suitable for international students, and this is appropriate. However, students have significant opportunities to engage with international colleagues, not least because of the excellent and comprehensive network of research and academic collaborations

We were provided with the following information regarding KPIs

Students' Gender Profile: 13,5% male, 86,5% female

Dropout rate (during the last 5 years) : 5.4%

Pass rate (during the last 5 years): 94.5%

We note that very low dropout rate, which we commend.

Strengths

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

The programme is well aligned with national and international standards for clinical psychology training and research. It is embedded in a high-quality network of research groups. It aligns with Professional Standards for Clinical Psychology as defined by Cypriot Professional organisations.

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.

Given the clinical nature of the professional component of this research document, we recommend that a Fitness to Practice and Fitness to Study policy be developed and deployed as part of the course requirements, and that such a policy be embedded in the course regulations. Such a policy needs to cover personal integrity and mental and

physical capacity to work clinically. We note that the course is aware of the need to make reasonable adjustments for student disability, and FtP and FtS policies should of course take account of such considerations.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
1.3	Public information	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 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.

This programme is a fusion of a professional training in clinical psychology and a research doctorate, and as such as the difficult task of meeting the requirements of both. The panel agreed that it has been successful in achieving these goals, but strongly supports the transition from a four-year to a five-year programme. It was clear from the meeting with graduates that the demands of year 3 and 4 were often excessive, including the requirement for 1000 hours clinical practicum. The further year will allow sufficient time for completion of the work in a timely way. There are an unusually wide range of assessment methods, including summative assessments by essay, seminar, examination and practical (clinical work). Mostly these assessments are well constructed and map on to the learning objectives very well; however, we have a recommendation set out below for improvements in the research thesis, which is currently satisfactory but could be improved.

It is clear that teaching and research supervision takes place in a good context, with strong elements of identifying the students as adult learners. Both clinical and research components are typically well supervised; we would like to suggest further enhancement as set out below, but again consider the present circumstances to be generally satisfactory.

The process for assessments and their marking, failure procedures and appeals are all well specified.

Strengths

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

We were very much impressed by the enthusiasm of the staff team for applied psychological research and more so that it was clear that this enthusiasm was backed up by comparable levels in the students and graduates we met (and that so many of these turned up to endorse the activity of the programme). All concerned were clear that typically they received high levels of support from internal staff and supervisors and similarly from placement supervisors. The course ethos is well defined, and has clearly been adopted by staff and students to good effect. The wide range of both summative and formative assessments is a credit to the course, which has put a great deal of effort into ensuring that not only will the students be excellent PhD students, but also be excellent qualified/postdoctoral researchers and clinicians. In other words, this course is focussed on the outcomes after qualification for graduates and employers in a highly appropriate way.

The course clearly acknowledges not only the importance of helping the students gain competencies, but also metacompetencies, so that they are able to extend their application of clinical psychological work to situations which are not and cannot be covered in the training, but for which situations the students have tools to develop and apply new areas of competence.

The course shows a keen awareness of appropriate pedagogical strategies, and we would encourage them to further explore Problem based learning and flipped classrooms. The fact that numbers are relatively small means that such strategies are likely to be particularly effective alongside the already excellent use of seminar and skills-based teaching.

It is clear that, where students experience difficulties in relation to their learning and application of that learning, the staff team take appropriate measures to help them manage this and to reflect on the implications of such experiences.

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.

It was clear to us that the research thesis can be quite variable in terms of the quantity and intensity of the work planned and conducted. Both present students and graduates commented on this, and identified the variability as an issue. We suggest that the course produce a clear statement of the requirements of the research thesis against which the research proposal should be judged. Such a definition should include the requirements set out in course regulations (eg contribution to knowledge), but in addition identify the anticipated volume of work (time likely to be spent on research development, such as the creation of new scales or experimental tasks), data collection time (eg whether the data are already available or have to be gathered), the samples being sought (clinical vs community/online recruitment) and so on. A reasonable benchmark would be the feasibility of completing the research within the time available on the course for this work, with some allowance for contingencies. Statistical power analyses should be used to justify sample sizes whilst also considering sample availability. All of these factors should be considered at the research proposal approval stage.

It would be helpful if there were a means of gaining clarity regarding expectations of both supervisor and supervisee in relation to the research project. We noted that there was some variability in, for example, frequency of supervision meetings, extent to which the work was facilitated by the supervisor and so on. We regarded it as an important strength that the students have significant ownership of the development and implementation of the research project, but this allows significant variation in the nature of supervision. We do not wish to suggest that this be homogenised, but rather that the expectations be clarified. We suggest that the use of a research contract, indicating the responsibility of those involved, be developed and applied, perhaps in the form of a template which can be varied by those involved prior to project approval by the course, and the contract would then form part of the proposal for approval by the course. Broad headings would be responsibilities of the student, of the supervisor, of the Department and so on. Items specified could include anticipated frequency of meetings, maximum response times by both student and supervisor, expectations regarding data ownership and authorship and so on.

We also would like the Department and Faculty to consider the appointment of a second supervisor for all research projects. This supervisor would be involved to a lesser degree, but would be in a position to step in where the first supervisor is unavailable, or when other difficulties arise. If the first supervisor becomes unavailable, the second supervisor would either become the first OR be responsible for ensuring the recruitment of another first supervisor. This would ensure that a student would not become “stranded” as a result of staff changes. If this is implemented, the second supervisor’s role would be defined and agreed in the proposed research contract.

We are aware of the fact that the Pandemic and accompanying mitigation measures have impacted teaching strategies, but would encourage the course to consider the range of skills training strategies, including the use of video examples, role play and so on. These are already deployed somewhat, and are appreciated by students, so further expansion would we think be a positive development.

In terms of course development, we note that usual “per semester” feedback is obtained. Given the complexity of this course and the need to integrate multiple streams, we would like the course team to consider more frequent feedback arrangements in relation to teaching, perhaps weekly, on a simple ratings basis (for example using MicroSoft forms) which feed into a review process with some student input.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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 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.

The teaching staff are highly qualified, with impressive educational backgrounds of their own, and a strong publication record while at the HEI. Thus, they are qualified to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the courses they teach, and to ensure the quality and sustainability of the programme overall. Indeed, the promotion procedure ensures that quality of teaching and research activities are taken into account. The HEI encourages and provides the means for the implementation of innovative teaching methods, including new technologies and qualified visiting teaching staff to augment the learning experience for the students.

Teaching staff number and status

The teaching staff cover the full range of levels, from lecturers to full professors, and the teaching is done predominantly by permanent staff. The number of teaching staff allocating time to the specific programme being evaluated, however, is borderline adequate. While the teaching staff is committed to providing the best possible learning environment and experience for the students, this is at the cost of their research activities.

Synergies of teaching and research

The teaching staff are involved in both teaching and research, as well as administrative work. Their research includes collaborations within the department and HEI, as well as with other institutions within and outside of Cyprus. There is a good synergy between the scholarly work of the teaching staff and their courses, as well as the experience the students gain from their research projects under the supervision of the teaching staff, yielding publications that are relevant to the courses offered in the programme. Given the heavy teaching and supervision (both in clinical and in research contexts) load, the balance between teaching and research activities is skewed towards the former, limiting opportunities for the latter.

As for teaching quality, performance is assessed by students at the end of each semester. Some support is provided for teaching improvement within the department and at the HEI level.

Strengths

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

The programme has highly qualified and very dedicated teaching staff with active involvement in research relevant to the courses taught, with state-of-the-art laboratories and equipment. The synergy between teaching and research is strong in terms of the relevance of one to the other, as is the synergy among the teaching staff in terms of calibrating the areas covered in their courses. Additionally, the teaching staff are very responsive to the students with respect to taking into consideration student feedback regarding improvement of teaching approaches and as evidenced in the changes proposed to the overall programme (currently under evaluation/accreditation).

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.

Training programmes in clinical psychology are typically more demanding than other doctoral programmes, as they place equal importance on the preparation of both future scientists and competent practitioners. This makes one-on-one involvement of the teaching staff fundamental to adequate training. Thus, algorithms for determining the number of teaching staff allotted to such programmes should not be the same as those used for purely research-based doctoral programmes; instead, they should consider this unique aspect and increase the number of the teaching staff. While end-of-semester student evaluations of courses and teaching staff are useful, further improvements could be made by requesting weekly feedback (electronically and anonymously), for more immediate and specific feedback (i.e., rating the clarity of the teaching and the relevance of the topics, indicating whether topics have been covered in other courses).

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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 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.

Admission requirements are appropriate and according to the school's rules and international standards. Applicants have a good academic background and the school seems to be able to choose from a group of very good students.

Both graduates, currently working as clinical psychologists in Cyprus and current students in the four-year program, said they were very satisfied with the program but pointed out that the workload was very high and almost impossible to complete in four years. Adding further year would be a great improvement.

Although proficiency in both English and Greek are required, most of the teaching is done in Greek, which limits the possibilities of international applicants.

Previous training in clinical work under supervision is recognized up to 500 hours of the 1500 hours required in the programme.

Due to the small number of students each year, it is easy to monitor their progress, both regarding the research project and the clinical training. Both former and current students expressed their satisfaction with the research and clinical supervisors and their support. The EEC suggests that the students' progress should also be monitored more formally by requiring the students to fill in a progress report every semester signed by the supervisor. The report could state what goals the students have achieved during the semester, what goals they have set for the next semester, courses/workshops/seminars they have completed, how often they have met with the supervisor,

presentations at academic conferences, papers published, accepted or submitted, number of clients treated as well as other clinical required tasks at placements carried out.

Recognition of previous degree studies is acceptable and evaluation of previous courses is carried out by the evaluation committee in each case. Recognition of previous supervised training up to 250 hours (for example, from a previous master's program in clinical psychology or educational psychology) is also acceptable.

Strengths

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

The main strength of the admissions process is the three-person admissions committee (2 clinical psychologists and the practicum training coordinator) who match the student's interest and previous education with with a particular supervisor linked to the program.

The multi-stage and multi-faceted selection process is well suited to the combination of research and clinical abilities required of those admitted.

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 most obvious area for improvement, as set out above, is to increase the number of students admitted. The programme is particularly strong by virtue of the excellent efforts of current staff; such an increase would of course require a commensurate increase in staffing.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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 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.

This course has a very demanding combination of both research and teaching. We were introduced to a range of laboratory resources which are clearly heavily and appropriately used. Teaching spaces were adequate or better, and the magnificent University Library is a credit to the Institution. The numbers of students is relatively small, and the shift to a five year course is unlikely to stretch these resources at all.

By the close of our onsite visit, it was also clear that student support in a broader sense was well accounted for, including both emotional support (where the students indicated that staff were approachable where they were experiencing difficulties) and also in the provision of reasonable adjustments (including, but not confined to, the excellent provision in the University Library)

The programme is unusual in that the students themselves provide counselling and mental health support for the student body, which means that this route is closed to them. We were pleased to hear that the University is able to make alternative provision at an appropriate level for students from this course requiring such assistance, although this may not be as widely known to the students as perhaps it should be.

As is normal in clinical psychology training, the students described the importance of mutual support both within and between cohorts.

Students note that undertaking this course is a significant financial commitment on their part. Students and staff note that they consistently provide valuable clinical services to a range of clinical and educational settings without any financial support. Students indicated that some recognition of this contribution in terms of at least minimal financial support would be highly desirable, and the panel agree with this assessment

Strengths

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

The course is able to draw on a wide range of resources both within the Psychology Department and beyond. These are well equipped and supported. Of course the major asset for the course is the staff team, and as already indicated these are particularly well deployed.

The University Library is excellent and provides more than can reasonably be expected.

The fact that students provide mental health services is a major asset for the University, and we particularly applaud this. There is evidence that this is a highly effective provision.

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 students identified their internal peer support systems as being particularly important, but that this could be difficult to find time for. We recommend that the course consider co-producing ways of doing this, such as by the allocation of regular slots for facilitated or peer based reflective support sessions inserted in the timetable. Involving students in the design of such a system would, in our view, be important.

We understand that Postgraduate Research Supervision is not allowed for within the Faculty Workload Model (WLM). We would like the Faculty and University to consider the impact of this on such a supervision intensive course. We were provided with an extensive and impressive list of student publications co-authored with staff

supervisors and typically in international journals. It is quite clear to us that the reputation of the University is enhanced by this course in a highly significant way, which does not appear to be reflected in the WLM. The course is much sought after and its graduates are of high impact (as indeed are the current students) and the University might want to consider expanding the provision, which inevitably means (a) taking account of the work carried out by staff in the WLM and (b) expanding the staff team, particularly in areas where applied skills are either absent or scarce. Clearly this is a matter for the University, but we would like to point out the opportunity presented by course expansion. The almost unique element of a key service being provided by the students (in terms of in-house counselling and mental health treatment for other students) should in our view be taken into account.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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 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.

The selection criteria are well-crafted and fit for their quite complex purpose. The outward facing information fully defines the requirements and processes. Students on the course were clearly satisfied with the information given. Arrangements for progression through the programme are clear and well understood by students. The present proposal is meant to deal with the issue of a four-year course being insufficient in terms of time allowed for the substantial majority of students. There are clear progression landmarks for students, with appropriate levels of flexibility within specified parameters; this represents good practice for this type of degree.

Thesis presentation is well defined, with a clear structure. We were able to inspect completed theses which met the requirements.

The proposal itself is largely dependent on the identification of a lead supervisor; some supervisors have relatively larger groups which allows greater or lesser degrees of collaboration, but this is to be expected of a research degree of this type.

Strengths

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

There are many strengths of this programme as set out above. Central to this is the fact that this is a unique programme in the region, blending high quality applied research work with excellent clinical practice training. The clinical relevance of the research and the skills which the students bring to its implementation is particularly striking.

The bespoke nature of the student's studies means that this programme sits with the best of clinical training programmes internationally.

The degree of engagement with the broader community is also outstanding, including the provision of high-quality mental health care to students in the University, and engagement with a range of clinical and research placement

providers in Nicosia and beyond. This course has, in our view, an impact which surpasses its modest size, supported by a dedicated and capable staff team.

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.

As outlined above, we consider that the course should develop a clear statement of expectations for the thesis which allows comparability across research work, for example, in terms of the anticipated expenditure of time on the research. Clearly this is a complex issue which would benefit from guidance both for students and staff involved in proposal approval. We noted the willingness of the staff team to engage in such an enterprise. Also as noted above, we are strongly of the view that a fitness to practise policy should be developed and implemented. Doing so will both have the effect of protecting the public in terms of clinical activity on placement, and also protecting the reputation of the University.

The visiting panel would very much like the Faculty to consider how the work on this leading programme impacts staff time, and how best to reflect this work in the Workload Model for those staff. We consider that an expansion of the programme, if this were consistent with the strategic aims of the University, would be highly desirable provided appropriate resources were made available.

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

Sub-area		<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 the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

As a panel, we found the University and the course team welcoming and flexible in their approach. They were open about the challenges they face, but in the context of a “can do” attitude towards their complex and highly effective course. The panel are therefore happy to declare this proposed 5 year course, which is an extension of the 4 year course already in existence, to be entirely compliant with QAA requirements and to correspond well to EQF criteria.

We have highlighted a number of important strengths above, but would like to reiterate the following:

All concerned have a demonstrably strong commitment to high quality integrated clinical and research training

The supervisory and mentoring relationships on this course are strong and focus on students' learning and development needs

The course is embedded in a strong internationally recognised research University which provides excellent facilities, infrastructure and support for both staff and students. We particularly note that the library is a major asset to the course.

The laboratory facilities are very well equipped and set up, with a wide range of different state of the art technologies. There is good evidence of their collaborative use.

The staff team have been successful in obtaining a range of national and international grants, and the entire department have benefitted as a result.

The course has a distinctive and strong ethos which guides the programme and its further development

The admissions process is necessarily more complex than most, but can be regarded as a model for selection for this type of course.

The teaching and supervisory staff are individually very strong but also have an excellent synergy which works to the advantage of student training and development

We were impressed by the way in which the students were providing a high-quality expert clinical service to the broader student body of the University.

The graduates and the programme itself has significant societal impact both in Nicosia and beyond.

The overall impact of this blended research and clinical training is to ensure clinical relevance of the high-quality research conducted, much of which is published in international journals.

Although we are confident that the course is fully compliant with QA requirements, we did have a number of recommendations which we would like the University, Faculty and Department to consider. Again, these are set out above, and include:

The unique nature of this programme should in our view be capitalised on by all concerned. To make any development more effective, we consider that the Faculty should review the way it managed the Workload Model for the very considerable investment of time by supervisors in relation to the Clinical PhD. The programme could expand but needs investment in staffing and a clear recognition of the work of existing staff, which both assists the students but also enhances the reputation and broader impact of the University.

We recommend that the course provides clear guidance on the research requirements for the thesis, integrated with the proposal approval process. This will ensure closer comparability of workload for students, and indeed supervisors.

For a similar reason, we recommend that the course develop a research contract which indicates the responsibilities of all parties (student, supervisor/s, department). This to be from a general template with agreed modifications in order to preserve flexibility

We would like the course and University to consider the introduction of a second supervisor to supplement the main one.

The course should continue its efforts to enhance the skills training elements in the course by means of a range of strategies (video, role play and so on)

The development of the course would in our view be further enhanced by increasing the frequency with which feedback is obtained, and to feed the results of this into course development processes

We consider that it would be helpful for the inclusion of reflective/supportive sessions in the timetable to further enhance peer support; ideally such a development would be co-produced with the students.

We would strongly recommend that consideration be given to the development and implementation of a fitness to practise policy, integrated with course regulations.

As a panel we were very impressed by the enthusiasm, commitment and satisfaction from the leadership team, the broader staff group and supervisors, and above all by the current students and graduates, who clearly value the course and for the graduates have been able to take their learning and skills into the broader community to the benefit of those experiencing mental health problems and issues.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Paul Salkovskis	
Mary Kosmidis	
Jon Fridrik Sigurdsson	
Phivos Phylactou	
Ioanna Katsounari	
Click to enter Name	

Date: Feb. 8, 2023