

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 15/11/2025

# External Evaluation Report

## (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

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

**In Greek:**

Δημοτική Εκπαίδευση (4 έτη/240 ECTS, πτυχίο)

**In English:**

Primary Education (4 years/240ECTS, bachelor's degree)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme'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 EEC were welcomed to the campus at 9.00 am – 13th November - at the University of Nicosia by the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs - Chair of the universities Internal Quality Assurance Committee, and the team comprised of the Dean of the School, the Head of Department, and members of the Internal Quality Assurance Committee. The officer from the Vice Rectors Office for Academic Affairs – Mr Lakis Agathokleous – ably supported all of the activities over the course of the day – including ensuring the presentations could include participants coming in via zoom, as well as ensuring any requests for further information would be followed up. Over the course of the day we met with the Head of the Institution, the Internal Quality Assurance Team, Dean and Head of Department, programme leads for Primary, Masters and PhD programmes, stakeholders, administrators, students, and academics. The information provided was clear, and the various presenters were able to respond to all of our questions with confidence and clarity. We were given an opportunity to view a lesson taught by one of the academics in the Primary Education programme and were impressed with the quality of the pedagogy as well as the genuinely innovative nature of the curriculum that was being explored to build creative knowledge and skills.

## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Susan Lee Robertson</b>	Chair	University of Cambridge
<b>Josefina Sala Roca</b>	Member	Autonomous University of Barcelona
<b>Hanno van Keulen</b>	Member	Delft University of Technology
<b>Wilfried Admiraal</b>	Member (E-Learning expert)	Oslo Metropolitan University
<b>Athena Theodotou</b>	Member (Student)	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 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)

### 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.***

#### 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

All courses are formally evaluated, and the data are visible to teaching staff, head of department, dean and vice rector. Student evaluation data are used for appraisal of staff and promotion. The PhD programme prepares for a wide variety of careers in various countries with various educational systems and cultures; this programme looks to global developments (e.g., digital transformations, diversity issues) rather than surveys employers' demands. The Bachelor Primary Education, on the other hand, follows procedures and regulations of the Ministry of Education to ensure that graduates will be able to pass the Examination for employment in public schools. All in all, the policies for quality assurance are appropriate.

#### 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

##### Bachelor Primary Education

The BEd Primary Education programme effectively prepares teachers for teaching in Cyprus and Greece. The programme employs dedicated teachers for all school subjects who all have a PhD and external experience through research and innovation project. This ensures that the development of pedagogical content knowledge receives substantial attention, probably outstanding in international comparison. The fact that quite a few graduates continue with the Master Education Sciences and with the PhD, even in combination with a job as a schoolteacher, signals a level of knowledge, understanding, and aptitude for continuous professional development exceeding the bachelor level.

The programme is organized mainly in 5 EC courses with a strong emphasis on transferring state of the art knowledge of the subject. There is a variety of teaching formats in place, stimulating critical thinking, reflection, interaction, and collaboration. Assessment is also varied, with paper and pencil tests, essay writing, oral presentations, and participation in class discussions, which allows students to showcase their full repertoire and guarantees triangulation of judgment. Rubrics are used for formative and summative assessment. The use of GenAI for creative purposes (e.g., lessons plans) and for doing assignments is being discussed.

Practical skills for teaching are developed through the 'Practicum' or 'School experience'. Compared to other programs for primary education, these internships are relatively short. Requirements on paper emphasize the number of lessons to be executed (e.g., 90 lessons in the final Practicum in the 8<sup>th</sup> semester), and not the development of pedagogical skills, although these are mentioned in detail in the assessment form that the supervisor has to fill in. After graduating, students are licensed to teach in primary schools. Stakeholders, such as mentors of students

working in primary schools and principals of primary schools stress that the students are qualified and that UNIC sets the right standards.

Students receive feedback from schools during their practicum that helps them develop and improve their skills and to recognize the theoretical aspects that are dealt with on campus. Students and alumni report that they are enabled to apply the knowledge in their classrooms, both during the internships and as a schoolteacher. Important societal issues, such as inclusion and digital competencies, receive attention.

## PhD program

The PhD programme has three stages. The first focuses on developing methodological competencies through mandatory courses, the design of the research plan, and the composition of the supervision team. The second stage focuses on conducting the research activities described in the plan. The last stage focuses on the thesis and ends with the defense.

The teaching staff is well placed to develop the methodological aspects of educational research. There is ample experience with quantitative and qualitative methods of data acquisition and analysis and publication in peer reviewed journals. However, there is no formal cooperation (such as a national Graduate School) with other institutes with a programme on educational research to provide joint courses for PhD-students.

Standard software for this is available; additional software can be acquired by students from the student support service center. The library allows access to many electronic and printed books and journals.

This model allows students to make reasoned choices about what to investigate, how to investigate, and who to involve as supervisors.

Students should take between 3 and 8 years to finish their PhD. Most candidates combine the PhD with a job (often as a schoolteacher). Completion on average takes 5 and a half year and attrition is 22%. This is good.

The language of the thesis is either Greek or English. 40% publish in refereed journals. This means that a substantial part of the findings is not accessible for an international audience. It would be well advised to stimulate students to do their work in English.

## Public information

### Bachelor Primary Education

Selection criteria for the program, intended learning outcomes for the courses, the qualification awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures, and learning opportunities available to the students are all clear and outlined in documents and website. The employment information

for graduates cannot be mistaken, since this programme focuses on teaching in primary schools. Pass rates and attrition rates were not clear from the document.

The requirements for teaching in primary schools are set by government agencies, such as the Ministry of Education of Cyprus. The programme agrees with this and also with international standards. Graduates of the programme teach not only in Cyprus and Greece but also in Germany and other countries, signaling alignment.

All students do their internship in primary schools in Nicosia, which ensures that the curriculum is under continuous, albeit informal, review from stakeholders ('external auditors') and resonates with the local and societal context. Communication with teachers and principals of these schools appears to operate on a daily level.

## PhD program

Selection criteria for the program, intended learning outcomes, the qualification awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures, and learning opportunities available to the students are clear and outlined in documents and the presentation during the site visit. For example, students can present their work during international conferences. Completion rates and attrition rates were not clear from the documents but were provided on site. Most PhD-students already have a job and their incentive to do a PhD often is to improve their position, such as becoming a principal.

The number of students pursuing a PhD in Education Sciences in Cyprus may be too low to allow for a 'professional body' to validate the program. However, it might be worthwhile to consider collaboration with other research universities to set up a joint Graduate School, for example to guarantee quality and variety of courses in methodology and thesis writing.

## Information management

### Bachelor Primary Education

The management is aware of many aspects mentioned in the standard, such as student satisfaction, drop-out rates, career paths, where students come from, and certainly employers (that is, primary schools) insights concerning career readiness. Students and teaching staff have easy access to each other and to support staff. Students have access to counsellors which help them with personal problems that have impact on progression. The number of students in the programme (71 spread over four years) is such that this rather informal management, compared to systematically collecting, monitoring, and analysing specific key performance indicators, will suffice.

## PhD Program

The number of students (19) is such that an information management system to collect data would be over the top. Management is aware of what goes on and how students progress. The completion rate and duration are satisfactory.

### **Strengths**

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

The development of pedagogical content knowledge with respect to all school subjects receives substantial attention.

Quite a few graduates continue with the Master Education Sciences and the PhD, even in combination with a job as a schoolteacher.

Good alignment of the teaching staff with all programs of the Department, covering the school subjects of primary education and the pedagogical, psychological, and leadership aspects.

### **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.***

Encourage PhD students to publish their thesis in English to enable to participate in the international community production.

Consider the possibilities of increasing the duration of the practicum (the 'school experience') in the Bachelor Primary Education.

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

Sub-area	<b><i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i></b>
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<b>1.1</b>	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
<b>1.2</b>	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
<b>1.3</b>	Public information	Compliant
<b>1.4</b>	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.*
- *Detailed schedules in course materials are included, explicitly stating the expected hours for lectures, self-study, and group projects, ensuring transparency in time allocation.*
- *A system is integrated where each learning activity is assigned a weight proportional to its importance and time requirement, aiding in balanced curriculum design.*

### **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.*

- *The expected hours for different components of practical training, such as lab work, fieldwork, and internships are clearly documented in the training manuals*
- *A weighting system is applied to various practical training elements, reflecting their significance in the overall learning outcomes and student workload.*

## 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.*
  - *The time allocation for each assessment task is explicitly stated in course outlines, ensuring students are aware of the expected workload.*
  - *A balanced assessment weighting strategy is implemented, considering the complexity and learning objectives of each task, to ensure fair evaluation of student performance.*

*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.*

From both the application form and the site visit presentations made clear that the process of teaching and learning and students-centred teaching, in particular, receive a lot of attention. In both programmes, primary teacher education and the PhD programme, the number of students in each work format is quite low, which allows small-scale teaching with enough individual support during regular teaching. In addition, students in the teacher education programme are mentored by a teacher in school, and students in the PhD programme form their own project with the supervisors. In the regular teaching formats, teachers applied student-centred pedagogical approaches with tasks and technology that support these approaches. If students have requests or complaints about teaching, they are well heard, and approaches can be revised.

Concerning practical training of students in the primary teacher education, the three periods of practical training are well-prepared so that students know what to expect. Moreover, reflection sessions are part of the practical training, in which students reflect on their teaching experiences, relate what they have learned at the institute, and also bring back their practical experiences into the institutional programme. It is clear what the requirements and assessment criteria are for the practical training.

Concerning student assessment, all subject courses have the assessment structure of 60% final exams and 40% intermediate assessment, which can have various forms. The intermediate assessments are also used as a formative assessment, providing feedback on students' performances. All requirements and criteria related to student assessment are clearly stated in the study manual. A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.

### Strengths

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

One of the main strengths is the connection between theory and practice. With reflection session students connect their practical experiences to what they learned at the institute and also bring back their teaching experiences into the institutional programme. Another strength is the small-scale teaching in both the primary teacher education and the PhD programme, which allow for student-centred teaching and learning, support by the technology and tasks. A third strength is the similarity of the student assessment structure across all courses, which provide both students and teachers with a consistent approach.

### 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.*

No special recommendations

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 recruitment and promotion of teaching staff follow formal, transparent and merit-based procedures, as defined in the University's Internal Regulations. Academic posts are approved through the Faculty Affairs Committee, the Senate, and the University Council, and are publicly advertised to ensure open competition.

Teaching staff possess strong academic and research qualifications aligned with the programme's needs. All full-time faculty hold doctoral degrees, many have international training or Fellow status in Higher Education Academies, and most part-time lecturers also hold PhDs. The specialisation of the staff is appropriate for the courses they teach.

PhD are supervised by full-time faculty members, whose ongoing involvement in research provides an appropriate foundation for this role. Their familiarity with current methodologies and academic practices helps ensure that students receive adequate support throughout the research process.

The University places emphasis on continuous pedagogical and technological training. All faculty members should attend a 36-hour professional development seminar each semester, complemented by DL-specific technical certifications (*Distance Learning Essentials, Moodle Essentials, Creative Media Essentials*). This ensures consistent competence in e-learning pedagogy and tools. The University encourages adjunct staff to participate in the pedagogical and

technological training seminars offered each semester; however, participation remains uneven due to difficulties in combining these trainings with external professional commitments.

Promotion criteria include teaching quality, research productivity, service to the institution and community, and pedagogical innovation. International mobility is supported through Erasmus+ staff exchanges and guest lectures by visiting academics.

According to Table 4, the programme employs around 12 full-time faculty and over 20 part-time lecturers. While the teaching staff number is adequate, the majority of teaching is carried out by part-time staff, raising questions of coherence and coordination. The Department addresses this through regular online meetings and long-term collaboration with many adjuncts.

Teaching loads among full-time faculty vary significantly; some teach one or two courses per semester while others teach up to six. Overall, the balance between teaching, research ( $\approx 40\%$ ) and administration is acceptable and allows active engagement in scholarly work.

Faculty maintain strong research activity, publishing in recognised international journals and participating in Horizon Europe, Erasmus+ and RPF projects. Research centres such as CARDET and InSSTER enhance collaboration and strengthen the link between teaching and research, with opportunities for student involvement.

### Strengths

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

The programme benefits from transparent and well-defined recruitment and promotion procedures, ensuring merit-based selection and career progression. The academic staff profile is strong: all full-time faculty members, as well as the majority of part-time lecturers, hold PhDs in areas directly aligned with the programme's disciplinary scope.

Faculty receive continuous support for teaching excellence through regular pedagogical training and university-wide seminars, which strengthen their skills in online pedagogy, assessment, and student-centred learning. The institution also actively encourages innovation and the integration of educational technologies in teaching, consistent with contemporary trends in higher education.

The Department demonstrates balanced coverage across key disciplines, including Pedagogy, Educational Technology, Psychology, Mathematics, Music Education, Philosophy, Physical Education, and Theology. Teaching responsibilities (typically 6–12 teaching periods per week) are generally well distributed, enabling effective curriculum delivery while allowing space for scholarly activity.

A significant strength of the programme is the alignment between faculty research and the course content, which contributes to academically rich and up-to-date teaching. Staff show strong research productivity, with publications in recognised international journals and active engagement in externally funded projects. Participation in European research networks further enhances the programme's international dimension.

Finally, the teaching team effectively integrates research outcomes into teaching practice, particularly in the fields of inclusive education and digital learning. This reinforces the programme's evidence-based orientation and strengthens the connection between research, professional practice, and student learning. Moreover, the fact that PhD theses are supervised by full-time faculty members is a strength, as it ensures continuity, stability, and an appropriate level of academic oversight.

#### 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 high proportion of teaching delivered by part-time/adjunct staff, the Department should strengthen formal supervision and coordination mechanisms to ensure full coherence across courses, avoid unnecessary overlaps, and guarantee consistent adherence to course outlines and programme learning outcomes. Establishing structured monitoring processes—such as mandatory coordination meetings, peer review of course content, or central approval of assessment plans—would help maintain programme integrity.

It is recommended that the institution develop more flexible and accessible training pathways for part-time instructors—such as asynchronous modules, alternative schedules, or condensed weekend workshops—to ensure that all teaching staff, regardless of employment status, receive the required preparation for high-quality e-learning delivery. Increasing participation among adjunct staff would strengthen the coherence of teaching practices, enhance methodological consistency across courses, and further support the programme's overall quality.

The University may also consider expanding its full-time faculty base to ensure greater stability, enhance long-term planning, and reduce reliance on adjunct instructors. Increasing the number of permanent staff would also support a more even distribution of teaching responsibilities.

To reinforce the programme's research–teaching nexus, it is recommended to develop formal incentives for research-led teaching, such as small internal grants (seed funding), temporary reductions in teaching load, or competitive awards for innovative research-based pedagogical

practices. Such measures would encourage staff to continuously integrate emerging research into course content and strengthen the programme’s scholarly profile.

**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.*

The Department provides clearly defined and publicly available admission regulations for BEd program. Applicants for the undergraduate programmes must submit an application, a high school diploma with a grade of at least 15/20, and a minimum of 15/20 in Greek and Mathematics. Candidates who do not meet these criteria may still gain access through a special entrance examination. At postgraduate level, requirements include an accredited Bachelor's degree and certified English proficiency, whereas the doctoral programme outlines detailed criteria and documentation required for admission.

Students receive structured academic support from academic advisors and faculty members throughout their studies. Small class sizes, together with multiple communication channels—including Moodle, email, telephone, and face-to-face meetings—facilitate individualised attention and timely guidance. The Department also implements systematic procedures for monitoring student progression, including early detection of students who may be struggling and coordinated intervention by academic advisors.

During the onsite visit, students reported being highly satisfied and repeatedly underscored the support, accessibility, and professionalism of the academic staff. They noted the close and trusting

rapport they have developed with their lecturers, who offer continual guidance and assistance throughout their studies. This feedback is fully consistent with the findings from student evaluation surveys, which likewise indicate very positive levels of satisfaction regarding teaching quality, faculty interaction, and the overall learning experience.

Student assessment is based on a diverse range of methods, including assignments, group projects, case studies, presentations, workshops, quizzes, portfolios, and examinations. The workload is described as balanced and aligned with the expected learning outcomes. Regulations regarding academic standing, probation, ineligibility, and readmission are clearly defined and published, ensuring that student progression is structured and transparent.

In terms of recognition, the University has well-established procedures for the transfer of credits, prior learning recognition, and the evaluation of external qualifications, consistent with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention. The University issues the Diploma Supplement in accordance with European standards, ensuring transparent certification of completed studies, including learning outcomes, level, and context.

Career prospects for graduates are broad, including employment in public and private schools, study centres, summer camps, hotel childcare units, media organisations producing children's content, enrichment centres, and research institutions. The Department reports that approximately 70% of graduates find employment within one year. Regarding internationalisation, the University collaborates with over several partners worldwide. The students in BEd programme mostly come from Cyprus and Greece largely due to the language of instruction.

### Strengths

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

The Department demonstrates a well-structured and transparent framework for student admission, with clearly defined and publicly accessible regulations across all levels of study. Students benefit from strong academic support, facilitated by small class sizes, accessible faculty, and multiple communication channels that enable personalised guidance. There is genuine support and understanding between students and professors, fostering strong bonds and a student-centred learning environment. Systematic procedures for monitoring student progression allow for the early identification of difficulties and timely intervention by academic advisors.

The doctoral programme is supported by a robust regulatory framework ensuring transparent admission, structured supervision, and clear quality assurance mechanisms aligned with European doctoral standards.

Assessment practices rely on a broad range of methods aligned with programme learning outcomes, ensuring balanced workloads and constructive feedback. Recognition procedures for

prior learning, credit transfer, and external qualifications are well established and aligned with European standards, including the Lisbon Recognition Convention, and certification is supported by the use of the Diploma Supplement.

Students report high satisfaction with the quality of teaching and support received. Furthermore, students are actively involved in the Department’s development strategy and governance processes, with student representatives communicating concerns or disagreements and contributing to the adoption of appropriate academic and administrative policies.

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.*

Although the institution makes effective use of Learning Analytics and maintains comprehensive internal monitoring processes, aggregated indicators of student progression, retention, completion rates and entry profiles are not publicly available at programme level. This is an aspect that had already been highlighted in the 2021 external evaluation, yet it has not been fully implemented. It is therefore recommended that the University publish these indicators annually, in line with European transparency practices, in order to enhance accountability, support data-informed decision-making, and strengthen the programme’s quality assurance processes.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
<b>4.1</b>	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
<b>4.2</b>	Student progression	Compliant
<b>4.3</b>	Student recognition	Compliant
<b>4.4</b>	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.*
- *Students receive support in research-led teaching through engagement in research projects, mentorship from research-active faculty, and access to resources that enhance their research skills and critical engagement with current studies.*

*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.*

## **Bachelor of Education and PhD Programme enrollees**

The **Teaching and Learning Resources** which are well described in the Application Document and an example of which we were able to view on our site visit are excellent. The classrooms were modern, well equipped and spacious for the classes being held. The latest digital resources were evident in the classroom. The lesson we viewed made available hands-on resources to visually build a narrative that creatively engaged the students in student centred learning. These resources are fit for purpose. There is also support for students with physical and learning needs.

The **Physical Resources** – meaning the premises, libraries, study facilities, and IT infrastructures were excellent and able to support the study programme. The overall numbers of BEd students was not high; in all, there were 71 students; the bulk of the students are in the virtual M.Ed programme. Again, given that the expansion has largely been in virtual mode, there has not been pressure on the physical and material infrastructures as a result. There are excellent library, canteen and student areas. The PhD programme is currently small, and many are both part-time and working, and not full-time. We were not made aware of specific infrastructures dedicated to them and their needs.

The **Human Support Resources** are excellent. The university provides student welfare as well as academic support services. The **Centre for Research and Counselling Services (KESY)** plays a key role here. KESY are available to all the students. The main aim is to provide individualized psychological support to students that face a series of personal challenges including academic and learning, adjustment, abuse, or family issues. Counselling services are offered either in individual or group sessions.

**Student support** is targeted based on the specific area of concern. For example, an Erasmus Officer promotes student mobility and handles the overall programme. Students we met talked about the benefits of accessing these services. Part-time, employed, international students and students with special needs. Other student supports are offered via that the KESY noted above.

### Strengths

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

These services are available to students and the quality of the infrastructures and resources available are excellent.

### 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.*

No recommendations



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?*
- *Are the criteria reflected in 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 and requirements that potential students need to meet for admission in the programme are clearly stated in the documentation. This is also the case for how the selection procedures are applied. Many of the students are full-time workers in education (mainly teachers), which means that it is even more important that the criteria and procedure are clear as many students do not have much flexibility in their planning of study.

Concerning proposal and the dissertation, all guidelines are clearly set, for both the students and supervisors. Because most dissertations are written in Greek, only a few article-based dissertations are produced. Two compulsory course, one on qualitative and one on quantitative research (total 20 ECTS) precede the proposal rewriting. Student should apply with a draft research proposal, which can be change after the courses and at the beginning of the thesis process. The dissertation phase of 160 ECTS includes three elements: research proposal, data collection (I and II), and writing (I and II). Turnitin is used for plagiarism check, which is also available for student before they hand in their dissertation.

Concerning supervision and assessment committees, all procedures and criteria are clearly stated, for the selection of the supervisors (at least one internal, sometimes two, and one external) and the formation of the examining committee. The supervision team has set regular meetings and each semester students hand in a self-evaluation report. Many PhDs collect data in their own or each other school practices, which makes the PhD study directly relevant for teaching and learning in school. In order to prepare some of the PhD students for an academic career outside Cyprus or Greece, these students could be asked to produce an article-based dissertation in English.

### Strengths

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

One main strength of the PhD programme is the transparency of the procedures that students and supervisors have to comply with. This counts both for the quality of the dissertation and supervision and assessment committees. A minor suggestion could be to encourage PhDs who want to pursue an academic career to publish in English-language journals.

### 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.*

No recommendations

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
<b>6.1</b>	Selection criteria and requirements	Compliant
<b>6.2</b>	Proposal and dissertation	Compliant
<b>6.3</b>	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.*

It is very clear that the two programmes we have just reviewed and which are reported on here at the University of Nicosia have made outstanding gains in offering an excellent learning and teaching experience. We commend the department, school, and university for an excellent operation. The department is clearly intent on improvement across all fronts. It is guided by effective structures and quality assurance mechanisms in place.

Its undergraduate BEd is engaging and innovative in its pedagogical practices. We strongly encourage the ongoing development of this programme, as the benefits to Cyprus and beyond are significant. The teachers being produced appear to be developed through a programme that actively fosters creativity, curiosity, and problem-solving. This is, in no small measure, the outcome of a staff body that is totally committed to providing an excellent educational experience.

At the postgraduate level, the PhD programme is small and largely because of its enrollees being employed full-time and are studying part-time, its graduation numbers of some 27 are small. That said, the PhD has the capacity to strengthen the knowledge, skills and leadership of key actors in the education sector and have an impact on research-based decision-making. The staff are highly professional and undertake a full portfolio of teaching. We were impressed with the quality of the teaching we observed on our site visit; engaging, student centred, and creative.

All alumni spoke in glowing terms of their experiences – for B.Ed – those who were able to engage in mobility programmes, and for the PhD students, those who were able to attend conferences and also value working closely with the supervisor and committee. In short, we were impressed with the high level of professionalism, motivation and enthusiasm by staff, administrators and the leadership of the Department, School and University for all aspects of delivering excellent programmes. We were also impressed at the ways in which AI has been rapidly engaged with and incorporated in critical and reflexive ways into the curriculum.

Several areas which we outline below might form part of a conversation in the Department for future strengthening. We do this only as we are aware that the Department is fully committed to an ethic of improvement:

1. Establish formal coordination mechanisms for part-time and adjunct staff to ensure coherence across courses, avoid overlaps, and guarantee adherence to outlines and learning outcomes.
2. Implement Introduce mandatory coordination meetings, peer review of course content, and central approval of assessment plans to maintain programme integrity.
3. Develop more accessible training pathways for part-time instructors (e.g., asynchronous online modules, condensed weekend workshops) to ensure high-quality e-learning delivery and methodological consistency.
4. Integrate thesis supervision formally into the faculty workload model to ensure balanced staff responsibilities and maintain the quality of student supervision.
5. Consider increasing the number of permanent, full-time faculty to ensure greater stability, enhance long-term planning, and reduce over-reliance on adjunct instructors.
6. Develop formal incentives to encourage staff to integrate their research into teaching. These could include: (i) small internal grants or seed funding for course development; (ii) temporary reductions in teaching load for pedagogical innovation; or (iii) competitive awards for innovative research-based teaching practices.
7. Begin a conversation in the School and University to consider the benefits of a Graduate College that pools expertise and resources made available to doctoral students. This might entail productive engagements with other Cyprus universities to be part of a consortium for a Graduate College. The benefits also enable networking amongst small cohorts from Departments who are able to join a bigger community.



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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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Register for Higher Education enqa.

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**E. Signatures of the EEC**

F.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Susan Lee Robertson	
Josefina Sala Roca	
Hanno van Keulen	
Wilfried Admiraal	
Athena Theodotou	

**Date:** 15/11/2025