

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

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

- **Higher Education Institution:**

European University Cyprus

**Town:** Nicosia, Cyprus

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):**

School of Humanities, Social and Education Sciences

- **Department/ Sector:** Humanities

- **Programme of study**

“Προπαρασκευαστικό Πρόγραμμα (Foundation Course) Εκμάθησης της Αγγλικής Γλώσσας” (1 Έτος)

**Title of the programme of study in English:**

“Foundation Course for Learning English Language  
(1 Year)

**Language(s) of instruction:** English

- **Programme’s status:** New

- **Concentrations (if any):**

**In Greek:** Concentrations

**In English:** 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].

## A. Introduction

The European University of Cyprus was established 60 years ago by the transformation of Cyprus College and is now a leading university in Cyprus offering degrees from undergraduate to doctoral level in a wide variety of disciplines. The mission of the university is “to advance learning and knowledge by teaching and research, to enable students to obtain the advantages of University education, and to provide relevant service to the community.” The university has over 9000 students. The university consists of 7 schools (medicine, social sciences, business, etc.) and offers three levels of degrees: undergraduate, postgraduate, doctoral.

In the first part of the visit, the following representatives of the university were present: Prof. Loizos Symeou, Vice Rector of Academic Affairs & Head of Internal, Quality Assurance Committee, Prof. Marios Vryonides, Vice Rector of Research and External Affairs, Prof. Stavros Stavrou Karaganni, Dean, School of Humanities, Social and Education, Sciences, Dr. Charis Xinaris, Associate Professor, Chairperson, Department of Humanities and Program Coordinator, Dr. James Mackay, Associate Professor, Faculty Representative of the Departmental Committee of Internal Quality Assurance. Prof. Loizos Symeou gave a detailed presentation of the history, demographics, organizational structure and research activities of the university. He explained that the university offers on-site as well as e-learning programs. The university recruits an increasingly large number of international students. The university has a medical campus in Frankfurt and also has franchised programs overseas. Following the presentation, questions were raised about the intended student intake for the Foundation programme, the quality assurance and employment policies and hiring plans for the new programme.

In the second part of the visit, the members of the programme participated: Dr. Charis Xinaris, Associate Professor, Chairperson, Department of Humanities and Program Coordinator, Ms. Monica Hadjichrysanthou Senior Instructor, Communication, EFL, ESP, Panos Panayiotou Senior Instructor EFL, ESP, Krystallo Nicolaou Instructor, Communication, EFL, ESP, Claire Georgiou Instructor, EFL, ESP Maro Neophytou Special Scientist, EFL, ESP. After the introduction of the programme teaching staff, Dr. Charis Xinaris gave a presentation of the structure and organization of the department where the programme will be run. She then presented the aims, learning outcomes and structure of the English Language Foundation programme and answered questions relating to integrated skills development, individualization and differentiation and learner-centred teaching methods.

In the meeting with administrative staff, Ms. Eleni Markantoni Director of the Office of Students Affairs Ms. Christina Kolatsi International Student Advisor, Department of Enrolment, Mr. Miltiades Hadjioannou Head of IT Support and Mr. Theodoros Tzitzimbourounis Head Librarian were present. They presented the available resources in terms of IT and library collections. The international student advisor described the procedures for supporting international students at the university.

## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Prof. Judit Kormos	Chair	Lancaster University
Prof. Kata Wein Cszér	Member	Eötvös Loránd University
Prof. Mirosław Pawlak	Member	Adam Mickiewicz University
Panagiota Retsa	Student member	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)

### 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?*

Based on the analysis of the documents submitted by the European University of Cyprus (EUC) and the information obtained during the online meetings with the representatives of the institution, the following main findings can be reported:

- 1.1. Transparent policies for quality assurance have been established and are followed by the university. These policies are spelled out in the Quality Assurance Manual and the Internal Regulation on EUC's Program Evaluation Review (P.E.R.) Procedures and Template, which were adopted by the Senate (75<sup>th</sup> decision of 29 July, 2020 and 62<sup>nd</sup> decision of 28 January, 2019, respectively). Bodies responsible for quality assurance function at two levels: (1) at the University level, the Internal Quality Assurance Committee makes recommendations to the Senate and Council on all matters concerning quality, (2) at the Department level, the Department Quality Assurance Committee monitors the courses and programs which on offer and brings areas for improvement to the Department's Chairperson. Importantly, student representatives are involved in quality assurance at both levels. The courses and programs run by the university are subject to regular program evaluation review (PER). As part of the review, information is obtained from several sources: (1) representatives of students who are members of program committees and evaluation questionnaires that are filled out by students, covering, among others, such areas as the course, instructions, resources, etc., (2) alumni who also complete questionnaires and are invited to be members of advisory boards, (3) faculty members who are represented on program committees, (4) professionals who sit on advisory committees and are requested to provide guidelines on course curricula, and (5) university management. This shows that steps have been taken to ensure that both internal and external stakeholders are involved in the procedures concerning quality assurance. As was made clear during the meeting with the authorities of the institution, the tools used for PER are periodically updated to keep up with new challenges (e.g., student feedback and evaluation questionnaires are being modified at present). The English Language Foundation Course will be run within the School of the Humanities, Social and Education Sciences and it will be coordinated by the Language Center which is a unit of this School. Therefore, all quality assurance mechanisms will be applicable to this course as well.
- 1.2. The university has adopted clear-cut policies concerning academic ethics (e.g., guarding against cheating, plagiarism, etc.). There are also university bodies with the responsibility to prevent instances of discrimination and intolerance and at the same time to ensure a high level of diversity and inclusion. Information about the quality assurance procedures adopted by the European University of Cyprus is not available publicly but can be accessed by interested parties (e.g., students, teachers) through University Intranet.



1.2. In accordance with the instructions issued by the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Sport and Youth, the English Language Foundation Course aims to prepare international students for successful entrance to European University Cyprus but also any other higher education institution in the country. Courses of this kind constitute a response to a growing influx of students with diverse academic backgrounds and English language skill levels, and their goal is to successfully prepare them for participation in degree-level programs but also the realities of the changing labor market. Specifically, the course is intended to allow its graduates to: (1) attain proficiency in all language skills: listening, speaking, reading, and writing, (2) develop academic vocabulary and language necessary for studies in the area of higher education, (3) enhance communication skills needed for academic and social interactions, (4) gain confidence in participating in class discussions and debates and presenting academic topics, and (5) improve critical thinking and analytical skills through reading and writing tasks. The course covers one academic year and consists of two modules: English Language Learning Foundation Course I & II, each comprising 208 50-minute periods per semester. The meeting with the course coordinator and members of the teaching staff demonstrated that the choice of an integrated approach rather than including separate modules, dedicated, say, to reading, writing, or language practice, was carefully premeditated and drew on previous experiences in teaching different language courses (e.g., ESP, EFL) in the Language Center. It should also be emphasized that the course is consistent with current developments in society, enabling, for example, the development of transversal skills (e.g. collaboration, communication, critical thinking, intercultural awareness, creativity, innovation) as well as digital literacies, all of which will gradually foster learner autonomy and lifelong learning. Based on the analysis of the contents of the modules, methodology and assessment criteria, there is no doubt that the course will allow meeting its objectives and enable students to achieve intended learning outcomes. The program is coherent and allows smooth student progression. In light of the integrated character of the modules, the small number of teaching staff involved, their commitment, regular meetings as well as ongoing collaboration, there is very little likelihood that classes taught to different groups (it is more than likely that more than one group will be formed) will deviate from the general objectives. Like other courses in the university, the course will be subject to regular review, with internal (i.e., administrators, teachers, students) and external (representatives of the labor market, alumni) taking part in the process. One area that is in need of improvement concerns the development of learner autonomy, which also involves effective use of language learning strategies. This issue is not sufficiently emphasized in the course description and caused considerable confusion during the meeting with the program coordinator and the teaching staff. Some training in this area might be necessary, with concrete techniques and procedures being implemented.

1.3. The information about the program will be made public once it has been accredited, as is the case with other programs (courses) run by the EUC.

1.4. Information about effective management of the program is not yet collected because the course is not running. However, careful analysis of the policies and procedures for quality assurance indicates that such information will be regularly collected and analyzed by the institution, as is the case with the programs that are currently in progress.

#### *Strengths*

- involvement of internal and external stakeholders, including students, in ongoing program monitoring and review;
- detailed SWOT analysis in relation to the projected course;
- awareness of the need to periodically amend procedures for program evaluation and review.

#### *Areas of improvement and recommendations*

- more pronounced and explicit focus on the development of learner autonomy and adept use of language learning strategies in the course; some staff training might be needed in this respect.

**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	<b>Compliant</b>
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	<b>Compliant</b>
1.3	Public information	<b>Compliant</b>
1.4	Information management	<b>Compliant</b>

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

### Sub-areas

**2.2 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology**

**2.3 Practical training**

**2.4 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.*

The educational framework presented in the application and the site visit prioritizes the integration of teaching skills to ensure teaching skills in an integrated way. The approach includes small class sizes, diverse resources, topic-based instruction, varied delivery methods, recognition of mixed-abilities, and supplementary materials. The team's proposal prioritizes small classes to foster intimate learning environments, enabling personalized attention and meaningful peer interactions. Employing a blend of textbooks and multimedia resources caters to different learning styles and enriches comprehension. The curriculum adopts a topic-based approach, encouraging interdisciplinary connections and holistic understanding. The team embrace diverse instructional strategies, accommodating varied preferences and optimizing learning outcomes. Recognizing diverse learning needs, they implement differentiated instruction to ensure all students are appropriately challenged and supported. The proposal provides extra materials to supplement core content and encourage independent exploration and critical thinking.

The courses integrate authentic-like materials mirroring academic, social, and professional scenarios. Employing constructivism, social-constructivism, and multimodality, the institution fosters dynamic learning experiences. Language activities cultivate transversal skills vital for success: collaboration, communication, critical thinking, intercultural awareness, creativity, and innovation.

In the educational approach, differentiation is treated as highly important, accommodating varying abilities and background knowledge through personalized instruction. Small class sizes facilitate tailored support, fostering an intimate learning environment where every student's needs are addressed. Continuous assessment ensures ongoing feedback and adaptation, while presenting challenges and opportunities encourages growth and engagement. Strategies were offered to track progress through observation, offering individualized help and scaffolding where needed. It was also pointed out that creating safe classrooms fosters a conducive atmosphere for exploration and risk-taking. Collaborative teaching experiences will be used to enrich learning, leveraging diverse perspectives. Teachers are prepared to employ various modes of learning to cater to different preferences of students and optimize comprehension. Through these strategies, tutors will strive to create an inclusive and dynamic learning environment where every student can thrive and reach their full potential.



Teachers prioritize autonomy, empowering students to take ownership of their learning journey. Encouraging language use beyond the classroom fosters real-world application and fluency development. Homework tasks are strategically tailored to reinforce language skills and cater to individual needs. Embracing English in local contexts enhances language proficiency and cultural immersion. Project-based learning engages students in hands-on, collaborative experiences, promoting critical thinking and creativity. Through these approaches, teachers cultivate a dynamic and immersive learning environment, preparing students for success in an interconnected world.

Varied forms of assessment are offered and mitigation processes are in place.

**Strengths**

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

1. Strong swot analysis
2. Teachers in the program seem to be highly motivated
3. Teachers are committed to support students in various ways

**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.*

Further training on students’ individual differences might result in more complex approaches to learner autonomy and the use of efficient learning strategies.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	<b>Compliant</b>
2.2	Practical training	<b>Not applicable</b>
2.3	Student assessment	<b>Compliant</b>



### 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

The institution has detailed procedures, guidelines and criteria in place for recruitment and promotion in place. There are promotion opportunities for 'special teaching' personnel which acknowledges the work of faculty whose job mostly focuses on teaching. Promotion criteria take into account teaching quality and professional development in teaching. Time allocation for research for teaching-oriented roles is theoretically possible.

Development of teaching skills is supported using various means and tools including evaluation by the head of department, peer and student feedback collected through questionnaires and interviews and classroom observation. Language teachers are actively encouraged to be actively involved with professional teaching organizations, and they indeed do this. The teachers can participate in internal professional development

programs related to teaching in higher education with a specific focus on e-learning and distance education. There are opportunities for participating in language teaching conferences.

The teaching staff have a range of relevant qualifications that allow them to carry out teaching activities to a high standard. Some of the qualifications are not related to English language teaching or education, but the lack of formal qualifications in these areas are compensated by decades of English language teaching experience mostly in higher education contexts.

*Charis Xinari* is the head of the department with long experience of managing and directing learning language programs.

*Monica Hadjichrysanthou* holds an MA degree in English language and stylistics.

*Panos Panagiotou* completed two post-graduate programs: MA in Educational Management and MA in Creative Writing.

*Krystallo Nicolaou-Konstantinidou* has an M.A. English Literature and B.A. English and History.

*Claire Georgiou* has an MSc in Management and Public Policy Analysis, which is not a qualification related to English language teaching but she has 30 years of experience and she is an active member in university committees.

*Maro Neophytou* completed an MA in Applied Linguistics and a Diploma in English language teaching.

### Strengths

The recruitment and hiring procedures are fully transparent and publicly available through an open website. The recruitment and hiring criteria are exceptionally detailed and thorough. Explicit consideration is given to fairness, reducing bias and eliminating discrimination in the appointment process.

Teaching staff is highly qualified and is actively involved in the university committees on teaching. They also have extensive language testing and test development. Many of the members play an active role in the Cyprus Association of English Language Teachers. The program employs full time members as well as part-time members.

There is a committee focusing on equality, diversity and inclusion with also a focus on gender equality in hiring and promotion.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

None

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3	Teaching staff recruitment and development	<b>Compliant</b>
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	<b>Compliant</b>
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	<b>Not applicable</b>

#### 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

Student admission criteria are defined externally.

They include Higher Secondary School leaving Certificate or of an equivalent degree. Proof of English language proficiency such as:

- An average score of at least of 4.0 in the IELTS examination.
- A score of at least 43 in the Pearson PTE Academic examination.
- A score of at least 42 in the TOEFL Internet Based Test (TOEFL iBT).
- A grade of at least E in the IGCSE / GCSE English as a Second language examination.
- Any other English language proficiency examination set by relevant Decisions of the Council of Ministers for entry to this program.

Students take an accredited external language proficiency exam to be able to progress to university studies in Cyprus.



Students' progress is assessed throughout the semester through various methods and techniques such as mid-term and final examination, classwork, homework and active participation. There are robust mechanisms for monitoring student progression through their studies.

Students' admission is handled by the registry. School administrators and secretaries provide necessary administrative support and are accessible for students.

### Strengths

An academic advisor is assigned to each student and monitors their progress. The advisor is available for discussions of academic progression, challenges, relevant support and study plans. The university has detailed mechanisms and relevant resources to support the adjustment and progress of international students.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

None

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Not applicable
4.4	Student certification	Not applicable



## 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.*

The EUC provides its students with a well-organized and student-centered environment that reflects the experienced teachers' dedication and enthusiasm for teaching.

The students, who are provided with a free wi-fi service, enjoy 24-hour IT support along with basic digital platforms and applications like Blackboard, Turnitin, Microsoft Office 365 and a technologically enhanced learning environment through videos, Kahoot games, etc. Also, it is noteworthy that the teaching staff tries to incorporate AI as assistance to the students' central ideas in writing tasks, taking advantage of new technologies as opportunities while at the same time, the university is trying to develop policies against plagiarism and a guide for students on how to use AI appropriately. Moreover, the university's clubs and societies and the online discussion forum help students use English as a communication tool in a vibrantly social international environment.

Regarding the premises, 1000 apartments with a range proximity between 200 m to 1.7 km from the university are able to accommodate the students of the university. The EUC library, as a member of the Cyprus Academic Library Consortium, is a fully computerized library with 300,000 e-books through 130 databases and 50,000 print books, which will provide a useful supplement to the program as the foundation students will be able to make use of its full-time services and premises. The university's total seating capacity of 3907 seats in 152 classrooms ensures adequacy of resources for new students.

The EUC, through a fully supportive network (school secretaries, personal student advisors, academic advising coordinator, course instructors and a Committee for Students with Special Needs), provides students with assistance regarding learning difficulties and physical impairments, psychological disorders, health problems and movement disabilities. Consequently, the facilities are designed to be friendly to students with various kinds of disabilities. In addition, financial support can be provided as the university offers 50% and 35% scholarships, depending on their social or grade status. This policy will apply to the foundation program students as well.

There is a very active part on behalf of the university's career services. Career days, internship placements, faculty mentoring, on-campus company visits and alumni networks are just some of the ways that the students receive support. There are workshops and seminars within an annual career exhibition with approximately 1000 students participating. Also, CSM is an international career platform for students, allowing them to have a profile on the platform and bringing them closer to the marketplace.

**Strengths**

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

EUC Teaching staff's commitment and willingness to embrace new technologies.

The EUC Language Centre also offers Greek as a foreign language to international students.

**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.* None

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5	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.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

### 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.*

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6	Selection criteria and requirements	Choose answer
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
6.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer

#### **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.*

The EEC concluded that the program under consideration has the potential to deliver quality education of the expected standards that complies with the standards of the CYQAA. The visit was well organized and the submitted documentation contained great level detail. The EEC was very much impressed by the student-centered teaching, the elaborate quality assurance mechanisms and the expertise and enthusiasm of the teaching staff. The university has wide ranging experience in working with international students and has highly supportive procedures in place to assist their integration in the student community. Lecturers demonstrated a high level of experience and expertise in teaching English for academic purposes and are very well equipped with pedagogical tools to ensure that students complete the foundation year successfully. Learning, teaching, infrastructure and administrative resources are excellent.



## E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Judit Kormos	
Kata Csizér Wein	
Mirosław Pawlak	
Panagiota Retsa	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

**Date:** 5<sup>th</sup> May 2024