

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

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

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Central Lancashire, Cyprus (UCLan Cyprus)
- **Town:** Larnaca
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Language Academy, UCLan Cyprus
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
In Greek:
Προπαρασκευαστικό Πρόγραμμα Εκμάθησης της Αγγλικής Γλώσσας
In English:
English Foundation Course
- **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

University of Central Lancashire, Cyprus consists of four departments: Law, Business and Communication, Sciences, and Arts, Media and Communications. The university is a fully-accredited branch of University of Central Lancashire, UK. It can award double-degrees from UCLan UK and UCLan Cyprus. It was established in 2012.

The site visit started with the introduction of the committee members and the representative of the University, Dr Cosmina Theodoulou, Director of the Academic Quality and Compliance Office & Chair of the UCLan Cyprus Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee, Dr Andria Michael, Academic Programme Coordinator, Ms Lyda Eleftheriou, Language Academy Coordinator and Ms Antri Yerasimou Makri, Academic and Quality Assurance Officer.

The first part of the visit included a presentation by Dr Cosmina Theodoulou, Director of the Academic Quality and Compliance Office & Chair of the UCLan Cyprus Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee. She explained that the university is research active and the university produced 364 outputs between 2019-2024. The university holds several high value research grants and an Erasmus charter. The university has 198 FTE members and around 60 research active academics. She also described the governance structure of the university and the organization of the university in terms of departments, research clusters and committees. She gave a detailed description of the Senate that also includes the Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee. 45% of students come from Cyprus, 12% from EU and 43% are international students. 32% students receive merit-based scholarships. Particular attention is given to students' voices and representation. Overall student satisfaction is at or above 90%. The university has a robust strategic plan for education, research and networking, including developing new programs and increased international recruitment.

Next Ms Lyda Eleftheriou, Language Academy Coordinator gave a presentation on the Language Academy, which was established in 2016. The academy offers a diversity of language courses throughout the academic year. The academy teaches languages in addition to English. English language courses are targeted from A1 to high level language preparation courses. Courses can be face-to-face, online or hybrid, short or long. Recent courses include some new ESP courses. Erasmus support is available for all Greek courses for international students. Ms Lyda Eleftheriou also described the facilities and resources of the academy. The presentation gave a convincing account of how the foundation year would be integrated into the Language Academy.

In the next part of the meeting, Dr Andria Michael, Academic Programme Coordinator provided an overview of the programme, its structure, assessment and the teaching staff. The presentation included information about academic support. Dr. Pawlak asked representatives to provide additional information on the everyday workings of quality assurance mechanisms.

In the third section of the visit, the following teaching staff members were present: Dr Andria Michael, Ms Lyda Eleftheriou and Ms Maria Georgiou and Mr Alexander John Kakoullis (associate lecturers). This part of the visit focussed on teaching and assessment methodologies. Dr. Csizér asked further clarification questions on individualization and differentiation.

In the fourth section of the meeting, the following colleagues working in administration were present: Mr Robert Georgiades, Head of Admissions and Recruitment, Mr Yiannis Zazos, Head of Marketing, Mr Yiannis

Kekkou, Head of IT, Ms Helen Plaado, Head of Schools Administration, Ms Margarita Manoli, Head of Schools Administration, Ms Chrysovalanto Christoforou, Head of Student Support, Ms Chrysovalanto Christoforou, Human Resources Officer and Ms Antri Yerasimou Makri, Academic and Quality Assurance Officer.

External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

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

B. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

Findings

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

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

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

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*

- *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
- *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
- *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
- *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

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

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*

- *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
- *learning resources and student support available*
- *career paths of graduates*

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*

- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

Findings

Based on the analysis of the documentation submitted by the University of Central Lancashire Cyprus (UCLan Cyprus) and the online meetings with the representatives of the institution, the following observations were made:

- 1.1. Being the international branch of the University of Central Lancashire and at the same time a fully licensed private university in the Republic of Cyprus, UCLan Cyprus offers to its graduates double-awarded degrees, accredited by both the UK Quality Assurance Agency and the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (DIPAE). This status in itself guarantees that quality assurance is taken extremely seriously by the institution. Transparent policies for quality assurance are in place in the university which involve relevant bodies and positions, such as the Senate, Department Boards, the Course Planning Committee, the Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committees (ASQAC) which has its counterparts in each department, the Student Engagement and Attendance Monitoring Committee, Module and Course Leaders, Heads of Departments, etc. There are clear guidelines for the development of new courses and programs, existing courses and programs are subjected to a thorough review every five or six years, and measures are taken to undertake annual monitoring and continuous enhancement of the courses and programs taught (e.g., course leader reports, departmental action plans). The procedures of quality assurance involve both internal (e., teaching and administrative staff) and external (e.g., prospective employers, graduates) stakeholders, examiners and advisors. Importantly, students are involved every step of the way since they are members of relevant university bodies (e.g., ASQAC), they are regularly requested to fill out Module Feedback Questionnaires, assessing, among other things, quality of instruction, feedback received, quality of support or teaching facilities, and their representatives attend student staff liaison meetings once a semester.

While the procedures for program development will not apply to the English Foundation Course, which is an initiative of the Ministry of Education, Sport, and Youth, Republic of Cyprus, all the other assurance quality measures will be implemented. The course will be run by the Language Academy, a unit with considerable experience in teaching foreign languages within the university. The coordinator of this unit and the foundation course coordinator will be members of ASQAC and they will implement the procedures described above to ensure high quality of instruction.

Clear-cut policies are in place to guard against different forms of academic misconduct (e.g., plagiarism, cheating, collusion). There are also university bodies concerned with the prevention of all instances of discrimination and intolerance (e.g., Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee).

The University quality assurance procedures are available to all UCLan Cyprus students and staff on the University Intranet space.

- 1.2. The course was designed taking into account the fact that adequate command of English is a crucial skill for academic achievement and professional success for international students. As pointed out in the application, there is a growing influx of students with diverse academic backgrounds and thus there is a need to address language disparities and ensure that such students can be admitted into degree-level programs in universities. Importantly, the design of the course takes into account the realities of the labor market, going beyond mere linguistic competences ensuring attainment of the B2 level according to the CEFR and also focusing on effective communication, cross-cultural understanding and networking that will allow the graduates to assume a variety of roles in the dynamic global job market. Specifically, the course will allow students to: (1) attain proficiency in all target 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 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 will last one year (two semesters) and comprise mandatory courses in the following areas: English in Academic Contexts, Listening and Speaking Skills, Reading Skills, Writing Skills, Academic Vocabulary and Language, and Language Practice and Application. It should be emphasized that detailed information concerning the objectives, content, methodology and assessment for each of these courses is extremely exhaustive. There is no doubt that the program will allow meeting its objectives and enable students to achieve the intended learning outcomes. One area that should perhaps be given some thought is a more explicit focus on the development of learner autonomy as well as adept application of language learning strategies. The course is consistent with developments in society, enabling, for example, the development of critical thinking, understanding of the impact of cultural and context-related factors on communication, collaboration in different settings, as well as honing digital literacies. The program is coherent and allows smooth student progression. In light of its character, the small number of teaching staff involved, and projected, regular meetings of lecturers as well as their ongoing collaboration, overlap between different courses is unlikely and should not constitute cause for concern. Like other courses in the university, the program will be subject to regular monitoring and periodical review, with internal (i.e., administrators, teachers, students) and external (representatives of the labor market, advisors, examiners) taking part in the process. Input from other institutions (i.e., University of Central Lancashire, British Council) will also be taken into account.

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 UCLan Cyprus.

1.4. Information for the effective management of the program is not yet collected because the course is not running. However, careful analysis of the policies 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

- consistent involvement of internal and external stakeholders, including students, in ongoing program monitoring and review;
- inclusion of a course focusing on English in academic contexts, which, among others, is aimed to develop students' awareness of academic expectations in higher education and, possibly, tailor the topics covered to shared interests and professional goals of a specific cohort;
- detailed policies for dealing with academic misconduct;
- policies in place to monitor students engagement and attendance;
- detailed description of the specific course modules (objectives, methodology, resources, assessment, etc.).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- more pronounced and explicit focus on the development of learner autonomy and adept use of language learning strategies.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

1.6 Practical training

1.7 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.

Based on the application, it is clear that this foundation program offers student-centered learning opportunities that support students' individual and social development. In the detailed and professional course description, student interaction and communication are emphasized, which, by definition, lead to not only autonomous language learning but also autonomous language use. It is praiseworthy that self-related issues are considered, including ensuring that students' self-confidence related to both academic and social contexts will be enhanced. In addition, general critical thinking skills and specific academic skills are carefully considered, and teaching processes are in place to ensure that students' skills are developed in an adequate but individualized way. The design of the program ensures that it helps students adjust to academic life in Cyprus. Teaching methods, tools, and materials are modern, as virtual learning environments are used, and online learning is encouraged through Lynda.com.

Assessment procedures are in line with the requirements. They are consistent and transparent, and they take into account the fact that skills are developed in an integrated way. The tutors are well-versed in the relevant issues pertaining to differentiation in teaching that are based on the learning styles and individual needs of students. During the review, it became apparent that tutors have various teaching strategies in implementing personalized learning by encouraging student self-reflection, setting individualized goals and expanding critical thinking skills.

The application contains well-structured mitigating circumstances for student assessment.

Strengths

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

The committee identified a high number of strengths in the application, from which the most important issues are as follows:

1. The proposed procedures for needs analysis allow for student-centered teaching and learning.
2. Varied forms of assessment are used: formative, summative, portfolio.
3. The detailed SWOT analysis presented in the application.

4. The way that integrated skills development is proposed.
5. Emphasis on independent learning in various modes (individual, pair- and group-work).
6. Assessments align well with learning outcomes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. The use of AI for portfolio assessment could be more sophisticated.
2. More comprehensive approaches to fostering the effective use of language 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	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Not applicable
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.

Recruitment and selection procedures aim to ensure impartial evaluation based on merit, devoid of bias or favoritism. Based on the documentation, the institution upholds transparency and reliability throughout the recruitment and hiring process.

The strategic development plan identifies professional development needs and resources are allocated based on the development plan. In future development opportunities, participation in Erasmus programs is considered.

Most lecturers in the programme are permanent members of staff. They are all highly qualified (many with PhDs or in the process of completing their doctoral degrees). They have extensive experience teaching English and relevant expertise in teaching English for Academic Purposes.

Dr. Andia Michael (PhD) is the Academic Coordinator for English Foundation Year. She has an MA Comparative Literature and PGCert of Learning and Teaching in Higher Education. She has wide ranging teaching experience in higher education, including experience in the UK.

Lyda Eleftheriou holds two MA degrees: MA in English Literature and MA in English Studies. She is Senior Fellow of Advance HE and leads the Academic English Lab. Her research interests include a range of areas that are pertinent to current pedagogical challenges in English for Academic Purposes.

Maria Georgiou completed an MA in TESOL at UCLAN (UK) and has over 10 years of English teaching experience.

Alexander John Kakoullis has an MA in Intercultural Communication (PhD candidate at UCLAN, UK).

Dr. Asma Al-Hawi (PhD) completed an MA in Linguistics.

Dimitra Dimitriou (PhD in progress) has an MA in English Language and Literary Studies.

Andri Fanou has CELTA qualifications and a postgraduate diploma in communications.

Many of the lecturers are active researchers and publish and present their work in academic forums.

Teaching quality is monitored annually through Module Feedback Questionnaires (MFQs), student representative interviews and the information and reflections in the module review document. Quality of teaching is enhanced through the feedback students provide and via suggestions and actions recommended by the Student Experience and Engagement Committee (SEEC), course leaders and the head of department. It is apparent that staff members are encouraged to conduct research because their PhD topics examine themes relevant to the Cypriot higher education context.

Teacher development opportunities are available through the staff mobility scheme; topics include using AI in teaching and cross-cultural awareness. There is a staff development budget.

The criterion concerning synergies of teaching and research is not relevant for this type of programme, as research is not part of the job description/requirement for most staff members.

Strengths

Some of the interview questions are pre-determined and are the same for all candidates to maintain consistency and comparability in the hiring process. Unsuccessful applicants can get feedback. Lecturers are highly qualified and have extensive EAP experience.

Teacher development opportunities are available through the staff mobility scheme; topics include using AI in teaching and cross-cultural awareness. The university collaborates with several companies, institutes NGOs and charities in the areas of education. Teachers are encouraged to complete their PhDs at UCLAN and they have special fees. There is a mentoring and peer observation scheme in place and lecturers can apply for HEA membership.

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	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Not applicable

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.

Students applying for this course must have a Certificate of English Language proficiency at level B1, according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Only English Language certifications approved by the Council of Ministers are recognised. The application includes other criteria which are contradictory to the requirements (B2 level proficiency). Admission guidelines with regard to disabilities do not seem to be inclusive and place the responsibility on the student for adapting to the university requirement rather than on the university to remove barriers to participation.

The application includes a detailed description of the staff of the recruitment and admissions department, which seems to be an efficiently organized and well-staffed unit.

The University has sufficient administrative mechanisms in place for monitoring and supporting students, and the different support mechanisms and administrative structures are elaborated in the application in detail.



Students' attendance is closely monitored and student support officers contact and advise students with low attendance. Counseling services for students with difficulties are available. Student support services also liaise with academic advisors, module convenors and course leaders in case students experience challenges and need assistance.

The documentation assigns credits to the modules albeit notional ones. The programme is not credit bearing and for this reason no credits should be allocated to specific modules.

Strengths

The description for identifying and supporting at risk students shows that the institution has robust mechanisms in place to assist students if they experience academic challenges. The individual academic advisor system is a clear strength of the programme.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The institution should consider revising their admission policy with regard to disabilities.

No credits (not even notional ones) should be included in the application form.

Make sure that relevant admissions criteria are listed in all relevant parts of the application form.

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.

UCLan provides its students with a well-organized and student-centered environment that takes into account the students' preferences and needs. This is justifiably reflected in the high percentages of its graduate students' satisfaction.

The English Foundation Course will be organized by UCLan's Language Academy and is bound to provide the students with every possible advantage, such as guest lecturers, collaborating practitioners, workshops, and projects, to ensure an environment that will allow its students to further develop their language skills and enrich their social life.

The students are provided with a free wi-fi service and are also offered IT support along with digital platforms and applications like Blackboard, Turnitin, and Microsoft Office 365. Also, the learning environment is technologically enhanced through e-learning materials and online academic English learning packages. Moreover, in the conversation club, the students can regularly engage in discussions on topics that comply with the students' preferences and needs, giving them a way to practice what they have learned but not in a strictly structured way. In that process, teachers function as facilitators, ready to adjust and replace anything that does not seem to work. Thus, the students can feel they are offered a well-rounded education as they are expected to use authentic material to activate prior language schemata, building new knowledge upon existing knowledge.

The library counts 300,000 online sources, including e-books, e-journals, and databases, which are annually renewed, providing its students with online 24/7 access to useful resources. It also offers 49 study spaces of a 143-seating capacity, and 2 silent study rooms of 12 and 24 seating capacities, as well as technological equipment, such as 20 open access PCs, 20 laptops available on loan and 2 printers. Through Blackboard and Lynda.com, instructors are able to offer feedback as well as supplementary material like related online training and learning courses, video/audio/media files and web links, which further enrich and assist the learning process.

In terms of financial assistance, the university can offer its students a 70% scholarship based on grade or social criteria. Also, the university provides the students with discounts at collaborating companies. Through UCLan's Student Support Portal, students have easy online access to advice, support and guidance regarding student life, the Student Council and Student Clubs and Societies, and Career Hub. Another form of guidance can be obtained through the WISER application, which was constructed and targeted towards providing a

range of services from personalized feedback and individualized study to monitoring progress. WISER also offers students access to academic workshops and e-learning materials, which further assist with the lessons taught at the university. Moreover, students are provided with International Student Support services regarding their visas. Finally, the premises are equipped with disabled parking spaces and ramps facilitating mobility for students with special mobility needs, and students can be further assisted in terms of disability provisions and support. All in all, UCLan has an active student welfare mechanism to monitor the sufficiency of student support. It offers Counselling Services through its Cyprus Psychological Wellbeing and Counselling Centre, providing a friendly environment for students with academic or personal challenges.

Strengths

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

UCLan pays close attention to students’ preferences and needs.

UCLan offers Greek as a foreign language in the Language Academy.

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

C. 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 overall 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 UCLAN branch in Cyprus 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.



D. Signatures of the EEC

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

Date: 5th May 2024