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# External Evaluation Report (E-learning programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
University of Nicosia
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School of Humanities and Social Sciences
- **Department/ Sector:** Languages and Literature
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**  
**In Greek:**  
Programme Name  
**In English:**  
MA in TESOL (DL) (18 months, 90 ECTS, Cycle 2)
- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** Currently operating



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 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].



## A. Introduction

*This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.*

The committee was not able to visit the University of Nicosia due to the Covid19 pandemic. For this reason the evaluation was carried out remotely on Zoom. This posed no problems.

Committee members were provided with all the detailed documentation before the meeting, along with links to a small number of asynchronous classes. The Chair solicited questions from the committee members before the remote visit and compiled a master list of questions to ask the various groups. The committee met the day before the evaluation visit and discussed the questions we had prepared. George Aletraris from CYQAA outlined the procedure for the visit.

Throughout the day on 10 December 2020 the committee met with UNIC's senior management team, the departmental/faculty management team, teachers on the BA in English Language and Literature, teachers on the MA TESOL and students. The focus in this report is on the MA TESOL Distance Learning programme.

The committee was not able to visit the learning, teaching and accommodation facilities. However, a video-based campus tour was provided, which gave a good idea of the quality of the facilities.

## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Bas Aarts (Chair)</b>	<b>Professor of English Linguistics and Vice-Dean</b>	<b>University College London</b>
<b>Marjolijn Verspoor</b>	<b>Professor</b>	<b>Universities of Groningen/Pannonia</b>
<b>Anastasios Tsangalidis</b>	<b>Professor</b>	<b>Aristotle University of Thessaloniki</b>
<b>Iordanis Kavathatzopoulos</b>	<b>Professor</b>	<b>Uppsala University</b>
<b>Marios Rialas</b>	<b>Student</b>	<b>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

*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 procedures for quality assurance are sound.
- The programme is well-designed and coherent, with clear aims and objectives which reflect the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe.
- The semester structure is clearly specified ensuring smooth transitions. Students follow mandatory courses and can choose from a range of elective courses.
- Course content is monitored internally and externally.
- Public information about the programme is clearly presented and available.
- The programme's information is effectively managed.

### Strengths

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

- The policies for quality assurance concerning the study programme, design and development are well-documented.
- Courses are monitored internally and externally according to international standards.
- Courses are continually evaluated and updated where needed.
- Student feedback is taken seriously and is acted upon at different levels.
- There is clear information about student career pathways.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Although staff seem to stay in touch with some graduates, perhaps relations with alumni can be intensified.

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



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

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

### Sub-areas

- 2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology
- 2.2 Practical training
- 2.3 Student assessment
- 2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

### 2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

#### Standards

- *The e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*
- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
  - *among students*
  - *between students and teaching staff*
  - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of e-learning 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 e-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

- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on e-learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *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 e-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.*

## 2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

### Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with e-learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
  - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
  - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
  - ***Weekly schedule of interactive activities and exercises (i.e. simulations, problem solving, scenarios, argumentation)***
  - *Clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
  - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
  - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*

- *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
- *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *Is the nature of the programme compatible with e-learning delivery?*
- *How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- *How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- *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 process of teaching and learning is flexible and student-centred. A set of core courses is mixed with a variety of elective courses and students are expected to proceed as autonomous learners within their individual programme of studies.

We found that theory and practice are well-balanced.

The programme is compatible with e-learning delivery. However, DL students do not appear to have the opportunity to take part in actual teaching practice, e.g. visit schools, interact with students, etc.

Very good technical infrastructure updated regularly allowing smooth communication and cooperation as well as access to necessary materials and literature. Many years' experience in delivering DL courses and programmes.

### Strengths

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

- The theoretical part of the course is supplemented by practical considerations in terms of both research methodology and classroom practice, including internships. In a number of classes students are presented with different research tools and are also involved in various aspects of the TESOL practice.
- The technology used, the pedagogical methodology adopted and the assessment processes applied are generally compatible with each other.
- Cooperation and communication between teachers and students, and among students, is supported by the technology, for example through group work and peer-reviewing.

### 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.*

- An obligatory research thesis or dissertation seems to be the norm in many other European institutions, even if it is not an absolute requirement at EQF7; this may be especially important for students wishing to pursue further studies at the PhD level. As the programme stands, it is not clear how an optional thesis can be replaced by a couple of electives.
- The Department may want to consider introducing some quantification of the learning activities in the text of the syllabi. This will make the calculation of ECTS workload more transparent and available to students.
- The Department may wish to consider anonymising examination material to ensure the blind application of grading criteria.
- Peer-review is used in many courses of the programme, e.g. portfolio, but still many students do mainly solitary work because they work, or they prefer to follow their own pace and time schedule.
- Peer-reviewing procedures which are more adapted to this reality should be developed and used, for example asynchronous and progressing mutual assessment of assignments and tasks.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Partially compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	Partially 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.*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *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:*

- *Is the teaching staff qualified to teach in the e-learning programme of study?*
- *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.*

There are special organisational structures and procedures that support teachers in the use of ICT for learning in DL courses.

To ensure that objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme can be obtained and sustained, the Department has tenured an adequate number of staff members in the relevant subdisciplines, with an appropriate range in rank.

The recruitment process is very transparent and clear and promotion criteria explicitly take three areas of service into consideration: research, teaching and administration, showing that good teaching is recognized and rewarded.

Several grants, (international) projects and publications show that staff members are involved in innovation, and during the on-site visit several innovative teaching methods were mentioned with the use of new technologies. There were publications on the link between education and research, and staff publications are related to the courses they teach.

### Strengths

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

- teachers who are experienced in delivering e-learning courses with excellent research output and professional qualifications
- compulsory introductory and regular training, as well as continuous support to teachers to take advantage of the possibilities of technology in distance learning
- many international collaborations
- staff with expertise and publications in learning technology
- staff with degrees from universities across the world

### 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.*

More focus is needed on the pedagogical advantages and challenges of technology used in e-learning education, and on the interaction of learning and teaching by the use of technology.

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

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

#### 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

##### Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2 Student progression
- 4.3 Student recognition
- 4.4 Student certification

##### 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

###### Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

##### 4.2 Student progression

###### Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

##### 4.3 Student recognition

### Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
  - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
  - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

## **4.4 Student certification**

### Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

### Findings

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

The committee found that the student admission process appears to be carefully thought out and appropriately publicised. These involve both special rules and dedicated committees for the admission of applicants to different courses.

A set of rules for monitoring student progress and for the recognition of work done in other institutions have been set up and are available to students.

A number of alternative certification documents are available, as appropriate certification may be required in different circumstances. In all cases, the relevant rules seem to be quite straightforward, directing students to the competent authorities.

### Strengths

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

- The admission regulations provide for a number of alternative means of certification of English language proficiency, which may be easily accessible to applicants from distinct backgrounds.
- Detailed special provisions are in place for applicants with various disabilities
- The Diploma Supplements issued for both degrees follow the relevant guidelines and provide sufficiently detailed descriptions of the content of each course of study and of the individual student's accomplishments.

### 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 alternative means of certification of English language proficiency (which may indeed be useful to applicants from different backgrounds) are not always equivalent and some confusion may arise as to the exact level of attainment required.
- On the other hand, when it comes to the Leaving Certificate minimum requirements, the information provided ("15 out of 20") may not be sufficiently informative to applicants from different educational backgrounds.

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

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

## **5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)**

## Sub-areas

- 5.1 **Teaching and Learning resources**
- 5.2 **Physical resources**
- 5.3 **Human support resources**
- 5.4 **Student support**

## 5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

### Standards

- *Weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The e-learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
  - *Simulations in virtual environments*
  - *Problem solving scenarios*
  - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
  - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
  - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
  - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for e-learning, which is responsible for the support of the e-learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*
- *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 e-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.*

Well-functioning activities and materials are planned using the possibilities of ICT. A special pedagogical planning unit is in place to support students and teachers participating in e-learning education.

The committee found that the Department offers a vast amount of resources and material for students that they can work on. The University's library offers online solutions to the students and ensures them access to online material that is useful for their academic progress. Also, the instructors provide students with additional material that offers them guidance and understanding of the courses. Students shared that they are very satisfied with their instructors' guidance and support. Instructors are also in frequent contact with the students personally, as necessary, and sometimes on the recommendation of student affairs. Also, the infrastructure of the University seems to be able to handle any increase in the number of students. The courses are successfully held online due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the live sessions and recordings are available to students at any given time. Students expressed satisfaction about the flexibility of the online course.

### Strengths

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

- The e-Learning Pedagogical Support Unit of the university provides continuous support to the students.
- Good library facilities are also available for DL students.
- Students are very satisfied with the support and material that they have at their disposal.
- The infrastructure of the university is state-of-the-art.
- There are more than enough classrooms and labs for courses and other activities (e.g. research, studying, etc).
- Student mobility within the EU is active for both studies and internships.

### 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.*

- Since technology is changing fast creating new possibilities for education but also new risks, an explicit plan is necessary for regular revision of its use and for the corresponding learning activities.
- Student mobility for studies outside the EU is low and can further be improved.

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

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

## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

### Sub-areas

- 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements
- 6.2 Proposal and dissertation
- 6.3 Supervision and committees

### 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

#### Standards

- Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.
- The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:
  - the stages of completion
  - the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme
  - the examinations
  - the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal
  - the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree

### 6.2 Proposal and dissertation

#### Standards

- Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:



- *the chapters that are contained*
- *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
- *the minimum word limit*
- *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

### 6.3 Supervision and committees

#### Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
  - *regular meetings*
  - *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
  - *support for writing research papers*
  - *participation in conferences*
- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?*

#### Findings

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

n/a

#### Strengths

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

n/a

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.*

n/a

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
6.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

**7. Additional for joint programmes (ALL ESG)**

Sub-areas

- 7.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement
- 7.2 The joint programme

**7.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement**

Standards

- *The joint programme is offered in accordance with legal frameworks of the relevant national higher education systems.*
- *The terms and conditions of the joint programme are laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement in particular covers the following issues:*
  - *Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme*
  - *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation, including funding, sharing of costs and income, resources for mobility of staff and students*

- *Admission and selection procedures for students*
- *Mobility of students and teaching staff*
- *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures*
- *Handling of different semester periods, if existent*

## 7.2 The joint programme

### Standards

- *The partner universities apply joint internal quality assurance processes.*
- *The joint programme is offered jointly, involving all cooperating universities in the design, delivery and further development of the programme.*
- *Aims and learning outcomes are clearly stated, including a joint syllabus, language policy, as well as an account of the intended added value of the programme.*
- *Study counselling and mobility plans are efficient and take into account the needs of different kinds of students.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *Does the joint study programme conform to the requirements of a study programme offered at the specific level?*
- *Is there a system that assures the quality of joint provision and guarantees that the aims of the programme are met?*
- *Do the mechanisms for ensuring the quality of the joint study programme take into consideration the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)? Are they adopted by all the universities involved?*
- *Is the division of responsibilities in ensuring quality clearly defined among the partner universities?*
- *Is relevant information about the programme, e.g. admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures, well documented and published by taking into account the specific needs of students?*
- *What is the added value of the programme of study?*
- *Is there a sustainable funding strategy among the partner universities? Explain.*

### 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.*

n/a

### Strengths

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

n/a

**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.*

n/a

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
7.1	Legal framework and cooperation agreement	Not applicable
7.2	The joint programme	Not applicable

**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.*

Staff in the Department are well-qualified to teach on the programme: many have studied abroad, have international connections, and are research active.

Regarding the content of the programme, as we have remarked in a few places, we feel that academically it is essential for students to write a thesis. We understand the practical reasons why the Department has made the thesis optional, but academically there is no justification for not implementing an obligatory thesis component.

Student numbers are quite large on the MA TESOL (DL). We were pleasantly surprised to hear that satisfaction is high among the students. Several students reported that they were pleased that they could attend the course in their own time, and that the programme was just right for them.

Student support services are excellent. Feedback protocols are good.

Training and support for teachers and students should focus more on pedagogical aspects of ICT, and more attention should be given to communication and cooperation among students, for example by strengthening the use of the peer-reviewing method.



The committee did not have the opportunity to look at students' work: assessments, projects, examination papers, essays, etc., so it was impossible to take a view of the academic level of the students' work or of the quality of the feedback given to students. Even though it may not strictly be part of the requirements on this occasion, the Department might consider making some student work available for future evaluations.

UNIC's resources (campus, accommodation, e-learning technology, library, etc.) are excellent and provide an attractive working environment for students on the programme.

The committee very much enjoyed its visit to the Department of Languages and Literature and would like to express its gratitude to administrators and faculty for their hard work in compiling the documentation.



#### D. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Professor Bas Aarts</b>	
<b>Professor Marjolijn Verspoor</b>	
<b>Professor Anastasios Tsangalidis</b>	
<b>Professor Iordanis Kavathatzopoulos</b>	
<b>Mr Marios Rialas</b>	

**Date:** 12 December 2020