Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 1.07.2024

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  University of Cyprus

- **Town: Nicosia**

- **Programme of study**
  Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

  In Greek:

  Τμήμα Κοινωνικών και Πολιτικών Επιστημών

  In English:

  Department of Social and Political Sciences

- **Language(s) of instruction: Greek**

- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek:
  In English:

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*

- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*

  - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*

- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*

- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The department faces a number of challenges, some outside of their control. They are aware of a lack of resources for covering the full teaching program. Greater funding could enhance their ability to offer all the modules of their curriculum, which would provide students with more options to select modules. We encourage the department to embed procedures to increase EDI and balance the gender gap in the department.	Thank you for acknowledging the need for additional funding as the Department of Social and Political Sciences is one of the largest departments while being historically understaffed. The gender imbalance has been rightly noted. We try to ensure that, at least, the internal and external members of our promotion/hiring committees include female professors – although we recognize this is not in itself the solution. In our next hiring procedures, we will strongly encourage female applicants so as to increase the pool of female candidates.	Choose level of compliance:

2. Quality Assurance
   (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The department's environment is very conducive for high quality of research and teaching with impressing technological infrastructure, library, rooms etc. We believe that the quality of the assurance processes could be further improved, even though the department already addressed some of the issued from the previous evaluation. In particular, we recommend to think about a greater formalization of assessment procedures.	The Department frequently discusses and exchanges ideas on assessment procedures within its institutional framework. Nonetheless, we reiterate our commitment to further improve and systematize our assessment practices wherever feasible.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

3. Learning and Teaching
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
While the department is keen in offering a variety of substantive modules and different programs, they could certainly benefit from a broadening methodological training, i.e., methodological modules, courses, summer schools etc.	This comment is well taken as the department recognizes the value of methodological training. Additional discussions will be initiated toward improving specialization in methodological training. The department will initiate a discussion with faculty members who offer methods courses. As we discussed with the EEC in our final session, which included all programme coordinators in the Department, we will definitely explore systematizing our methods courses across the different programmes in the Department and/or at the School level, and may indeed end up including an optional methods course down the road, if an intra-Departmental or intra-School one is agreed upon.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

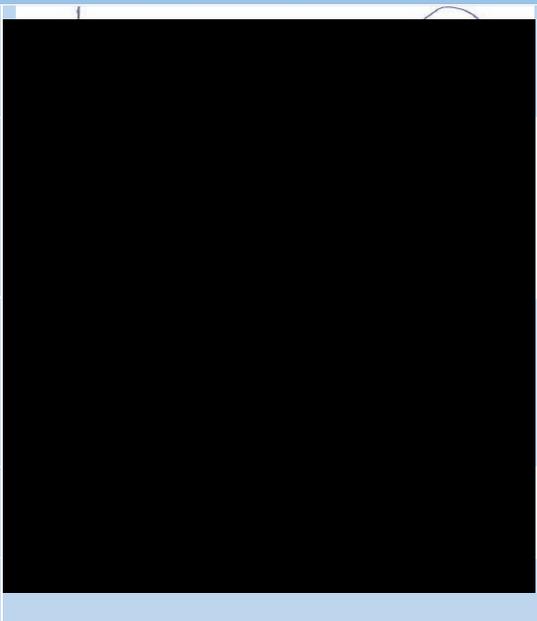## 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
(ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Overall, we found that the teaching staff is very qualified to cover the curriculum. However, as already mentioned in the previous evaluation, the number of permanent teaching staff remains insufficient in adequately supporting the program. From our visit we understand that the department is among the most understaffed in the University. This hinders the implementation of the department's strategic goals.	Thank you for your observation. This is a significant problem which needs to be addressed at the highest level. The Department has recently made a strong case for more faculty positions to cover the needs of all programmes.	Choose level of compliance:

7. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Compared to the issues raised in the previous evaluation, we found that the department has undertaken important steps to improve its strategic planning with short- and medium term goals. The department's environment is very conducive for high quality of research and teaching with impressive technological infrastructure, library, rooms etc. We believe that the quality of the assurance processes could be further improved, even though the department already addressed some of the issued from the previous evaluation. The department is well positioned in the Greek student market. They attract a very high number of Greek applicants. Furthermore, the department is improving its attractiveness by offering courses in English as	As our department moves forward, offering programs in English constitutes one of our future strategic goals. Our new MA in Peace, Conflict and Democracy constitutes a first step toward that direction. In addition, certain courses are offered in English at the undergraduate level. We appreciate the EEC's useful feedback while documenting initiatives undertaken by the Department of Social and Political Sciences. We are especially grateful for their recognition of the understaffing of the Department and the effects that understaffing has on all of our programs.	Choose level of compliance:

recommended in the previous evaluation. We believe that the coherence and compatibility with other programs is high. The programs cover the important subfields in political science. They are aware of a lack of resources for covering the full teaching program. Greater funding could enhance their ability to offer all the modules of their curriculum, which would provide students with more options to select modules. We recommend thinking about establishing more formal procedures for student assessment. To further improve the quality assurance system, we encourage the department to consider implementing a formal mechanism for student dispute settlement.		

B. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	*Position*	*Signature*
Professor Philemon Bantimaroudis	Department Chairperson	
Assistant Professor Antis Loizides	BA in Political Science Coordinator	
Lecturer Antria Christofidou	BA in Sociology, Coordinator	
Lecturer Costas Constandinides	BA in Journalism, Coordinator	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

Date: Click to enter date