

Doc. 300.3.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

(Departmental)

Date: 07.07.2025

- Higher Education Institution:
 University of Nicosia Athens Branch
- Town: Athens
- School/Faculty: Law
- Department: Law
- Programme(s) of study under evaluation
 Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1

In Greek:

Νομικής (4 Έτη, 240 ECTS, LLB)

In English:

Law (4 Years, 240 ECTS, LLB)

• Department's Status: New

KYΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS 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. 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.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the department in each assessment area.
- In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:
 - the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC
 - the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)
 - the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC
- The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.3.1).
- In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.

Introduction

We would like to express our deep gratitude to the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for its professional and diligent approach in providing constructive feedback and recommendations aimed at further improving the operations of the Department of Law at the UNIC Athens branch.

We are extremely pleased to note that the EEC has wholeheartedly endorsed our work and has recommended the accreditation of the Department. We also note that every area, section, and subsection of the report has been rated by the EEC as Compliant. Indeed, the average numerical score across all assessment areas is 4.98 out of a maximum of 5. As the EEC noted: "The main conclusion of the External Evaluation Committee is a clear one: UNIC Athens (University of Nicosia) is **compliant** in all the areas and sub-areas that were evaluated. The EEC does not attach any conditions to its positive assessment."

In the remainder of this report, we provide, for each section:

- 1. A list of the strengths noted by the EEC.
- 2. A list of the EEC's recommendations together with our responses.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

The Department of Law has been considered to be fully compliant in all criteria of this section. Out of 15 sub-categories it has been evaluated in all 15 of them with the highest grade (5) which indicates full compliance. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has confirmed the the Department of Law at the University of Nicosia is a well established academic unit with a strong track record of delivering high-quality legal education. The new Department at UNIC Athens is expected to mirror or adapt these existing structures and practices, ensuring consistency and alignment with the standards already in place in Nicosia. Based on the evidence provided and the discussions held during the site visit, the Committee identified several notable strengths that support the successful establishment and operation of the Law Department at UNIC Athens:

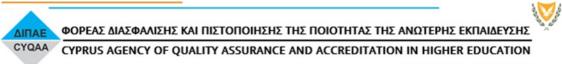
- The programme is underpinned by a well-articulated mission and a set of strategic objectives, supported by mechanisms for ongoing monitoring and evaluation of progress toward institutional and academic goals.
- The curriculum is well-conceived and pedagogically sound, reflecting both academic rigor and practical relevance, and benefiting from the Department's prior experience in delivering the Greek Law stream.
- The core faculty comprises established members who have successfully delivered the Greek Law stream at the University of Nicosia. Further academic appointments are anticipated to support the expansion and ensure adequate teaching capacity at the Athens campus.
- The Department has a history of collaboration with a range of external stakeholders, including professional bodies and regulatory authorities. This collaborative approach is expected to continue and adapt effectively within the Greek higher education and legal context.
- The Department employs appropriate systems for data collection, monitoring and internal evaluation, which support compliance with regulatory standards and inform ongoing academic development.
- The Greek Law stream has consistently attracted student interest, and the establishment of a physical presence in Greece is expected to enhance visibility and accessibility, thereby increasing enrolment and responding to the growing demand for legal education in the Greek language.

These strengths provide a solid foundation for the successful implementation and growth of the LLB programme (Greek Law) offered by the Law Department at UNIC Athens.

The EEC has further made suggestions, <u>noting that these</u> (and <u>subsequent recommendations</u>) do <u>not reflect deficiencies identified by the Committee.</u> Rather, they are forward-looking suggestions <u>intended to support the successful establishment</u>, <u>development</u>, and <u>long-term sustainability of the new Department</u>. These recommendations aim to ensure that the strong foundations laid by the University of Nicosia are effectively translated into the Greek context and that the Department is

well-positioned to meet both academic and professional expectations. These recommendations are discussed below:

Recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
While UNIC Athens will follow the standards and central oversight of the University of Nicosia, the Committee recommends a gradual development of local academic governance structures tailored to the Greek legal and educational context. This will ensure responsiveness to local needs and regulatory expectations.	We fully agree with the recommendation of the EEC. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not necessitate any action today on behalf of the Institution. However, we note that the University has already set local academic governance structured tailored to the Greek legal and educational context, which will apply immediately and which are part of the University's overall submission. It is clear that this is an important recommendation, with which we fully concur, and will take all necessary action in order to confirm that this is the case in practice.	Choose level of compliance:
Given the forecasted student intake, careful planning is needed to ensure timely recruitment of qualified academic staff with expertise in Greek law. The Committee recommends that UNIC Athens develop a phased staffing strategy aligned with student growth projections and curriculum delivery needs, alongside a plan for staff induction, mentorship and academic development. Strengthening and actively cultivating external partnerships within Greece and beyond with legal institutions, bar associations,	We fully agree with this recommendation of the EEC. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not necessitate any action today on behalf of the Institution. However, it is clear that this is also an important recommendation, and that we will ensure that this is implemented in practice in the best possible way. We thank the EEC for their comment, with which we fully agree. This is what the University of Nicosia already does as also acknowledged by	Choose level of compliance: Choose level of compliance:





is another area that the Committee finds critical to enhancing UNIC Athens academic credibility and market position. These relationships could support student placements, guest lectures, research collaboration, and improved graduate employability. As the programme expands, there is an opportunity to develop targeted career support services at UNIC Athens. The Committee recommends the introduction of tailored employability initiatives such as internship schemes, career guidance, alumni networks, and soft skills training aligned with the expectations of the Greek legal profession.	for the Branch to follow along the same path. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that will not be immediately implemented, but requires significant effort in the upcoming years, which we will definitely focus upon so as to ensure that this is implemented in practice. We fully agree and can confirm that the Branch will have equivalent mechanisms as the University currently has which are fully in line with the EEC's recommendations.	Choose level of compliance:
While the curriculum benefits from existing models, the Committee encourages continued efforts to contextualise course content, case studies and teaching methodologies to reflect the evolving legal landscape in Greece. This includes integrating emerging areas of Greek legal practice, EU law developments, and comparative perspectives where relevant.	We thank the EEC for this comment. We fully agree and will ensure that there is continued investment in the further contextualization of the course content along the lines suggested by the EEC. Again, we note that as the EEC stated, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not necessitate any action today on behalf of the Institution, but requires continued effort and we will definitely ensure that this is implemented in practice.	

2. Quality Assurance

Sub-areas

- 2.1 System and quality assurance strategy
- 2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study

The Department of Law has been considered to be fully compliant in all criteria of this section. Out of 30 sub-categories it has been evaluated in all 30 of them with the highest grade (5) which indicates full compliance. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has confirmed that the mechanisms for quality assurance are what would be expected for the type of programme in Cyprus and internationally. An important role is played by the Annual Programme Evaluation Process (APEP), which is a holistic exercise (KPIs, self-evaluations, feedback from students, teaching observations). Several levels of internal monitoring mechanisms for the quality of the programme and the department are included (Programme Evaluation Committee, Department Internal Quality Assurance Committee (DIQAC), School Internal Quality Assurance Committee (SIQAC)).

Recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The Committee considers that	We fully agree with the	Choose level of compliance:
it is important to reflect upon	recommendation of the EEC.	
the implication of externalizing	As the EEC noted, this is a	
on a sufficient level the	forward-looking	
evaluation of the department	recommendation. However,	
and the programme. It	we note that the University	
appreciates that external data	already adopts an internal	
are used as a benchmarking	peer-review system every 2.5	
instrument, but it can be useful	years which includes external	
to have an external view on	feedback from colleagues	
the department or programme	from other universities and	
by involving members who are	that these suggestions are	
external to the department and	seriously taken into account in	
to the University. Therefore, it	the further development of the	
is important to maintain the	programme and the	
External Team of Reviewers in	Department as a whole.	
a continuous monitoring and	Moreover, there is an	
quality assurance programme.	international advisory	
	committee for the programme.	
	It is clear that this is an	





important recommendation, with which we fully concur, and will take all necessary action in order to confirm that this is the case in practice als in the Branch.	
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3. Administration

The Department of Law has been considered to be fully compliant in all criteria of this section. Out of 11 sub-categories it has been evaluated in 10 of them with the highest grade (5) and in the remaining 1 with the second highest grade (4) which indicates full compliance. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has confirmed that the administrative structure aligns with both the relevant legislation and the Department's mission. The administrative team provides strong support for the smooth operation of the Department. The EEC was impressed by the way the administrative staff is organised. During the discussion with only the administration staff members, their apt capabilities clearly came to light.

Recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
As UNIC Athens is still in the early phase, it is hard to judge at this point in time how teaching and administrative staff, as well as students, will be able to actively participate in or contribute to the management in Athens to a satisfactory manner, following established procedures. The EEC recommends this will be watched closely, in order not to create a gap in this respect between the parent institution and Athens.	We fully agree with the recommendation of the EEC. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not require immediate actions on behalf of the Institution. It is clear that this is an important recommendation, and will take all necessary action in order to confirm that this is the case in practice also in the Branch.	Choose level of compliance:

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Planning the programmes of study
- 4.2 Organisation of teaching

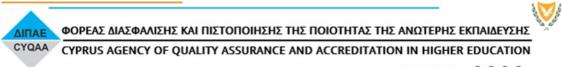
The Department of Law has been considered to be fully compliant in all criteria of this section. Out of 13 sub-categories it has been evaluated in all 13 of them with the highest grade (5) which indicates full compliance. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has confirmed that teaching is a priority task amongst the UNIC Athens academic staff and is also treated like that. The teaching burden is quite quantitatively and substantively (sometimes a wide range of expertises) demanding, but gives great satisfaction to the student population, at least the representatives that the EEC could speak with. The (relatively) small number of students per class group is important in this regard. The EEC learned that there is a maximum of 40 students in a classroom in the LLB programme. This allows continuous assessment of student's progress, the organisation of midterm exams, etc. The faculty members are committed to the student cohort. There is a good framework for further support of the students on a financial level (with a number of scholarships and subsidies available), psychological level and the level of extra-curricular events, which also enrich an academic educational programme. It should be an ambition to, mutatis mutandis, create the same vibrant environment at UNIC Athens. The Parent Institution demonstrates to be in touch with innovation on societal, technological and educational levels. Apart from the technical support mechanisms (Turnitin, etc.), the University of Nicosia also integrates new and emerging technologies in its operations. Distance learning is well in place and reaches an important portion of the students. Online databases are an important investment of the Parent Institution and it is important to operationalise this also on the Athens campus. The Department takes a forward-looking stance on disruptive but inevitable technologies, such as genAl, in the educational environment. Meanwhile, the University has reflected upon the development of soft skills. There have been fierce reflections and re-actualised guidelines on the use of AI as an instrument for papers. All this can be transposed and will be beneficial to UNIC Athens. Thus, UNIC Athens benefits from the advantages of being small and big (at least the Parent institution) at the same time. The small scale of the Department also underlies the vulnerability of the learning and teaching programme. The programme of UNIC Athens is very well reflected and established, given it's already been running in Nicosia for a number of years. There is a good balance between mandatory courses (162 ECTS) and elective courses, and the Committee was impressed by the number of elective courses, but it understands that the choice is somewhat de facto limited to the students who want to safeguard access to the Greek Bar Association. Also, certain electives are not offered every year, which the EEC notes to make logistical sense.





Recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The Committee appreciates that during transition stage the number of electives will be more limited at UNIC Athens, but that the ambition is to rotate them in the same way as it is done with elective courses offered at the Nicosia campus. However, it is important that the students are provided with relevant information in due time. The EEC notes that the students confirm there is proper support in place for them to choose their electives	We fully agree with the recommendation of the EEC. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not require immediate action on behalf of the Institution. It is clear that this is an important recommendation, and will take all necessary action in order to confirm that this is the case in practice also in the Branch as it is in the parent institution.	Choose level of compliance:
The Parent Institution must make sure that unavailability of one or more of staff members does not disrupt the teaching and learning. This is particularly critical during the transition period, with only 4 members of teaching staff in the first year and 8 in the second year; this should be closely monitored.	We thank the EEC for their comment, with which we fully concur. This is what the University of Nicosia already does as also acknowledged by the EEC, and the intention is to follow along the same path. We fully agree that this requires close monitoring on our behalf, while at the same time acknowledging that this does not require any immediate action on behalf of the institution.	
The EEC notes that there is no final paperwork, such as a thesis, which is written as 'crystallisation' of the academic education programme. The UNIC Athens may consider the opportunity for students that writing skills could be bundled into a larger paper, as is the case in most legal programmes in the European Higher Education Area. The Committee understands the fact that these writing skills are integrated in the Advanced	We thank the EEC for their suggestion, which is noted with interest. Whereas, it is not typical in Greek legal education to offer an extended legal research paper as an option, we intend to discuss this internally and consider how this could be best incorporated in a forward-looking reconsideration of the existing requirements.	





modules in the last year of the curriculum		
The Committee wants to emphasise the importance of not 'locking up' the programme into exclusively Greek law, without having an open perspective. Therefore, it recommends bringing in English terminology for students who are studying Greek law in Athens, paying attention to comparative approaches. An elective course on comparative law or the involvement of foreign guest professors is beneficial for broadening students' perspectives. The background of numerous faculty members, who often have an international profile, should be utilised in order to guarantee this open perspective. This is even more significant for UNIC Athens than in the Nicosia campus, as Greek students will be studying in Greece. It will also facilitate and encourage those students being able to engage in the Erasmus exchange programme	We fully agree with the recommendation of the EEC. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not necessitate any action today on behalf of the Institution. However, it is clear that this is an important recommendation, with which we fully concur, and will take all necessary action in order to confirm that this is the case in practice.	

5. Teaching Staff

The Department of Law has been considered to be fully compliant in all criteria of this section. Out of 7 sub-categories it has been evaluated in 6 of them with the highest grade (5) and in the remaining 1 with the second highest grade (4) which indicates full compliance. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has particularly noted the dedication and the quality of the teaching staff. The teaching staff are specialists in their area of law. The teaching staff support students who are in need of assistance, provide additional help where it is feasible.

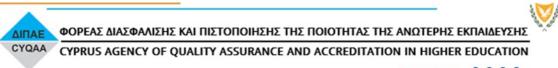
Recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The EEC highlights the potential risks associated with the Department's small size in its early stages, advising the University to closely monitor this during the initial year(s). Additionally, the EEC emphasises the need for the University to carefully track the workload of both teaching and administrative staff to maintain a sustainable balance between the various work commitments.	We fully agree with the recommendation of the EEC. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not require immediate actions on behalf of the Institution. It is clear that this is an important recommendation, and will take all necessary action in order to confirm that this is the case in practice in the Branch aligning it with the parent University current practices.	Choose level of compliance:

6. Research

The Department of Law has been considered to be fully compliant in all criteria of this section. Out of 9 sub-categories it has been evaluated in all of them with the highest grade (5) which indicates full compliance. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has confirmed that the Department operates under a coherent set of research regulations and procedures that provide clarity on expectations, ethical standards and output evaluation. The same frameworks will be applied to staff at UNIC Athens. A combination of internal funding schemes and access to competitive external grants (including EU-funded research) supports faculty research. The University of Nicosia has a strong track record in securing external funding, which is expected to include and create additional opportunities for staff based at the Athens campus in due course. There is a demonstrable commitment to fostering a research-active environment. Faculty are encouraged to engage in research through institutional incentives, such as research time allocations and financial incentives for SCOPUS-indexed outputs, and participation in collaborative projects. Academic staff have produced a consistent stream of peer-reviewed publications across a range of legal fields. Many are published in respected national and international journals, and staff members also contribute to edited volumes, conference proceedings, and applied legal research with societal impact. Overall, the Committee considers the Department to have a strong foundation for research excellence and a clear capacity to expand its scholarly contributions through the new Athens campus.

Recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
As the UNIC Athens campus develops, the Committee recommends the articulation of a site-specific research strategy that complements the broader institutional framework while reflecting national priorities and opportunities in Greece.	We fully agree with the recommendation of the EEC. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not require immediate actions on behalf of the Institution, but rather continuous engagement with the implementation of the strategy. It is clear that this is an important recommendation, and will take all necessary action in order to confirm that this is the case in practice in the Branch.	Choose level of compliance:





The Department is encouraged to continue expanding its international research collaborations and networks, particularly with Greek academic institutions and professional bodies, to enhance visibility and impact.	We fully concur with this recommendation. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that will not be immediately implemented, but requires significant effort in the upcoming years, which we will definitely focus upon so as to ensure that this is implemented in practice.	
As the faculty at UNIC Athens grows, the Committee recommends dedicated support for early-career researchers, including mentoring programmes, grantwriting workshops, and clearer pathways for integrating research into teaching and career progression.	We fully agree and can confirm that the Branch will have equivalent mechanisms as the University currently has which are fully in line with the EEC's recommendations, and will continue to work towards continuous improvement.	

7. Resources

The Department of Law has been considered to be fully compliant in all criteria of this section. Out of 7 sub-categories it has been evaluated in all of them with the highest grade (5) which indicates full compliance. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has confirmed that the parent institution has already demonstrated its full commitment to the success of UNIC Athens through the physical infrastructure which are in the final stage. According to the video presentation, it will be a modern and attractive center for academic and campus life.

Recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The full dependence of UNIC Athens on the parent institution requires a full commitment of the parent institution. While appreciating that the parent institution has demonstrated this full commitment and ambition with regard to UNIC Athens already, it is important to have strict standards for the allocations of material, human and physical resources.	We fully agree with the recommendation of the EEC. As the EEC noted, this is a forward-looking recommendation that does not require immediate actions on behalf of the Institution. It is clear that this is an important recommendation, and will take all necessary action in order to confirm that this is the case in practice in the Branch aligning it with the parent University current practices.	Choose level of compliance:

B. Conclusions and final remarks

We wish to thank the EEC for the professionalism they showed during the execution of their duties. The detailed discussion of all issues pertinent to the degree under evaluation, led to a fruitful discussion between the members of the EEC and the official representatives of the University and faculty members of the programme. The discussion proved to be extremely helpful due to the expertise of the members of the EEC and their willingness to share their suggestions and recommendations for further improving the programme. The demanding set of questions allowed us to elaborate on the pedagogical foundations of the programme and expand upon the content of the application form.

We have assessed and reviewed carefully the EEC report. We are pleased to note that the report is extremely positive, and we thank the EEC for their generous and positive comments and evaluation. We note that the Department of Law has been considered to be fully complaint in all criteria. Out of 92 sub-categories it has been evaluated in 90 of them with the highest grade (5) and in the remaining 2 with the second highest grade (4) which indicates full compliance.

We thank the EEC for noting that: "The main conclusion of the External Evaluation Committee is a clear one: UNIC Athens (University of Nicosia) is compliant in all the areas and sub-areas that were evaluated. The EEC does not attach any conditions to its positive assessment. We want to point out a number of strengths and make a few recommendations. The EEC was impressed by the university's and staff's dedication, the quality of the staff members, and the overall student engagement. They highlighted the Department's commitment to academic excellence and its alignment with professional standards. The faculty members have an excellent track record, with international experience. The visit affirmed the university's efforts in fostering a forward-thinking academic environment, which the EEC believes will continue to thrive in the future. The EEC recognises the University of Nicosia – as the 'parent institution' – has made substantial investments (in preparations, buildings, people) in order to give UNIC Athens a flying start. A second strength worth mentioning is the supportive atmosphere created by both staff and students. The EEC was particularly impressed by the palpable enthusiasm displayed across the department. Faculty members were noted for their approachability and passion for teaching, while students showcased a strong sense of engagement in their studies. The positive energy within the department was seen as a key factor in fostering an inspiring learning environment, which the EEC commends as a major strength. A third strength lies within the logic of the well-planned 'move' of the LLB programme (Greek Law) to Athens: it's bringing Greek law from Cyprus to Greece. The EEC is convinced of the feasibility of the operation, although it has no crystal ball. Relocating to Athens also comes with a risk, at the time of the writing of this report (beginning of June 2025). The concern is the evolving legislative landscape, particularly recent regulatory changes that could impact the department's position. These external factors, beyond the department's control, pose potential challenges to its sustainability. As a fourth strength the EEC identifies a robust institutional framework and quality assurance systems inherited from the parent institution. Dedicated academic leadership is present and a clear plan for recruiting qualified staff with the necessary expertise is in place. This also creates a research environment with growth potential, backed by existing structures, funding opportunities, and institutional support.". We fully acknowledge that all Department are always amenable to further improvement, and indeed we have been constantly working towards further improving our Department since it was initially accredited. Accordingly, the suggestions for further improvement offered by the EEC are taken very seriously into account. We consider the suggestions of the EEC as very helpful and we will try to incorporate them to the widest extent possible. Having said that, we acknowledge that, as the EEC has noted, its recommendations do not reflect deficiencies identified by the

Committee. Rather, they are forward-looking suggestions intended to support the successful establishment, development, and long-term sustainability of the new Department. These recommendations aim to ensure that the strong foundations laid by the University of Nicosia are effectively translated into the Greek context and that the Department is well-positioned to meet both academic and professional expectations. These recommendations have already been addressed in the relevant sections above.

We would like to thank the committee once more, both for the positive and fair evaluation, as well as the constructive comments and suggestions and the fruitful discussion that we had with its members during the lengthy virtual visit. We also thank the committee for the time and thoroughness it dedicated to the evaluation of the Department and for helping us improve the Department through the suggestions made. We consider this endorsement under the conditions of external peer review as a resounding vote of confidence in the Department and its potential for academic success. We finally acknowledge the clear positive evaluation and recommendation for accreditation of the Department.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Achilles C. Emilianides	Professor, Dean	
Christina Ioannou	Associate Professor, Associate Dean	
Irini Stamatoudi	Professor, HoD	
Vagia Polyzoidou	Associate Professor, Associate HoD	

Date: 07.07.2025

