



Doc. 300.3.1

Date: Date

External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
National and Kapadistrian University Athens
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School/Faculty
- **Department:** Department of Pedagogy and Primary Education
- **Department's Status:** New

- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation:**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle) Undergraduate Study Programme in Pedagogy and Primary Education

Programme 1

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

Programme 2

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

Programme 3

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name



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].



Department's programmes (to be filled by the CYQAA officer and verified by the EEC):

DEPARTMENT	PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

A. Introduction

The EEC appreciated very much the opportunity to visit the site, to meet with the Vice Rectors, academic and administrative staff, stakeholders, former students of Athens, and the theology programme. The overall programme for the day was well scheduled, though more time with the former students could have been allowed. That said, we did ensure in the session that everyone had an opportunity to speak. The overall programme for the day was divided into initial departmental oversight regarding mission, QA, resources and so on. The other element was the programme that will be commented on in a sister document to this one. Our main concern prior to our visit, was the overwhelming experience in the paperwork that the details of the branch campus had not been sufficiently elaborated. A great deal of the paperwork was given over to the history of the NKUA and its status. We therefore came to the site visit with many questions that we are very keen to ensure could be answered. Our understanding even before arriving is that the proposers had been made aware that more detail was required to meet the CAQA criteria for both Department and Programme operations. Our team necessarily had spent a great deal of time on the paperwork we were provided as part of the review process, and had many questions requiring clarification. We were greatly relieved that the various inputs were sufficient for us to feel more confident that the overall programme purpose, quality assurance, resources, staffing and so on have now been considered. Though we have requested some further elaborations, we feel that the programme will be important, viable, properly resourced and housed. The strength of support at the highest of levels in NKUA was evident in terms of the delegation, the physical presence and commitment amongst academic, administrative, and senior leadership with only some staff being brought into the meeting via zoom. Our questions and conversations were mutually respectful. We felt that we could raise issues, and have these clarified, or that documents would be provided to enable the EEC to conclude its work. Overall, this investment offers the potential for new academic posts at the university of considerable status, and thus new route for social mobility.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Susan Lee Robertson	Professor	University of Manchester
Josefina Sala-Roca	Professor	Autonomous U of Barcelona
Martin Valcke	Professor	University of Ghent
Theano Giagkou	Student	University of Cyprus

1. Department's academic profile and orientation
(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

Quality indicators/criteria		
1. Department's academic profile and orientation		
1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)		1 - 5
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	2
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	3
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	2
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	4
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Department's development strategies.	4
1.1.6	Stakeholders such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Department's development strategy.	4
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Department's academic development is adequate and effective.	3

The written application highlights the experience and profile of the parent department in Greece; however, it does not sufficiently address how this experience will be adapted to the Cypriot context. During the site visit, the mission of the Cyprus Branch was clarified, although some aspects remained vague or lacked specificity. We encourage the implementation team to consider these issues.

For the moment the mission is not supported by a formal document, strategic planning lacks clearly defined goals and review mechanisms, and the role of local stakeholders remains largely at the level of securing access to schools and the location of the Department. We appreciated

that the stakeholders expressed strong support for NKUA's establishment in Cyprus and conveyed their willingness to collaborate to ensure the successful implementation and future growth of the project. They also expressed their readiness to contribute to the Department's development strategy, particularly in relation to school internships and professional practice placements.

Quality assurance is referenced through MODIP, the central quality assurance unit of NKUA, but no details were provided regarding how quality assurance processes will be implemented locally at the Cyprus Branch. It appears that quality monitoring relies primarily on student surveys, with no mention of self-assessment by academic staff or programme leaders, which limits the comprehensiveness and effectiveness of the quality assurance system.

Academic staff contribute to programme development through the annual general assembly and via representation of academic divisions in monthly meetings, ensuring a degree of academic participation in governance.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

- **Mission and Strategic Planning:** The institution should formalise the mission of the Cyprus Branch in a clear, written document and ensure that it is contextually adapted to the Cypriot educational, cultural, and professional environment. Strategic planning should be strengthened by defining concrete objectives, implementation steps, review mechanisms, and indicators for monitoring progress over time.
- **Stakeholder Involvement:** Although local stakeholders expressed support for the initiative, the institution should establish structured mechanisms to involve them in the ongoing development and review of the programme. Their contribution should go beyond implementation support and include co-design of key aspects, especially regarding school internships and practical training components.
- **Quality Assurance:** The institution should provide a detailed plan on how quality assurance will be implemented locally at the Cyprus Branch. This should go beyond reliance on student surveys and include mechanisms such as periodic self-assessment by academic staff, internal academic reviews, and structured feedback from stakeholders and internship partners.
- **Academic Governance and Participation:** While the involvement of academic staff through assemblies is positive, the institution should ensure that staff from the Cyprus Branch are actively involved in decision-making processes and curriculum development from the outset, and that their input is systematically considered in governance structures.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.2 Connecting with society		1 - 5
1.2.1	The Department has effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities.	N/A
1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	N/A
1.2.3	The Department ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	N/A

1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	N/A
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None of the elements listed in points 1.2.1 to 1.2.4 are clearly addressed in the application. Where relevant reflections are provided, they refer to the department's activities in the Greek context, not to the Cyprus Branch. There is no evidence of specific mechanisms to assess societal needs in Cyprus, to communicate effectively with the public or with graduates, or to ensure that the department's activities will have a positive impact on Cypriot society. As a result, these aspects remain underdeveloped and disconnected from the local context. These matters were not discussed during the site visit. Nevertheless, considering the experience and institutional capacity of the parent university, we are confident that all these processes will be appropriately developed and implemented over time.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.3 Development processes		1 - 5
1.3.1	Effective procedures and measures are in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure that they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach, carry out research and effectively carry out their work.	3
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	3
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	4
1.3.4	The funding processes for the operation of the Department and the continuous improvement of the quality of its programmes of study are adequate and transparent.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

In relation to aspects 1.3.1–1.3.2, the application form and development plan do not provide detailed information on the procedures for attracting and selecting teaching staff in Cyprus. During the site visit, the Head of Department stated that the same procedures used at the Greek branch would be applied.

The application states that 40 new students are expected to enrol in the programme. Although this is not explicitly stated, it is understood that these students will primarily be Cypriot or Greek nationals, given that the programme will be delivered in Greek.

Findings

The Department of Pedagogy and Primary Education of NKUA states its mission in the application; however, no formal document is provided in which this mission is officially recorded or endorsed. The absence of such a document raises concerns regarding the institutional alignment, visibility, and strategic communication of the department's goals.

The application indicates that, in order to achieve this mission, the faculty's strategic plan is based on several pillars: strengthening innovative teaching methods, integrating experiential skills training and evidence-based curricula, reinforcing international collaborations, and fostering innovation and the translation of research into educational practice. Nonetheless, this strategic orientation is not supported by a formally adopted or publicly available document.

The Department's strategic planning does not clearly outline short-, medium-, and long-term goals and objectives, nor does it describe any mechanisms for their periodic review and adjustment. This limits the ability to assess the coherence and responsiveness of the department's strategic direction over time.

The application states that the department strives to maintain excellence through the collaboration of all stakeholders. However, it does not specify how each group of stakeholders is expected to contribute to this goal. As a result, their role in the strategic planning process remains underdeveloped, and there is no evidence of structured mechanisms to engage them meaningfully in the development, implementation, or evaluation of the department's strategic objectives — even less so in terms of how they could contribute to monitoring these strategies over time. During the meeting with stakeholders, the President of the Nicosia Greek Schools Board of Governors stated that they are willing to make their schools available to NKUA for practicum placements, research activities, and other forms of collaboration. In the same vein, the other stakeholders present at the meeting also expressed their willingness to collaborate with NKUA to support the development of its teaching and research programme in Cyprus.

Although the application states that the mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators to support the department's academic development is adequate and effective, the only concrete tool mentioned is the course evaluation surveys completed by students. No additional sources of data or systematic processes for broader analysis are described, which limits the capacity to monitor academic quality and support evidence-based planning in a comprehensive manner.

The application refers to the implementation of the parent university's internal quality assurance system at the Cyprus Branch, coordinated by MODIP, the Quality Assurance Unit of NKUA. In the visit, it was said that the same model will be applied to Cyprus branch.

The department's connection with Cypriot society cannot be assessed, as no evidence has been provided in the application. This suggests either that relevant information was omitted in the written application submitted, or that such a connection does not currently exist. In both cases, the lack of documentation limits the ability to evaluate the social relevance and local engagement of the proposed Cyprus Branch.

After the visit the NKUA provides an annual recruitment plan that ends on the 4th year with a total of 8 professors.

Strengths

The Department of Pedagogy and Primary Education of NKUA has extensive prior experience in Athens and is well-positioned to provide academic supervision and mentoring to support the development of the Cyprus Branch.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- **Mission Statement:** The Department should formalise its mission in an official document that is clearly endorsed by the institution and publicly available. This would help ensure

institutional alignment, strengthen the visibility of the Department's goals, and improve strategic communication with internal and external stakeholders.

- **Strategic Planning:** It is recommended that the Department develop and adopt a formal strategic plan that outlines its short-, medium-, and long-term goals. This plan should include specific objectives, timelines, and indicators, as well as mechanisms for periodic review and revision. Making this document publicly available would also enhance transparency and accountability.
- **Stakeholder Involvement:** The Department should define structured mechanisms for involving stakeholders in the development, implementation, and monitoring of its strategic goals. This includes clarifying the roles of different stakeholder groups and creating regular channels for their input. The positive attitude of stakeholders observed during the site visit should be channelled into formal collaboration agreements, particularly in areas such as practicum placements, research cooperation, and community engagement.
- **Quality Assurance System:** The Department should provide a detailed description of how the internal quality assurance system will be implemented specifically at the Cyprus Branch. This should include local procedures, responsible units or staff, and the resources allocated for quality assurance. Clarifying how MODIP's processes will be contextualised and operationalised in Cyprus is essential to ensure their effectiveness.
- **Data and Evidence-Based Planning:** The Department should broaden its quality monitoring tools beyond student surveys by incorporating multiple data sources such as peer reviews, staff self-assessments, academic performance indicators, and stakeholder feedback. A more comprehensive and systematic approach to data collection and analysis is necessary to support effective academic development and strategic decision-making.
- **Connection with Cypriot Society:** The Department is encouraged to establish and document concrete links with Cypriot society, including partnerships with local educational institutions, professional bodies, and community organisations. Providing evidence of local engagement would help demonstrate the relevance and added value of the Cyprus Branch to the local context.
- **Recruitment Planning:** While an annual recruitment plan has been submitted following the visit, the Department should ensure that it remains realistic, time-bound, and aligned with the educational needs of the Cyprus Branch. It is recommended that the recruitment strategy also consider the inclusion of faculty with knowledge of the Cypriot educational system and experience relevant to the local context.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	Partially Compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	Partially Compliant
1.3 Development processes	Partially Compliant

2. Quality Assurance

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8)

Sub-areas

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

Quality indicators/criteria		
2. Quality Assurance		
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy		1 - 5
2.1.1	The Department has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of the Institution's strategic management.	4
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	4
2.1.3	The Department's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.	4
2.1.4	The quality assurance system adequately covers all the functions and sectors of the Department's activities:	
2.1.4.1	Teaching and learning	4
2.1.4.2	Research	N/A
2.1.4.3	The connection with society	N/A
2.1.4.4	Management and support services	N/A
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	4
2.1.6	Students' evaluation and feedback	4

During the site visit, specific questions were asked regarding the internal quality assurance system. The University explained that it has an internal quality assurance framework in place, which includes the evaluation of teaching through student surveys conducted each semester. These surveys focus on students' perceptions of the courses and the performance of individual instructors.

However, there was no clear indication that other areas—such as research activities, student support services, or institutional management—are systematically evaluated, although it is likely that NKUA has plans or mechanisms in place to address these aspects.

The results of the teaching evaluations do not appear to have any direct financial consequences for academic staff. The only recognition mechanisms mentioned were two annual awards for excellence in teaching at the department level and two additional awards at the university level. Similarly, research performance does not seem to be formally linked to any salary-related incentives. Its main impact lies in enhancing academic staff members' CVs and potentially improving their chances for promotion within the academic career structure.

On the other hand, the panel also inquired whether the institution had a clear policy in place to prevent any form of discrimination against students or staff. The representatives confirmed that such a policy exists and specifically mentioned the presence of a Gender Equality Committee as part of the institution's commitment to promoting equity and inclusion.

2. Quality Assurance

2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study

1 - 5

2.2.1	The responsibility for decision-making and monitoring the implementation of the programmes of study offered by the Department lies with the teaching staff.	4
2.2.2	The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Department are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	4
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective, which have been presented and discussed.	4
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	4
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	2
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	4
2.2.7	The Department publishes information related to the programmes of study, credit units, learning outcomes, methodology, student admission criteria, completion of studies, facilities, number of teaching staff and the expertise of teaching staff.	3
2.2.8	Names and position of the teaching staff of each programme are published and easily accessible.	3
2.2.9	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	4

2.2.10	The Department flexibly uses a variety of teaching methods.	5
2.2.11	The Department systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.	4
2.2.12	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	3
2.2.13	The Department ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and/or international practices, particularly:	
2.2.12.1	Building facilities	4
2.2.12.2	Library	4
2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	4
2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	4
2.2.12.5	Academic support	4
2.2.14	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.	4
2.2.15	The Department's mechanisms, processes and infrastructure consider the needs of a diverse student population such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities.	3
2.2.16	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.	4
2.2.17	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.	N/A
2.2.18	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff, enables continuous and effective feedback to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.	N/A
2.2.19	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.	N/A
2.2.20	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.	N/A

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

NKUA has an internal quality assurance system that operates independently of the academic department, with established and widely used protocols. Although full details of these protocols have not been provided, the Committee places its trust in the validity of the process, given that NKUA is an accredited university with a recognised quality assurance framework.

Findings

In the application form, it is stated that the Provisional Administration of the Undergraduate Study Programme (USP) in Cyprus Branch, and the (Provisional) Academic Council, are responsible for the procedures for the prevention and handling of plagiarism, making use of all available technological tools. Nevertheless, no specific plagiarism detection software has been mentioned as being available to the teaching staff, nor is it clear what procedures are currently in place at the Athens Branch.

The application form also outlines the procedure through which students can submit complaints. During the site visit, we were informed that there is a digital platform allowing students to submit complaints anonymously, and that a protocol exists for addressing such cases. However, it remains unclear how complaints made by academic staff are handled. Nonetheless, we trust that NKUA has established protocols for such situations and that these will be implemented at the Cyprus Branch as well.

The names and academic positions of the teaching staff for each programme are included in the application form; however, there is currently no website where students can access this information because the program has not been approved yet. Moreover, the application does not specify which courses will be delivered by the newly recruited faculty members based in Cyprus. That said, we rely on the information provided by the Head of Department during the visit, who confirmed that, by the end of the implementation period, 70% of the teaching will be delivered by Cyprus-based faculty and 30% by faculty from the Greek Branch, and that all teaching will be conducted face to face.

During the visit, the Department informed us that the Quality Assurance Unit at the Greek Branch collects and analyses graduate employment data. However, it remains unclear whether this information is made publicly available. They also informed us that data from the Cyprus Branch will also be collected and analysed.

The programme's infrastructure and internal procedures appear to take into account the needs of students with disabilities. However, it is unclear what specific support measures are in place for international students. During the visit, the institution also clarified that the programme will not offer a part-time study option.

Strengths

NKUA has an established internal quality assurance system and a dedicated central office (MODIP) that processes and evaluates information independently from the academic departments. The fact that this system will also oversee the teaching activities at the Cyprus Branch provides an additional guarantee for the quality and consistency of academic delivery across campuses.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- **Flexible Study Options:** While the programme currently does not plan to offer part-time studies, it is recommended to evaluate the potential demand for more flexible study options in the future, particularly to accommodate diverse student needs.
- **Graduate Employment Data:** The institution should make publicly available the data collected and analysed by the Quality Assurance Unit regarding graduate employment outcomes, for both the Greek and Cyprus branches. This would improve transparency and provide valuable information to current and prospective students.

- **Broadening the Scope of Quality Assurance:** The institution could expand its internal quality assurance framework to include the systematic evaluation of key areas beyond teaching, such as research activities, student support services, and institutional governance. Clear procedures, indicators, and review mechanisms should be established and made publicly available to ensure transparency and continuous improvement.
- **Anti-Discrimination Policies and Structures:** The existence of a gender equality policy and a dedicated Gender Equality Committee is a positive step. However, the institution should develop and implement a broader set of anti-discrimination policies that go beyond gender, addressing other potential grounds for discrimination. It is also recommended that the implementation of these policies be actively monitored across both the Greek and Cyprus branches.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	Compliant
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study	Compliant

3. Administration (ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
3. Administration		1 - 5
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	4
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of specified procedures, in the management of the Department.	4
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	5
3.4	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Department's council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	5
3.5	The Department applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	4
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	4
3.7	The Department's council operates systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the law and / or the constitution of the Department without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	5
3.8	The manner in which the Department's council operates and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	4
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	4
3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	4

3.11 Internationalization of the Department and external collaborations. 5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Given that the Department has not yet been established all we can do is assume that the processes that are in operation in the home campus of NKUA will be transposed to the new branch campus in Nicosia. In their paperwork and also in the presentations to us on the site visit, these are well developed in the home campus and have also passed accreditation procedures applied in 2021.
ter text.

Findings

On our site visit the Vice Rectors and various administrative personnel were able to provide us details of the overall structure that will drive operations in Nicosia. We felt confident that the administrative staff are there to support the establishment of this new branch campus. We also were reassured that the engagement of the academics in the ongoing governance of the Department is in place.

Strengths

Click to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Click to enter text.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
3. Administration	Compliant

4. Learning and Teaching (ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

Sub-areas

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

Quality indicators/criteria		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.1 Planning the programmes of study		1 - 5
4.1.1	The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study.	3
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	4
4.1.3	Intended learning outcomes, the content of the programmes of study, the assignments and the final exams correspond to the appropriate level as indicated by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	3
4.1.4	The programmes of study are in compliance with the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	N/A
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	3
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>The EEC has made the assumptions that the practices in NKUA will transposed into the cyprus branch.</p>		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.2 Organisation of teaching		1 - 5
4.2.1	The Department establishes student admission criteria for each programme, which are adhered to consistently.	N/A
4.2.2	Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	5

4.2.3	The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	4
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Department has regular and effective communication with their students, promoting mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship.	N/A
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	N/A
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	4
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	4
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	3

The EEC is – for some indicators - only able to indicate N/A since the department – in terms of its staff resources and students - does not exist at the time of the evaluation. Nevertheless, an evaluation could be carried out given the extensive information being provided about the way NKUA sets up the Learning and teaching approach in the Greece branch. The scores in relation to assessment and evaluation are somewhat lower given the course level approach and – currently a lack of an overarching approach to determine whether the overarching competences are being attained.

Focus 4.1 Planning the programmes of study

Findings

- Prior to the on-site visit, the available documentation about the learning and teaching quality indicators was rather limited given the virtual nature of the department 'under construction'.
- Some admission requirements for students were discussed during the on-site meeting (mainly focusing on language requirements, given the Greek language being adopted in the programme).
- To develop a comprehensive picture about the department, the EC also consulted programme level documentation to be sure they did not miss specific information.
- The EEC was presented with a description of programme design and development in the NKUA context. The available documentation is convincing given it was input for the successful accreditation of the NKUA in 2021. Information about the programme was also found in the documentation in relation to the accreditation of the programme.
- In relation to the indicator "professional qualifications requirements", a screening of the sparsely available information about "research related competences" of future teachers does not show how the emphasis on strong academic foundations will result in teachers actively involved in research about their own teaching. Internationally this is promoted as inquiry-based teaching and data-driven decision making.

- The design and development process of the Greek programme presented its historical development and the subsequent changes it went through given new legislation related to teacher education requirements. These findings show the flexible and efficient way of working in the mother institution NKUA.
- The site visit was helpful to develop an understanding on the future design and set up of the department. This understanding starts from the projections related to the transfer of expertise, resources, course units, staff, practices ... from NKUA in Athens to the Cyprus branch.
- However, the concrete operational information as to the procedures, rules, systems ... that should fit the Cyprus context and legislation are yet not available. This puts the EEC in a difficult position to judge the standards in view of coming to conclusions about compliance.
- A key issue is the alignment of the Cyprus programme so that it follows the existing legislation and meets the professional qualifications as stated locally. During the site visit, the EEC was given additional information about the close connection between the Greek and Cyprus setting in terms of professional qualifications. Information about the legal framework was not available.

Strengths

- The physical meeting with the large number of stakeholders during the on-site meeting in Cyprus showed the very reactive way how the partners – academic and administrative - to take up the tasks to design courses that are adapted to the Cyprus context, and to develop local stakeholders.
- Moreover, the existing programme at NKUA mirrors key qualities that fit the above standards as to the alignment with the EQF, the development of a balance between theory and practice in the programme and the mechanisms to design, approve, monitor and periodically review the programme. This makes the EEC confident that the related competences, resources and capacities are and will be available in the Cyprus context.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The EEC suggests developing a paragraph about the compliance of the – to be operationalised - Cyprus programme with the Cyprus legislation.
- The EEC would encourage the identification of the specific courses and a description of the strategy that the department will follow to change/adapt the course content of specific courses to fit the Cyprus context.
- As will be elaborated further below in the section about research, the EEC invites the Cyprus branch to discuss the competence list put forward to ground the current programme. The EEC misses a competence related to research that could result in teachers adopting inquiry-based teaching approaches and data-driven decision making.

Focus 4.2 Organisation of teaching

Findings

- Prior to the on-site visit, the available documentation about the approach to learning and teaching in the Cyprus context was described entirely in terms of the past and ongoing processes, protocols, procedures, rules, ... in the NKUA context.
- The available documentation and also the on-site discussions with the NKUA partners confirmed the impression of the EEC that the design of the programme was largely course-

based and that related assessment and evaluation also followed this course-based approach to attain the overarching teacher competences to be developed. This confirmed the EEC that the assessment and evaluation policy remained limited to this course level and did not spill over to an evaluation of the competences.

- Since – also at the time of the site visit – the actual programme was not yet implemented, an operational picture of how teacher communicate with students, how the teacher-student relationship does look like, whether students experience the teaching and learning approach as student-centred, could not be evaluated. The EEC did build on the documentation about the NKUA programme to understand how this is currently looks like. Especially the meeting with the NKUA students and alumni helped developing a convincing and positive picture.

Strengths

- The available documentation mirrored a well-developed understanding of the requirements to set up a programme and deliver it through adequate teaching and learning approaches. This documentation grounded in a convincing way the expectation of the EEC that the partners were up to the task to set up the programme in the Cyprus branch.
- The NKUA programme – that can be labelled as a course-based programme design - mirrors an integrated assessment and evaluation approach and feedback practices.
- The discussion with NKUA students and alumni mirrored very positive experiences with the teaching and learning approach.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Though the EEC trusts that the implementation of the teaching and learning processes will result in a high-quality level outcome, some key recommendations are given:

- Firstly, the EEC wonders why the NKUA staff, and the future new staff would not grab the opportunity to move beyond a ‘copy paste’ approach of the existing NKUA learning and teaching approach. The new setting and context, the smaller number of students, the opportunity to work with new stakeholders, the different cultural and society context ... can be considered as a laboratory setting to redesign current courses and adopt some innovative directions to educate future teachers. This “lab-approach” to the development of the teaching and learning experiences in the Cyprus branch could even be beneficial for the Greece branch as it can become a research base that inspires the design and development of other programmes. In the context of teacher education this could result in the adoption of e.g., co-creation approaches, the lesson study plan (see Japan), the adoption of inquiry-based teaching by student teachers, the adoption of project-based education, etc.
- Secondly, the EEC would appreciate a commitment to a focus on assessment and evaluation at course level – how the teacher competences are being assessed at a holistic level so that we see how students evolve and are gradually able to function as competence autonomous teachers. During the site visit some teachers mentioned the potential of portfolio assessment. The EEC considers this as a promising approach since it helps to collect evidence that could be pulled together from the course level to come to conclusions at the competence level.



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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Partially Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	Partially Compliant

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5) (Fina)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

Quality indicators/criteria		
5. Teaching Staff		1 - 5
5.1	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	3
5.2	The teaching staff of the Department has the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	3
5.3	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Department's programmes of study.	N/A
5.4	The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study.	4
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	N/A
5.6	The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught by teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	3
5.7	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the programme of study.	4
5.8	Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	3

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The teaching staff listed in the application appears to meet formal qualification requirements and cover the necessary subject areas; however, they are primarily based at the Greek branch. On a site visit we understood that the two full time Cyprus professors will be full time in Nicosia while the others will be visiting. Is very important to assure face-to-face student support and contextual relevance. The application lacks information on the role, profile, and contribution of visiting or special teaching staff, and does not clarify the time commitment of Greek faculty to the Cyprus Branch. In the visit we request a table of the profile and conditions of the professors, but we are not confident they understood our request.

Also, write the following:

- Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of visiting Professors
- Number of special scientists on lease services

The application lists a total of 34 staff members from Greek branch: 12 Professors, 5 Associate Professors, 5 Assistant Professors, 11 Laboratory and Teaching Staff, and 1 Scientific and Teaching Staff. Over 4 year period eight new academic contract will be made.

Findings

Click to enter text.

Strengths

The academic staff listed in the application possess the formal and substantive qualifications required by national legislation to teach in the programme.

The number and subject areas of the teaching staff appear sufficient to support the delivery of the study programme, particularly during the initial implementation phase.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Local Academic Presence and Contextual Relevance: The institution should ensure the recruitment of permanent, full-time academic staff based in Cyprus to provide continuous face-to-face support to students and to ensure alignment with the Cypriot educational context. Faculty with specific knowledge of, or experience in, the Cypriot primary education system should be included in the core teaching team, as this is essential for a teacher education programme operating locally.
- Time Commitment and Presence of Greek Branch Staff: The application should clarify the actual time commitment, teaching load, and physical presence in Cyprus of staff from the Greek Branch. This is necessary to assess the sustainability and effectiveness of the academic support structure at the Cyprus Branch.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
Teaching staff number, adequacy and suitability	Partially Compliant
Teaching staff recruitment and development	Partially Compliant
Synergies of teaching and research	Partially Compliant

6. Research

(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)

Quality indicators/criteria		
6. Research		1 - 5
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	N/A
6.2	The Department consistently applies internal regulations and procedures of research activity, which promote the set out research policy and ensure compliance with the regulations of research projects financing programmes.	4
6.3	The Department provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	3
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development of students' research skills.	4
6.5	The results of the teaching staff research activity are published to a satisfactory extent in international journals which work with critics, international conferences, conference proceedings, publications, etc. The Department also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	3
6.6	The Department ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	N/A
6.7	The Department provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	N/A
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	3
6.9	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the teaching staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	3
<p>Given the status of the 'under construction' department in the Cyprus branch, the EEC could mostly not evaluate the level of compliance. In relation to some indicators, the EEC could conclude there is 'partial compliance', building on the track record of the Greek mother institution, the available information about funding and resources and the profile of Greek staff that initially will be 'flown in' from NKUA.</p>		

Findings

- The EEC built on the information available in the specific department file “strengths, e.g. examples” to develop a picture about the research orientation of the Cyprus branch. The related documentation mirrored the approach adopted in the Greek context and was as such confusing to come to conclusions about its compliance with the Cypriot quality indicators in view of this evaluation activity. The Cyprus branch - at the moment of the site visit - was still ‘virtual’ and under development.
- The above observation continued to affect the evaluative undertaking during the site visit. Though Greek staff was present that would be ‘flown in’ for teaching and learning activities, this did not help to understand the nature of the research orientation of the Cyprus branch.
- The EEC developed an understanding that at the start, teaching responsibilities of staff in the Cyprus branch could be mainly related to teaching. Nevertheless, given the academic orientation of the programme and the plans to hire new staff (N 8, during the next 4 years), a picture about the future research activities in the Cyprus branch is deemed necessary.
- Though it was – at the time of the site visit - not exactly clear what teachers would be ‘flown in’ from the NKUA campus, the available information about this staff (see CVs) demonstrated their active involvement in research (project applications, research activities, research communication, research publications). It is to be stressed that the available information mirrored an individual involvement in research of NKUA staff. Information about a programmatic approach was not available.
- The EEC screened the CV of potential teachers being involved in the programme of the Cyprus branch (<http://www.primedu.uoa.gr/an8ropino-dynamiko/melh-d-e-p/alfabhtikos-katalogos-melon-dep.html>). These CV’s are not up to date (e.g., publications of 2015 in press; no publications beyond 2021, or even without a publication track record).
- Despite the above, the local deployment of a research programme that fits the Cyprus branch and could be the basis to hire new staff, was not available.
- During the site visit, the university level presentations explicitly referred to the funding of research per year, for each staff member in the Cyprus branch by NKUA. It was also explicitly stated that teachers would be given sufficient time to set up and carry out research in the Cyprus branch. This was a reassuring piece of information that helped the EEC to look at the available information from different perspective.
- The active involvement of students in research is a critical element that could not be evaluated. Nevertheless, it was reassuring that an initially elective course about research methodologies was moved to the compulsory part of the Cyprus branch curriculum.
- The additional information provided after the on-site meeting clarified the number of staff to be hired to work permanently in the Cyprus branch.
- The EEC was surprised by this reduction in staff and puts forward some recommendations in relation to this extra information.
- There was no available information about the existence of an ethical committee in NKUA.

Strengths

- The available information – though not up to date - about the Greek staff that would be engaged in the Cyprus branch, shows that the staff can be considered as active

researchers; some of them with a strong track record and an established position as researchers with a (inter)national reputation.

- The available information demonstrates established approaches in the Greek branch about research related regulations, compliance, resources ...
- The NKUA research funding and monitoring mechanisms can be seen as an inspiring base to develop comparable approaches in the Cyprus branch.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The EEC recommends developing a basic research programme for the local Cyprus branch that mirrors the local society and cultural setting. This basic research programme could be helpful, to pull together the - sparse (N 8) – research resources. This programme is expected to be helpful to develop profiles for the future staff to be hired that take of – next to teaching and learning responsibilities – research responsibilities. The additional information obtained after the site visit about the lower number of staff to be hired reinforces the need to emphasize a programmatic approach to research that will inspire the profiles of new staff to be hired.
- The EEC considers active involvement of student teachers in research as a key asset of the future curriculum. This would align the local teaching and learning approach with international trends to see teachers adopting inquiry-based teaching practices and a data-driven approach. In this context the EEC also suggests looking at the list of competences and to include at programme level a research related competence to the list currently being developed and upgraded.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
Research mechanisms and regulations	Partially Compliant
External and internal funding	Partially Compliant
Motives for research	Partially Compliant
Publications	Partially Compliant

7. Resources (ESG 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

Quality indicators/criteria		
7. Resources		1 - 5
7.1	The Department has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Institutional and Departmental bodies.	5
7.2	The Department follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	5
7.3	The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	5
7.4	The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	5
7.5	The Department carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.	5
7.6	The Department's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	4
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	5
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>In the presentation at the site visit the Vice Rectors (2) presented financial information on the overall financing of the Department. The EEC note that money was allocated for scholarships, research and operations sufficient for the Department to be established and for the programme to be developed and delivered.</p>		

Findings

We were impressed with the site itself and in particular that this is made available from the premises of the Archbishop of Cyprus and specifically where the theology programme is delivered. In the short term, it is evident that the start of the Department can be collocated, however over time, it is clear that other premises as well as adjustments to enable access to the building for those needing assistance will need to be made. We were impressed with the access to broadband and the latest projection technologies. All rooms were airconditioned and this is important to enable year round access.

Strengths

The Department will – in the Theology Building - be located with many museums in the neighbourhood. We believe that the Department could access consider synergistic relationships that would enable access to resources such as museum artifacts and library materials that would augment their library holdings. We also are impressed that the library that services the theology programme will, along with the librarian, will be available to the Department. The Department will have access to significant library resources back into Athens; we noted a robust and wide-ranging set of resources that included CUP. The VPN also enables remote access.

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Areas of improvement and recommendations

These resources are adequate to the establishment of the Department – whose small staff (academic and administration) and first intake (40 students) will be accommodated in the current proposed site. However, we note that at full intake across 4 years, that 160 students – together with 60 theology students – this will take the building to full capacity and likely require additional space. We know the Vice Rectors are aware of these longer term issues.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
7. Resources	Compliant

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 Department under review may be achieved.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) appreciated the opportunity to review the documentation and to conduct an on-site visit as part of the evaluation process for the new Education and Pedagogical Programme for Primary Education in Cyprus.

First, we would like to note that the documentation provided for the initial review was extensive but included a considerable amount of historical information and content that was not directly relevant to our evaluative purpose. In order to fully understand the mission and overall strategic plan for the educational investment in Cyprus—particularly the specific developments planned over the next four years, such as staff recruitment and programme implementation—we found the documentation to be generally vague and underdeveloped. As a result, we brought a series of questions with us to the site visit.

During the visit, we were warmly received, and we were particularly impressed by the enthusiasm expressed at all levels of the team—academic, administrative, and senior leadership—who are committed to guiding this investment in Cyprus. Prior to our arrival, we had some concerns about the implications of a well-established and prestigious university from Athens setting up a branch campus abroad. However, we were enthused and engaged by many of the elements presented.

We believe that offering a lower-tuition teacher education programme in Cyprus, delivered by such a reputable institution as the University of Athens, is an exciting initiative. After speaking with students, stakeholders, administrators, and newly appointed academic and senior staff, we are confident that—despite many details still needing to be finalized—the programme has strong potential for success.

Nevertheless, we stress that pending details are critically important, and we urge the implementation team not to overlook key aspects related to programme execution. These include the need for a clear strategic orientation; comprehensive documentation outlining vision, stakeholder engagement, student recruitment and support strategies, scholarship allocation procedures, and other core components. Specifically we encourage the implementation team to prioritise the following as part of their work. This is important to secure success both in the early phase and at the completion of the first cycle of four years.

- **Mission and Strategic Planning:** The institution formalise the mission of the Cyprus Branch in a clear, written document and ensure that it is contextually adapted to the Cypriot educational, cultural, and professional environment. Strategic planning should be strengthened by defining concrete objectives, implementation steps, review mechanisms, and indicators for monitoring progress over time.
- **Staff appointment and local involvement:** - we understand that new appointments of staff will be dedicated and located on the Cyprus campus. This is vitally important to provide the quality of face to face teaching, student support and welfare, and ongoing programme development both amongst the academics and administrators and the wider community.
- **Stakeholder Involvement:** Develop a plan for the ongoing and timely use of the local stakeholders. This can include school internships and practical training components as well as parent organisations and teacher unions.
- **Quality Assurance:** The implementation team should develop a detailed plan on how quality assurance will be implemented locally at the Cyprus Branch. This should go beyond reliance

on student surveys and include mechanisms such as periodic self-assessment by academic staff, internal academic reviews, and structured feedback from stakeholders and internship partners.

- **Academic Governance and Participation:** The institution should ensure that staff from the Cyprus Branch are actively involved in decision-making processes and curriculum development from the outset, and that their input is systematically considered in governance structures



D. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Susan Lee Robertson	
Josefina Sala-Roca	
Martin Valcke	
Theano Giagkou	

Date: 29/07/2025

