ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

Doc. 300.3.1

Date: February 26, 2025

External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

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

- **Town:** Limassol

- **School/Faculty:** Social Sciences and Humanities

- **Department:** Educational Sciences

- **Department's Status:** New

- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation:**
  Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1
In Greek:
 Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα στην Ειδική Αγωγή και Νέες Τεχνολογίες
In English:
 MEd in Special Education and New Technologies

Programme 2
In Greek:
    Πτυχίο στην Προδημοτική Εκπαίδευση
In English:
 Bachelor in Early Childhood Education

Programme 3
In Greek:
Programme Name
In English:
 Programme Name

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

DEPARTMENT	PROGRAMMES OF STUDY

A. Introduction
This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The onsite visit took place on February 24 between 9.00 and 18.15, at the premises of the University of Limassol. The evaluation committee consisted of four professors and a student representative, who were present throughout the visit and of whom three professors are evaluating this Department. (The fourth professor evaluated only e-learning aspects within one programme.) One professor participated online due to illness. The committee was briefed and guided by a representative from the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education. The committee met with management, academic and administrative staff, as well as with active and graduated students. The visit also included a physical visit to the library and a virtual tour of the future premises to be built.

The visit started with an introduction, presentation, and discussion with the Rectorate, followed by a presentation and discussion with the Dean of the School of the Social Sciences and Humanities and the prospective Head of Department of Education. The visit continued with presentations and discussions of two programmes to be offered (currently under evaluation by this committee), involving both designated Head of Department and staff involved in the programme committees. This was followed by presentations and discussions with the Distance Learning Unit of the university. Thereafter, meetings were held with teaching staff, selected stakeholders, students, and administrative staff. The visit was concluded by an exit discussion with the Dean, the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance, the designated Head of Department, one of the Programme coordinators, a member of the Administrative Council, and the Vice Rector of International Affairs and Extroversion, the last two from the University of Attica with which one programme to be evaluated is jointly conducted.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Barbara Schulte	Chair	University of Vienna
Riikka Mononen	Member	University of Oulu
Ágnes Hódi	Member	University of Szeged
Angelina Angelidou	Student representative	University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar//// enqa.

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report refers to the Department as a whole (programmes offered, teaching staff, administrative staff, infrastructure, resources, etc.).*

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas and sub-areas.*

- *Under each assessment area there are quality indicators (criteria) to be scored by the EEC on a scale from one (1) to five (5), based on the degree of compliance for the above mentioned quality indicators (criteria). The scale used is explained below:*

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

- *The EEC must justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.*

- *It is pointed out that, in the case of indicators (criteria) that cannot be applied due to the status of the Department, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the Department's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality indicator.*

- *In addition, for each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements. In particular, the following must be included:*

  ### *Findings*

  A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

  ### *Strengths*

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

  ### *Areas of improvement and recommendations*

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

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), **which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report.***

- *__The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.__*

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**

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	
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.	N/A
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	5
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	4
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	5
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Department's development strategies.	5
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.	5

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

There are no deficiencies.

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar//// enqa.

Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.

2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

The Department will host two new programmes, one focusing on Early Childhood Education (BA; conventional programme) and one on Special Education and New Technologies (MEd; distance learning, joint programme with the University of West Attica in Greece). Additionally, it is planned that the existing Master programme focusing on Educational Management and Leadership will be moved into the Department of Educational Sciences.

Both early childhood and special/inclusive education are expanding fields, in the society/the labour market as well as in academia. They are therefore wisely chosen as they can fill important gaps in the higher education landscape. They are also compatible but sufficiently different to target different students and serve different needs. The decision to establish one on-site and one on-line programme is also convincing.

Within the School of Social Sciences and Humanities, there are some overlaps in academic and professional orientation with the existing Departments of Psychology and Economics. For example, questions concerning educational management and leadership are both relevant for the field of economics and education, so the Departments will be able to draw on each other's expertise. Obviously, as regards learning theories, cognition etc., Psychology is an important field to draw on for the discipline of Education, and there is already some collaboration going on between psychologists and educationists at the School.

Currently, a fourth Department, of Law, is to be established and under evaluation. While currently there might be less overlap in general academic and professional orientation between Law and Education, there are interesting international research (and teaching) trends regarding processes of juridification in education; also, a legal perspective is relevant for administrative and management issues in education. Therefore, we consider the establishment of these two new departments, and their compatibility, to be convincing.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

There are no incompatibilities.

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.	5
1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	N/A

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar//// enqa.

1.2.3	The Department ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	5
1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	5

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

There are no deficiencies.

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.	5
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	5
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.	5

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

There are no deficiencies.

Additionally, write:
- Expected number of Cypriot and international students
- Countries of origin of international students and number from each country

It is planned to target, in a first stage, mainly students from Cyprus and Greece, as all three programmes to be offered will be taught in Greek. At a later stage, it is planned to also add more international programmes as well as a PhD programme.

Currently, for the BEd, 30 students are expected to start the programme (20 in the fall term, 10 in the spring term); for the MEd programme, the application document indicates 100 students for the fall term and 50 students for the spring term, operating in several cohorts. The existing MSc in Education, Leadership, and Management has had 120 students per year.

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

- The strategies, plans, and policies for the new Department have been prepared in great detail and are very well aligned with the mission and vision of the University of Limassol as a whole as well as with its governance structure. It became clear during the site visit and from the provided materials that an orientation towards research is the backbone of the University and the prospective Department, guaranteeing a firm integration of latest research findings in the education and training of students.

- Department representatives and university management showed themselves to be highly aware, and knowledgeable of societal demands and how the university can contribute to these.

- Overall, there are impressive policies in place to attract and retain excellent academic staff, for example in terms of excellent working conditions and professional training provided. The CVs of the prospective Department's teaching staff reveal high academic achievements and excellent teaching competence.

- It is very likely that the Department's programmes will attract good students, however it could be spelled out in more detail how the Department will ensure that it is attractive for the best students in Cyprus and beyond.

- Regarding Criterion 1.1.1, we wish to point out that the mission statement has been made available to us in the provided documents and during the presentations and is both clear and convincing, however since the Department has not yet been established, it has not yet been made available to the public. If the mission statement as presented to us is made available to the public, we would assess it to be within the range of "5".

- Regarding Criterion 1.2.2, since the Department has not been established yet, we cannot yet assess the Department's communication with the public. What we can state is that the Department has already well-functioning networks with relevant stakeholders, so it can be expected that public communication will be well in place.

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

- Prospective Department representatives and staff as well as the University leadership and management show a strong commitment to building up a research-based university which can attract high-quality teaching personnel and good students.
- There is also a strong awareness of good governance and the involvement of the wider academic community, for example through the advisory board.
- Policies such as seed money for academic staff to conduct research and a very active centre for the facilitation of research (e.g. supporting applications for third-party funding) are very favourable to build up a strong intellectual environment.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- It would be beneficial to arrive at a consistent English name for the Department. We came across various names, such as Department of Education during the presentations and Department of Educational Sciences in the application document.

- As a more general note, we would like to point out that a more equal representation of genders in University leadership positions, and pointed measures to reach such a representation, would be advantageous.

- Regarding Criterion 1.1.3, short, mid and long term strategic goals were explained to us during the site visit but could be made more visible in the strategic documents.

- Regarding Criterion 1.1.6, we assess the extent of participation in the Department's development strategy to be of very good quality, however the involvement of students and stakeholders could be addressed more systematically.

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

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

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA
ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar//// enqa.

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

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	
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.	N/A
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	5
2.1.3	The Department's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.	5
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	5
	2.1.4.2 Research	5
	2.1.4.3 The connection with society	5
	2.1.4.4 Management and support services	5
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	5
2.1.6	Students' evaluation and feedback	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.	

There are no deficiencies.

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.	5
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.	5
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective, which have been presented and discussed.	5
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	5
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	5
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	5
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.	N/A
2.2.8	Names and position of the teaching staff of each programme are published and easily accessible.	N/A
2.2.9	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	5
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.	5
2.2.12	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	5

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	3
	2.2.12.2	Library	3
	2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	3
	2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	5
	2.2.12.5	Academic support	5
2.2.14	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.		5
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.		5
2.2.16	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.		5
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.		5

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

There are no severe deficiencies. The premises including library etc. need to be expanded and upgraded (see recommendations).

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

- The Department is part of a clear governance structure at the University of Limassol which includes distinct stakeholders, tasks, and responsibilities that are necessary to establish and maintain high-quality research and teaching.

- Various parts of the governance structure, e.g. in the form of the Senate, the Council, the Committees, and administrative units, will ensure that rules and procedures will be communicated and followed in the areas of teaching, research, outreach/connection with society, and management and support services.

- There is a clear policy regarding discrimination and grievances which is not only reactive in case of problems, but also proactive e.g. through organizing seminars and other events on the topic. Staff we talked with proved themselves to be very knowledgeable of relevant procedures.

- Student involvement in quality assurance takes place mainly through student evaluations of courses. Student feedback is taken very seriously by staff and programme committees, as well as analysed and addressed systematically in the subsequent development of the programmes.

- A diversity of external stakeholders are clearly involved. While the role of academic stakeholders in the form of the Advisory Board was clear, less detail has been provided as to how other external stakeholders will be part of the quality assurance process.

- There is a distinct awareness of academic and teacher professionalism meaning that teachers are entrusted with quality assurance in the programmes. Assessment and evaluation are taken very seriously, drawing on various forms and processes of assessment and evaluation that are in line with current developments. Also, there is a broad knowledge base among teaching staff regarding various teaching methodologies. There are clear policies in place regarding academic integrity issues.

- The Department keeps good track of its students and graduates by collecting and analysing relevant data.

- Technological infrastructure and academic support are excellent; physical resources such as classrooms, student space, and library fulfil the basic requirements but could be improved considerably. Plans for the new campus were presented and will substantially increase the quality of the physical infrastructure.

- The Department has developed excellent policies and procedures for safeguarding students' wellbeing and satisfaction, and for providing basic and additional, personalised support. The students' life situation is duly taken into account.

- Regarding Criterion 2.1.1, we would like to point out that the Department has presented to us a clear and cohesive policy for quality assurance which is also part of the institution's strategic management, however since the Department has not yet been established, we cannot assess whether and how this policy has been made public.

- Regarding Criterion 2.2.7 and 2.2.8, we would like to point out that relevant information has been provided to us and is convincing, however it is not yet published since the Department is not yet established. This is why we don't assess these criteria.

Strengths

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar/// enqa.

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

- Overall, both the documents provided and the information gathered during the onsite visit reflected a high awareness and engagement regarding a culture of quality in all aspects of the Department. The Department can draw on established rules and procedures.

- Staff have strong expertise regarding quality assurance in the teaching programmes.

- There is a very good network of stakeholders with a very beneficial range of different backgrounds, such as from the fields of practice, administration, and research.

- The Department provides excellent support both to students and to staff.

<u>*Areas of improvement and recommendations*</u>
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- Students' involvement in quality assurance could be expanded beyond student evaluations of courses, for example in having student representatives in (some of the) committees.

- Clearer procedures are recommended regarding external stakeholders' involvement in quality assurance, for example by assigning to them regarding mission and strategy of the Department.

- Staff's awareness of assessment and evaluation procedures was very high, however some additional training in these issues, including also shared reflection on these issues, could be beneficial. Discussion of assessment and evaluation could even be made part of the teaching contents, since this is an educational Department whose graduates will most likely be working within the educational sector. If the resources allow for this, we would also recommend occasional cross-grading among teaching staff in order to practically calibrate grading procedures.

- While student, employer, and market demands are important to consider, we would like the Department to also think beyond these demands by developing their strategies distinctly with regard to frontline research, stating more clearly the contribution that the Department wishes to make to the research community. Groundbreaking contributions will create their own markets.

- While it is clear that the current premises are only preliminary, more could be done until the final premises are established. For example, the design of the interior including walls etc. could reflect more the fact that this is an educational institution, for example by showing works of students and making some fitting visual decorations that make it an educational place. Moreover, the library, even though it is quite limited in space, should be made more inviting for students, responding to the students' needs. Ideally, this could be designed together with the students.

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

Sub-area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
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.	5
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.	5
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.	5
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	N/A
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.	5
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	5
3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	5

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.

There are no deficiencies.

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

- Governance-related matters are stipulated in the UoL Charter at university, school and department level.
- The administrative staff is very thorough, knowledgeable and sensitive to problems the students may have. They deal with both academic and personal matters. They have been supporting the Department's work efficiently so far, however, ongoing changes in the administration system enabling automatization and programme specific actions will ensure an even more efficient system.
- The internationalization ambitions and collaborations with external bodies/experts and stakeholders are remarkable. Partnership is a key focus area besides research, impact and innovation.
- Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.
- We would like to note that since the Department is not operating yet, the standards eliciting information about the actual operation or efficiency of the administration were evaluated based on the information we were provided during the site visit and the documents we received. We do believe that these pieces of information attest dedication to effective procedures and transparency at each and every level.

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

- A clear organogram on the organizational structure contributes to transparency in terms of decision-making, rights and responsibilities, quality assurance, reporting and knowledge exchange.
- The renewal of the administration system enables the administrative staff to aid the Department's work more efficiently.
- The guidelines and procedures for academic misconduct on the behalf of any party involved in students' progression does not only facilitate a reactive approach but a preventive one as well.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

We have no recommendations for further improvement

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

19

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

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	
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.	5
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	5
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).	5
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.	5
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.
There are no deficiencies.

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.	5

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.	5
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.	5
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	5
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	5
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	5
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	5

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

There are no deficiencies.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

- The Department shows clear and detailed procedures for planning of programmes of studies. The Department follows the same design and approval process, and the same quality and relevance criteria in developing and introducing new programmes of study, as other departments.
- The Department has an elaborate programme design and approval process that aims to minimize risk and ensure the sustainability of its programmes of study.
- The Department receives and processes input from internal and external sources, carries out programme design, and vets it with the internal and external stakeholders. In making any changes to a programme, they consider the Department's mission, and strategic objectives, IILO, PILO, faculty resources, facilities, and other considerations, as well as the feedback from stakeholders especially students, alumni, and employers.
- All the programmes are being continuously monitored and evaluated annually for quality and effectiveness by the Department's Internal Quality and Evaluation Committee. The Committee employs a variety of assessment methods from student course and instructor formal evaluations forms to direct observation of course delivery, and from inspection of graded exams and assignments to surveys and interviews of students and faculty.

- The procedures described and heard on the site visit convinced the EEC that the risks to the programmes of study are constantly assessed, contained and managed, and their sustainability is secured.
- The programmes under the Department will emphasize hands-on, practical experience. Instead of simply teaching theory with practical applications, they are engaging the students in the deliberate practice of problem solving, decision making and turning challenges into opportunities. Programmes also include practicums, in which the students will get experience in working in the field of education. The programmes follow a student-centered approach, which is based on a structured system of supervision and guidance during internships/practicum, where students are supported in preparing individual portfolios through observation forms, self-assessment, and reflection. Feedback is provided by subject supervisors, mentors, and colleagues in the collaborative educational institutions.
- Small class sizes facilitate the establishment of meaningful relationships between students and faculty, improving communication and student progress, including feedback, while addressing their needs and requests.

- The Department of Educational Sciences uses the same system and assessment criteria for all its programmes, which are also used by the programmes of the other departments. The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance. The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved, as the assessment is based on a combination of assessment tools such as in class exams, take-home assignments, quizzes, simulations, teamwork, mock trials and class participation.

Strengths
A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.
- Clear procedures for planning and assessment of new study programmes.
- Clear procedures for giving and receiving feedback.
- Student-centered approach and practical activities are emphasised in the programmes.
- Clear and visible criteria for assessment of students' learning.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

We have no recommendations for further improvement.

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

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

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar//// enqa.

5. Teaching Staff *(ESG 1.5)*

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	
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.	5
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.	5
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.	5
5.5 The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	5
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.	5
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.	3
5.8 Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.
 	
There are no deficiencies but see below regarding student teacher ratio.
 	
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	

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar/// enqa.

- 7 teaching staff working permanently full-time (1 professor emerita, 1 associate professor, 4 assistant professors and 1 lecturer)

- Visiting Academic Personnel (VAF) = 2X 0.5 time= 1 full-time equivalent

- Special Teaching Faculty (STF): 4X0.5 time= 2 full-time equivalent

- Teaching & Research Faculty (TRF)/Total Teaching Personnel: 7/10=70%; STF/TRF = 2/7 = 29%; STF/Total teaching personnel: 2/10=20%; VAF/Total teaching personnel: 3/10=30%

According to the application, this faculty will grow to 12 members by the academic year 2025-26 and will continue to grow to reach 20 full-time resident academic staff by the fourth year of the University operations.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

- A clear, fair and transparent recruitment process of new teaching research faculty (TRF) (i.e., lecturers, assistant professors, associate professors, and professors) is reported. External reviewers take part in the evaluation process. The assessment, qualifications, and the responsibility for their selection rests with the Dean of School and the Head of Department. The appointment for TRF shall then be approved by the Senate and the Council.
- The number and status of the planned TRF are adequate to support the study programmes. Most of the academic staff (both resident and visiting TRF) have a PhD, long teaching experience in reputable universities mostly abroad and a strong research track record. Further, during the visit to the campus, we got an impression that the TRF members are very competent both in their teaching and research, and committed to work for their department.
- However, according to the information the EEC received, there is a slight mismatch between the numbers of student intake for each programme, especially concerning the new programmes. In the department application, the number of students expected to register, for example for MEd in Special Education and New Technologies, for fall semester 2025-26 is 100 and for spring semester 2025-26 is 50. In contrast, in the application of MEd in Special Education and New Technologies, it is expected that 20-25 students will enrol in the programme in the first year. Further, if there will be intake both in autumn and spring, we wonder how this is taken into consideration in the plan of studies and teaching of courses. Evidently, the number of students taken for the program will affect the resources needed in teaching, as well as has consequences for budgeting.
- The department is planning to recruit new faculty members. It currently has an academic faculty consisting of resident and part-time members. This faculty will grow to 12 members by the academic year 2025-26 and will continue to grow to reach 20 full-time resident academic staff by the fourth year of the University operations. In recruitments, they plan to put particular and increasing emphasis on the academic quality and research productivity. They also expect 2-3 of their current faculty to advance in their careers and secure their promotion to a higher rank in the next 3-4 years. The planning for faculty hiring, whether resident or visiting, is ultimately connected to the Department's academic development and strategic objectives which include the acceleration of research productivity and research output and the continuous upgrading and expanding of the full-time

resident faculty. The new recruitments will respond to the need to supervise an increasing number of Master students as well as to lead Schools and Departments.

- The Department is committed to the academic staff development and career advancement through coaching and mentoring, twining junior with senior staff and resident with visiting faculty in both research and teaching. The EEC finds this very good way of supporting academic staff in their career development.
- As part of quality assurance processes, student feedback is collected regularly, which will help the teachers to adjust their teaching methods and content of the courses.
- Through their research activity, staff members develop new pedagogical approaches, methodologies and tools that support effective learning and broaden students' professional skills, which contributes significantly to linking theoretical knowledge with practical application in teaching. Also, the synergy between research and teaching is achieved through the continuous updating of course content. Further, there are established actions at the university level, which aim to present the students with current research conducted by the TRF (e.g., the orientation period includes research presentations). Students are encouraged to take part in research with faculty staff.

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

- There exists a really competent group of TRF members to carry out the programmes at the Department. There is natural collaboration between the disciplines and departments, for example in teaching of courses, to bring their expertise to the programme.
- Clear, fair and transparent plans for recruitment processes are in place.
- Collecting feedback from the students is part of the quality assurance protocol.
- Synergy between research and practice is valued, and students are encouraged to take part in research activities together with the faculty staff.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- We would like the Department to consider the intake of students for new two planned programmes, especially from the viewpoints of needed teaching resources and budgeting, so that those are in balance and realistic to perform.
- The EEC would like to encourage the new Department to have some visiting professors in the future, who could bring their expertise on specific areas of the programmes (e.g., supervision and teaching activities), as well as broaden the national/international research collaboration.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

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

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA
ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar//// enqa.

6. Research
(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)

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

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

Quality indicators/criteria	
6. Research	**1 - 5**
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	5
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.	5
6.3	The Department provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	5
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development of students' research skills.	5
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.	5
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.	5
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.	5
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	N/A
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.	5

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar// enqa.

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

There are no deficiencies.

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

- It is one of the strategic objectives to ensure that ideas, research results, and expertise are transformed into reform, innovation, enterprise, and public policy.
- There is a comprehensive research policy and infrastructure that contributes to meeting the above mentioned objective.
- The Department is contributing to the development of UoL's Ethics code in research to ensure that all research is conducted in line with the highest ethical principles.
- The Department will have a shared infrastructure with the Department of Psychology.
- Research consists of a minimum of 30% of the total workload of resident academic faculty.
- Faculty members are also encouraged to present their work in (internal and external) seminars and attend workshops/conferences addressing their own special areas of interest. The University also places a high priority on grant applications to secure funds for academic research. Collaborative research arrangements with researchers in Cyprus, EU and abroad are very much encouraged.
- The resident academic faculty category includes a subcategory known as Research Faculty, which consists of faculty members dedicated to promising research agendas and who receive teaching reductions to enhance the chances of successfully implementing their research programs.
- The Faculty have the freedom to choose their field of research.
- Faculty are strongly supported by the University's research centre.
- Faculty are encouraged to incorporate their research results into the courses and disseminate it among stakeholders.
- Although the mechanisms for the development of students' research skills are not explicitly addressed in the documents, we do believe that the research background of the Faculty/Supervisors, the content of the courses on research methodology and of course that of other courses that can potentially be channelled into conducting research provide an adequate foundation for students' development in this field.
- Active publication in top-tier journals is a requirement from the Faculty, it is regularly monitored, without this further promotion is not possible.
- We found partial information about the OA policy. It is listed in the long-term plans to have the Institutional Repository operate as an open space that hosts and promotes open access research projects and papers authored by academic community members. Options are currently under scrutiny but whatever the final choice will be, all dissemination means will be compatible with the Open Access Infrastructure for Research in Europe (OpenAIRE)(https://www.openaire.eu/). The Department is considering all available options found in the Registry of Open Access Repositories (ROAR) and Directory of Open Access Repositories (OpenDOAR) to determine what better suits its research mission.
- We do not have sufficient information to evaluate the extent to which research funding corresponds to the practices and policies of other departments in Cyprus and abroad. The research funding principles seem to be aligned with those applied at other universities.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar/// enqa.

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

- Research activity is supported by all possible means, which will lead to a thriving community dedicated to creation, innovation, sustainability and social responsibility. There are remarkable benefits and privileges for research faculty such as requesting a research budget from the Research Fund, sabbaticals and the opportunity to take part in trainings provided by the University by waiving tuition and fees for classes. Software and database allowance is an immense help in conducting cutting-edge research.
- The Academic Research Fund and international conferences represent a fair and increasing share of the academic and general budget in the 4-year plan.
- Faculty is expected to publish the research results in Q1-Q2 journals, however, it is mentioned that smaller-scale dissemination channels bearing local relevance are also preferred.

Areas of improvement and recommendations
A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- The Department should make its Open Access policy available. The list of journals and the annual quotas based on the University's agreement should be made accessible and transparent.
- It would be highly beneficial if the Library could provide proof-reading services and would aid the scholars in choosing the right journal for their manuscripts.
- To enhance the introduction of research to students and to facilitate the training/education of future researchers, a bigger emphasis could be laid on the encouragement of students to undertake their bachelor's or master's thesis, even in instances where such a requirement is not currently stipulated within specific academic programs.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

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

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA
ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

eqar//// enqa.

7. Resources *(ESG 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	
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.	5
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	5

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

There are no deficiencies.

Findings
A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

- According to the materials that have been provided the Department has sufficient resources, as well as distinct administrative structures to manage finances and prepare the budget according to the Department's short-, mid-, and long-term planning.
- There are clear procedures and mechanisms in place to ensure that budget calculations and use will be adequate, and that financial risks are kept at a minimum.
- There is also a clear agenda of earning overhead funds through attracting third-party funding, in order to re-invest parts of these in seed money for further research activities. This is a very viable approach.

- Against the background of the provided information, including the feasibility study, it is very likely that student intake will generate sufficient income to make the budget sustainable.

- Budget preparation, securing of funding, and management of financial resources follow established procedures and are subject to transparent mechanisms of management and control.

We have no recommendations for improvement.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
7. Resources	Compliant

D. 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 establishment of a Department of Educational Sciences at Limassol University is both a necessity and an opportunity for further development. Education is the foundation for all learning and research to take place, and it is only common-sensical to concentrate staff, along with research, teaching, and outreach activities, in the form of an institutionalised structure. The School of Social Sciences and Humanities already has successful programmes pertaining to Education, so hosting these in their own Department will facilitate the development and management of these programmes. The two programmes to be established, in Special Education and New Technologies (Master joint programme; distance learning) and in Early Childhood Education (Bachelor; conventional programme), are two very wise choices to both help the Department establish itself and grow, and to attract students, as these two fields are in dire need both regarding the labour market and the wider society.

Apart from providing a proper academic home to the study programmes, both the provided materials and the insights generated from our on-site visit made clear that stakeholders conceive of the establishment of the Department also as a research-driven endeavour. There are very conducive policies and structures in place that will help the Department establish itself as a research hub in education, and there was also a strong awareness, and willingness, with regard to attracting third-party funding and hence growing as a research-based institution. The planned focus on technology in education/EdTech and artificial intelligence/GenAI is certainly a promising direction; further development of the research mission could include inquiries into both broadening and deepening this focus as to become maximally successful in the landscape of research funding and publications.

The Department will be able to draw on the experiences and routines of the School of Social Sciences and Humanities as well as of the University of Limassol as a whole. All staff, including management and leadership, are highly engaged, and identify strongly with the strategic mission and overall vision of the Department and the University. This unanimous spirit will certainly facilitate the process.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Barbara Schulte	
Ágnes Hódi	
Riikka Mononen	
Angelina Angelidou	
FullName	
FullName	

Date: February 26, 2025