

Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: 04/02/2025

- Higher Education Institution: University of Cyprus
- Town: Nicosia
- Programme of study
 Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)
 Modern Greek Studies (2 years /120 ECTS, MA, Conventional)

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα στις Νεοελληνικές Σπουδές, Επιπέδου Μάστερ

In English:

Master's Programme in Modern Greek Studies (2 years / 120 ECTS, MA, Conventional

- Language(s) of instruction: Greek
- Programme's status: Currently Operating
- Concentrations (if any):

In Greek: Concentrations
In English: Concentrations

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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].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.
- In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:
 - the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC
 - the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC
- The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment.
 The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report <u>without any interference</u> in the content.
- In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
We recommend a maximum word-limit for all written work, the Master's thesis included (suggested figures: 15,000 words for an M.A. thesis, bibliography included, 5,000 for semester papers). Continue the efforts to recruit more MA students. We recommend that the teaching staff continue to encourage students to participate in the <i>Erasmus</i> programme. The EEC also recommends establishing further collaboration with M.A. programmes of foreign Universities, especially of Greece, and Europe.	The Department agrees with the EEC and has approved the following two recommendations in its most recent Departmental meeting (29/1): a) A maximum of 15,000 words for an M.A. thesis, bibliography included. With the approval of the thesis advisor, the student can exceed the word limit. b) A recommended maximum of 5,000 words for semester papers unless otherwise specified by the instructor. The Department also agrees with the EEC on encouraging students to participate in the Erasmus program and the prospect of collaboration with other MA programmes in Greece and Europe. It will discuss ways in which it could join forces to offer joint lectures, course or, if possible, joint degrees in the future. As this is an open-ended recommendation, it will continue discussing the issue in its forthcoming Departmental Council Meetings.	Choose level of compliance:
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2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
- Word limit for MA and PhD theses: The rough guideline for the length of MA theses is currently 60 pages, but the length can deviate. For the PhD there is no word limit. We suggest setting a word limit for both MA and PhD theses (for MA: ca. 15.000 words / for PhD: maximum of 100.000 words including references and notes), so that students have a clearer idea of what is expected of them and, most importantly, to stimulate the efficient completion of MA and PhD theses within the allotted time. This would help avoid lengthy theses that take years to complete and are not easy to publish in today's academic publication cultures, in which publishers strongly prefer concise studies.	The Department agrees with the EEC and has approved the following recommendations in its most recent Departmental meeting (29/1): a) A maximum of 15,000 words for an M.A. thesis, bibliography included. With the approval of the thesis advisor, students can exceed the word limit. b) A maximum of 100,000 words for a Ph.D. dissertation, including references and notes. With the approval of the dissertation advisor, students can exceed the word limit.	Choose level of compliance:
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3. Teaching staff

(ESG 1.5)

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We recommend measures to alleviate the logistical burdens that currently fall upon the teaching staff, such as: organizing the semester teaching programmes in the currently dispersed venues. Logistical support for drafting and implementing grants and especially grant budgets	The Department will forward these recommendations to the appropriate University offices. The University has offered its assistance in identifying grants, but it will work closely with the Research and Innovation Support Services to explore other ways it can support researchers. The logistical burdens that relate to the organization of the teaching programmes are more difficult to alleviate. Our secretaries work hard in collaboration with the scheduling office and with the coordinator of the Programme to ensure that there are no conflicts between the courses offered and that rooms are secured for these courses. The schedule of classes often needs to be adjusted several times. The EEC correctly notes that these duties are increasingly taken over by the faculty and they constitute a tremendous burden. As stated, the Department will communicate the problem to the Administration before the end of the spring semester. The Department notes once again that it is in full agreement with the EEC. The only action it can take, however, is to inform the University administration.	Choose level of compliance:
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

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To boost the number of admissions both in the BA and MA, the EEC recommends: a) using additional methods of promotion, e.g. by enriching the website (e.g. with a video "pitching" the programme to prospective students; a dynamic section with student and alumni testimonials) and offering online information sessions in which the programme is presented to prospective students (both in the BA and MA) who cannot physically attend on-site information sessions. b) mobilising the university's marketing department to help more actively with student recruitment and make the professional resources (e.g. professional photographers and videographers) needed for the above promotion tactics available.	The Department's website has been significantly renewed and updated in the past couple of years. Apart from our secretaries, we have trained one of our doctorate students to assist in the process. We agree with the EEC's suggestion, and we will proceed to add the following: A) One or more promotional videos pitching the program to progressive students. B) A testimonials section. C) The possibility of arranging online information sessions to assist prospective students. To do these, the Department will need plenty of assistance from the University technical services (for the recording of the videos). As the EEC suggests, we will contact the marketing department to seek professional resources (photographers and videographers). If they are made available to us and if the University will take on the burdensome task of producing and editing these videos, we would be happy to work with them. Provided the Department gets the support it needs, we expect that these will be implemented by the end of 2025.	Choose level of compliance:
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5. Learning resources and student support *(ESG 1.6)*

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
We recommend that the University prioritise concentration of teaching and (faculty and administration) office facilities of the Department in one adequately equipped location and make provisions for a faculty-meeting room. We also recommend further negotiations	We are in full agreement with the EEC on both points: a) An adequate location needs to be secured for the department as soon as possible. The Department has repeatedly informed the administration of this	Choose level of compliance:
of the University with the transportation authorities of the municipality for better and more frequent bus services from the city to the campus and vice versa.	problem. It has also repeatedly informed the appropriate university committees of this unacceptable infrastructural problem and its many health hazards. The Department agrees that the University needs to take urgent action to resolve the problem, and it will inform the administration once again, before the end of the semester.	
	The Department notes once again that it is in full agreement with the EEC. The only action it can take, however, is to inform the University administration and hope for a speedy resolution of this issue.	
	b) The Department has communicated with the university's transportation office and has been informed that, since January 27, additional bus-routes are offered to students by both the municipality and the transportation office. The transportation office has one bus at its disposal, but it coordinates with students' representatives to use it when most needed. The director of transportation	



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	services has expressed an emphatic willingness to help students, and his office recently met with student representatives to address their concerns.	
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes

(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
-Scholarship schemes for MA and PhD students have been significantly reduced recently, which is a point of concern.	The issue has been discussed at the Graduate School council and, since this is a university wide policy, there is little the Department can do to alleviate this problem. However, the Department would like to note the following: A) Several faculty members support students (mostly for research purposes) through their research grants. They will continue to do so. B) The Department supports PhD students who wish to present their work at conferences (by covering travel and accommodation expenses). C) It will explore more ways to secure external scholarships to support students. The Department notes once again that it is in full agreement with the EEC. The only action it can take, however, is to inform the University administration, since the cessation of scholarships is a university wide policy. At the same time, it already helps students in the above mentioned ways.	Choose level of compliance:
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme)

(ALL ESG)

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Find permanent solution to the problem of the dispersed classroom and office locations. This challenge is directly related to the shortage of staff in the department and can be resolved through new hires.	The Department will take the following actions as already stated, before the end of the Spring Semester: a) Inform the administration of the EEC's findings and request its urgent move to a suitable location b) Submit a request for at least one new faculty position On these two crucial issues, the Department notes once again that it is in full agreement with the EEC. The only action it can take, however, is to inform the University administration and hope for a speedy resolution.	Choose level of compliance:
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C.

D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Marinos Pourgouris	Assistant Professor, Chair of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies	
Marilena Karyolaimou	Professor, Department of Byzantine and Modern Greek Studies (Chair during the evaluation process)	
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