



Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 25 November 2024

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**

University of Cyprus

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

1,5 years, 90 ECTS, MA

In Greek:

Μάστερ στις Βυζαντινές Σπουδές και τη Λατινική Ανατολή
(Διατμηματικό)

In English:

Master in Byzantine Studies and the Latin East (Interdepartmental)

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

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

- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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 **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>1.3 and 1.4. We learned that some faculty members attend workshops to learn better website design skills, so that they can better update the departmental and programme pages. These duties should really revert to professional staff.</p>	<p>We agree. However, this is related to the university-wide question of sufficient administrative support. Unless more administrative staff is hired, the situation will continue as it is, with the programme’s coordinators overseeing the webpage’s update, with the help of the university’s IT officers.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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
<p>Our student member reiterates that career prospects of the students must be taken into account in the further development of the MA programme. Good progress has already been made in finding internship opportunities for the students during their studies with both government and private organisations. Even if unpaid, this pathway will help the students gain valuable experience and knowledge of the market. Ideally this can be accomplished without adding to the length of the MA programme.</p>	<p>We agree. We will continue to work in this direction by consolidating collaborations with local institutions, NGOs as well as governmental departments for securing placements for our students, especially during the summer months. At the same time, the courses are designed towards cultivating transferable skills that will strengthen our graduates' employability prospects.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
In conjunction with the upper administration, the faculty need to start thinking of a holistic plan that takes future retirements into account.	We agree. This is a major challenge, given that new faculty positions for the programme may not be forthcoming. While visiting professorships and hiring adjunct instructors might offer short-term solutions, other options, such as inter-university collaborations, could be explored.	Choose level of compliance:

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The university needs to allocate some of the resources of the Public Relations and Marketing staff and of the alumni office to help advertise this uniquely valuable MA programme. Currently, that burden falls onto the faculty members, who already deliver the most of what they have to offer. The faculty promotes the programme by visiting high schools and organising open-house days, but there are important ways in which university offices can join in these efforts.</p>	<p>We agree and we are certainly aiming to work with the University services to promote the MA programme especially abroad.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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
5.4 Student support Housing and public transportation need improvement - Partially compliant	UCY works towards improving student housing and public transport, but such improvements can only be fully achieved through governmental support.	Choose level of compliance:
As much as the secretarial staff works hard to support the students' needs, it is clear that with more staff members they could do more in this very important area that strengthens students' well-being and helps to prevent any student attrition. The secretarial staff also expressed that they feel occasionally overwhelmed by the many ill-supported electronic, accounting, and other platforms that the University requires them to use.	We agree. The administrative staff carries a heavy workload, as they are responsible for the support of the students of ALL programmes of study in each department, in addition to other administrative duties. Hiring additional administrative staff would help alleviate the burden, but this depends on the University's central administration, its priorities and its resources.	Choose level of compliance:
The lack of adequate housing and the lack of appropriate public transportation. These areas, too, are crucial student support resources and need to be championed at the level of the upper administration and the city of Nicosia, ideally as soon as possible.	We agree.	
The departments need to be relocated and reunited with the rest of the university as soon as possible.	We agree. The housing of the two departments is a long-standing problem. It is hoped that in 2026 that the departments (administrative and teaching staff) will move to a single building, not far from the main campus. Still, the prospect of being relocated with the rest of the university remains distant.	



6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:



7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The contents and qualities of this MA programme reach far beyond Byzantine Studies. It respects Cyprus' position at the very crossroads of Western and Eastern cultures and histories.	We thank the ECC for the positive feedback	Choose level of compliance:
Students graduate with deep knowledge and excellent transferable skills that serve them well in the job market.		Choose level of compliance:
The faculty is more than impressive, as is the commitment of the secretarial staff. They also deeply care about the professionalization of their students, beyond teaching and mentoring. Their commitment to grant-capture and to the Erasmus-Mundus programme and other forms of cross-border collaborations is exemplary.		Choose level of compliance:
The tight connection between the BA, MA, and PhD programmes is another strong asset.		Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.		Click or tap here to enter text.

C.



D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Stavroula Constantinou	Professor of Byzantine Philology – Programme coordinator (BMGS)	
Maria Parani	Associate Professor – Programme coordinator (HISARC)	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

Date: 13/12/2024

