

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: Date.

Higher Education Institution's Response

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

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

In Greek:

Μάστερ στις Αγγλικές Σπουδές

In English:

MA in English Studies (2 years/120 ECTS,
Conventional)

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

- **Programme's status:** New

- **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>The Committee did not yet have the opportunity to see a study guide/handbook, which will presumably be created at a later stage.</p>	<p>Given that this is a new programme of study, a study guide/handbook will be created following the accreditation of the programme by CYQAA and made available to the programme's first cohort of students. Also, immediately after accreditation is granted by CYQAA, a detailed description of the programme, its structure and requirements will be uploaded on the website of the Department of English Studies. Further, following accreditation by CYQAA, a description of the programme will be included in the next edition of the University of Cyprus postgraduate prospectus.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Prominent, effective, and strategically targeted marketing and promotion on the part of the University (e.g. by advertising in international markets where comparable programmes are not readily available) will be key to the programme achieving its full potential in terms of recruitment. Support at central level is key in this regard.</p>	<p>The University's promotion of the programme will include: targeted advertising in international markets (e.g. countries in Continental Europe and the Middle East) through promotional actions, such as international visits and presentations, of the International Relations Office of the University; promotion of the programme on the Department of English Studies', the School of Humanities', and the University of Cyprus' social media platforms; the creation and publication of an advertising flyer within two weeks of accreditation by CYQAA that will be distributed widely (e.g. through social media platforms), shared with collaborators and collaborating institutions, as well as uploaded on the Department's website; advertising through the University of Cyprus alumni platform; pending timely accreditation by CYQAA, promotion of the programme at the University of Cyprus Graduate School Open Day on 20/3/2024.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

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<p>The Committee had some discussions with the leadership and staff about the risk that the proposed programme may not appeal to students who wish to specialize in a more narrow area, but, as we noted above, the rationale for the MA made sense to us in the local setting.</p>	<p>The Department would like to thank the EEC for the very useful discussion regarding this issue: as noted by the EEC in the programme’s list of strengths, the new MA in English Studies has been designed with special consideration of the issues of student recruitment and employability and it comes to replace a more narrow-focused literary MA programme offered in the past, whose student numbers had been in decline. In designing an interdisciplinary, intergeneric program, the Department is capitalizing on its strengths and addressing a new generation of students who wish to think outside the box, drawing on the distinct approaches and values of the Humanities.</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
<p>The Committee would like to express some concerns about staffing. To ensure the future viability of the new MA programme (and others too), and also to maintain the high quality of research and teaching in the department, staffing levels need to be adequate in all areas. The Department would especially benefit from additional expertise in postcolonial studies (potentially combined with specialisms in modern poetry/poetics).</p>	<p>Once again, the Department would like to thank the EEC for expressing its concerns regarding staffing issues. As per University of Cyprus procedure, the report of the EEC will be submitted by the Department to the Board of the School of Humanities and from there to the Quality Assurance Committee, the Planning and Development Committee and the Rector’s Council of the University. While acknowledging that the availability of new faculty positions at the University of Cyprus depends on budgetary constraints, it is expected that this process will highlight the Department’s staffing needs and that these will be taken into account in the allocation of new faculty positions when these become available at the University.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



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

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None.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

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
<p>The Department is housed in a building which is off-campus. This is less than ideal in terms of access to facilities such as the library. Despite having been promised a new building for a long time, this has not materialized yet.</p>	<p>The construction of a dedicated building that will house the Department of English Studies has indeed been long delayed. However, actions are currently being taken by the University towards this goal as the planning procedure has been initiated with the collection of data by the Technical Services of the University regarding the housing needs of the Department (as well as the other Departments, Schools and UCY entities that are going to be housed in the same building). Once this process is completed, the relevant data will be submitted to the Building Committee of the University for approval, with a view to announcing an architectural competition for the construction of the building in due course.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The University should consider hiring more administrative staff due to the current staff being overloaded.</p>	<p>The need for more effective administrative support of the Department has been brought to the attention of the University authorities and is currently being discussed by the Director of Administration and Finance and the University Human Resources Services with a view to providing an optimal solution that will best serve the Department.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>It is concerning that the administrative staff does not get paid for its overtime work at the University.</p>	<p>As part of the wider public sector, the University of Cyprus has a clearly stipulated policy regarding overtime that follows the framework set by the relevant policy of the Ministry of Finance. This involves the possibility of monetary compensation in combination with free-time compensation (with up to 75% of monetary compensation) for overtime outside regular workhours (i.e. after 5pm).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>Student support is not available after 14:30, although the University is open until 18:00. If technical difficulties occur, the administrative staff is obligated to take care of it.</p>	<p>The flexible work schedule recently introduced by the University of Cyprus for its administrative staff has helped with the provision of student support by various services of the University (e.g. by the personnel of the Academic Affairs and Student Welfare Service) beyond 14:30. For any technical problems that relate to the use of IT infrastructure, all members of the University, including students, may contact the University of Cyprus helpdesk, that may easily be accessed by phone (internally through extension 2222 and externally through number 22892222). The UCY helpdesk is available 24/7 with the provision of both on-campus and distant support by personnel of the IT Infrastructure Service from 8am till 6pm and with the provision of support by on-call personnel from 6pm until 8am every day as well as on weekends and during holidays.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

N/a

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

N/a

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The Committee would like to thank the Department for providing excellent documentation in advance of the visit.	The Department would also like to thank the members of the EEC for the time they devoted to reviewing the submitted documentation and carrying out the appraisal.	Choose level of compliance:
The Department of English Studies at the University of Cyprus offers an excellent intellectual environment for students to conduct their studies. Staff are enthusiastic and dedicated and have high levels of teaching and research expertise. Unlike in other comparable departments, there is an admirable level of cooperation across the various disciplines.	The Department would like to thank the EEC for the outstanding appraisal and will aim to maintain its excellent record in all respects.	Choose level of compliance:
The Department of English Studies is well-run by a competent and hard-working leadership team.	Once again, the Department would like to thank the EEC for its excellent evaluation.	Choose level of compliance:
Although the Department's current housing situation is less than ideal, the facilities that UCY offers are excellent, especially the outstanding library building.	Despite the fact that the Department is housed off-campus, its members do indeed benefit in many ways from the University's excellent on-campus facilities, including the state-of-the-art facilities of the UCY library building and the modern teaching room facilities of the new campus where the Department's classes are held. Regarding the Department's current housing situation, please see the relevant response on page 8.	Choose level of compliance:
Overall, while the Committee's evaluation is extremely positive, it had some concerns about the level of staffing, which appears to be inadequate. This is an issue which should be addressed by UCY with some urgency.	Please see the relevant response on page 6.	Choose level of compliance:

C.



D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Stella Achilleos	Associate Professor, Chair of the Department of English Studies and Coordinator of the MA in English Studies	
Maria Margaroni	Associate Professor, Vice-Chair of the Department of English Studies and member of the MA in English Studies Coordination Committee	

Date: 3/3/2024

