

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 28.06.2024

## Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
University of Nicosia (Joint Degree with Aristotle University of Thessaloniki)

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

**In Greek:**

Ποινικό Δίκαιο και Εξαρτήσεις (1.5 ακαδημαϊκά έτη,  
90 ECTS, MSc)

**In English:**

Criminal Law and Addictions (1.5 academic years, 90  
ECTS, MSc)

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

**In Greek:**

**A. Ποινικό Δίκαιο των Εξαρτήσεων,  
B. Νομική και Θεραπευτική Μεταχείριση των  
Εξαρτήσεων**

**English: A. Criminal Law for Addictions, B. Legal and  
Therapeutic Treatment for Addictions**



**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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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)

The MSc in Criminal Law and Addictions has been considered to be fully compliant with all criteria of this section. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC found the programme's learning outcomes to be clear and specific to the purpose and content of the Joint Degree programme. Co-operation between the institutions seemed to be very smooth in every respect. Overall, the committee found the quality assurance mechanisms to be robust and effective. Prospective students are provided with sufficient information about the programme. The EEC listed as strengths of the programme its robust quality assurance mechanisms, adequate information provided to prospective students and students registered on the programme, very competitive admission process, which ensures that registered students are strongly committed to the programme, and the excellent co-operation between the participating institutions.

The EEC has further made suggestions for further improvement. We address each one herein.

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution
<p>The documentation states (at p.25) that if a staff member receives a student evaluation score of less than 3 (out of 5) for two consecutive semesters, they will be removed from the course. In discussion, neither UNIC nor AUTH representatives recognised this rule, and they agreed with the committee that it is far too draconian. The committee believes that it should be possible to remove this particular rule, and replace it with a more general provision that ensures that student evaluations are taken seriously and that students are informed of actions taken to address the points that they have raised.</p>	<p>We fully agree with the recommendation. Indeed, the specific rule has never been implemented in practice, and we agree that it should be removed. We confirm that the particular rule has been removed from the programme regulations, and AUTH will notify in this respect the Ministry of Education in Greece for its approval, so that a more general provisions as suggested by the EEC is included, stating that students evaluations are taken seriously and that students are informed of actions taken to address the points that they have raised.</p>
<p>The learning outcomes do not currently include the development of research skills. As the programme does provide students with several opportunities in that regard, including empirical research, the committee recommends that an outcome to that effect be included explicitly.</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for their recommendation, and we fully agree with it. Learning outcomes have been amended to include the development of research skills as follows: Conduct independent research on both individual and team-modelled level and develop research skills on an academic-standard basis.</p>



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



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

The MSc in Criminal Law and Addictions has been considered to be fully compliant with all criteria of this section. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has applauded the flexibility of the teaching staff in finding ways to accommodate students who would like to pursue some elective courses, even when the minimum number of students is not met. It was noted that the communication with teachers is easy and regular and the teachers take into account students' feedback. The teaching staff was described by the students as very approachable. The students learn both how to do research through the course on master thesis writing and how to connect theory and practice (connecting law to addictions). Students were particularly happy with the interactive teaching. The flipped classroom approach and the experiential

learning methods applied were particularly appreciated. The methods of assessment are clearly explained in the 'booklet' that is distributed to the students. The introductory courses on law and therapeutic treatment respectively were particularly appreciated. The research component of the programme has encouraged some students to produce their own original publications in the field. Staff should be congratulated for their strong support of the research ambitions of their students. Students appreciated very much the internship offered in the context of the programme. Internships cannot be pursued by students working full time and this is regrettable, but the committee understands that this is not to be blamed on the two Universities but the legislation and practice in place.

The EEC has further made a minor suggestion for further improvement. We address each one herein.

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution
We would encourage programme and course convenors to be as clear as they can about the split between law-related and therapeutic science-related content in each pathway and course, so as to better manage student expectations.	We thank the EEC for its recommendation. We appreciate that this recommendation does not concern the pathway as such, but the way in which the existing split between law-related and therapeutic science-related content in each pathway is communicated to students. We acknowledge that managing student expectations is always a demanding task and the programme and course convenors will be as clear as possible in this regard as recommended by the EEC.

### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

The MSc in Criminal Law and Addictions has been considered to be fully compliant with all criteria of this section. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has concluded that the University of Nicosia, Aristotle University Thessaloniki and KETHEA have very competent teaching staff and they are all active researchers and have international qualifications and/or research profiles. All the teachers employed to teach on the programme seem very capable and enthusiastic to achieve the learning outcomes and work on improving their teaching skills as well as responding to student feedback to improve their courses and make the student experience excellent. With a view to research and research-teaching synergies UNIC has very good strategies in place to encourage research and dissemination. In relation to feedback, the closing of the feedback loop was done informally, but very efficiently.

The EEC has further made suggestions for further improvement. We address each one herein.

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution
With a view to research and research-teaching synergies Aristotle University Thessaloniki staff is extremely research active but has very limited research support (and only about 500 Euros available per year for research dissemination, such as conference participation). More formal support would be desirable.	We thank the EEC for their comment, which refers to AUTH. We note that AUTH is a public university governed by Greek legislation, and therefore the recommendation cannot be applied unilaterally by either University. The recommendation will be forwarded by the Programme co-ordinator to the appropriate AUTH organs for consideration.

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

The MSc in Criminal Law and Addictions has been considered to be fully compliant with all criteria of this section. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has concluded that the interview process places significant burden on staff members but is indicative of a strong commitment to the quality of the programme. The interview stage of the admissions process, ensures that students admitted to the programme are not only well qualified but also strongly motivated. It also facilitates counselling of students from non-law backgrounds in relation to the challenge of legal studies. The recruitment of students from law and social science academic and professional backgrounds facilitates true inter-disciplinarity in the programme. The minimum attendance requirements are important because of the value of interaction between students with different professional backgrounds.

The EEC did not have any particular recommendations for improvement in this section.



## 5. Learning resources and student support

(ESG 1.6)

The MSc in Criminal Law and Addictions has been considered to be fully compliant with all criteria of this section. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

The EEC has noted that the existing mechanisms of student support are perfectly adequate for the level of the courses and the demands of the programme as a whole. Students are registered in both UNIC and AUTH system and have access to resources from both. The teaching materials are up to date, very well informed by research. During the discussions, it became clear that physical resources appear to be fully adequate to the needs of staff and students. The programme pays particular emphasis on the diverse needs of different cohorts of students. Those with a law background receive adequate instruction on therapeutic methods and practices, while those with a therapeutic background receive adequate induction into law and legal thinking.

The EEC did not have any particular recommendations for improvement in this section.



## 7. Eligibility - joint programmes

The MSc in Criminal Law and Addictions has been considered to be fully compliant with all criteria of this section. No deficiencies in the quality indicators have been identified.

## B. Conclusions and final remarks

We wish to thank the EEC for the high level of professionalism they demonstrated during the evaluation process. The detailed discussion of all issues pertinent to the programme under evaluation, led to a very fruitful discussion between the members of the EEC, the representatives of the University and the faculty members of the programme. The discussion proved to be extremely constructive due to the expertise of the members of the EEC and their willingness to share their suggestions and recommendations for further improving the programme. The demanding set of questions allowed us to elaborate on specialized aspects and deep foundations of the programme and expand upon the content of the application form.

We have assessed and reviewed carefully the EEC report. We are pleased to note that the report is extremely positive, and we thank the EEC for their remarks and conclusions that are extremely supportive of the Program. We note that in their concluding remarks the EEC conclude that in the overall assessment, “We have found the proposed Joint Degree programme to be original, very well designed, with good quality assurance mechanisms, delivered by qualified, committed and enthusiastic academic colleagues, and producing excellent graduates with a competitive advantage in the field. We are also satisfied that the new programme is well integrated in the University’s and the Law Schools strategic development plans, and increases the two co-operating institutions’ academic profile. On the whole, the committee gladly recommends that the programme be accredited. The few points that we have raised in the ‘areas of improvement’ sections are meant solely as recommendations, which we believe will help strengthen the programme and make it even more attractive to its target market.”. These comments are indeed the best possible feedback we could have expected for the programme.

We fully acknowledge that all programmes, are always amenable to further improvement. Accordingly, the suggestions for further improvement offered by the EEC are taken very seriously into account. We consider the suggestions of the EEC as very helpful and we will try to incorporate them to the widest extent possible. We note, however, that the minor comments and suggestions of the EEC do not hinder its substance or structure and do not refer to any deficiencies in the quality indicators. Any immediate changes have already been implemented. Indeed, the programme has been deemed compliant in all aspects.

We thank once more the Committee for all the suggestions/recommendations, and note that there are no additional comments/recommendations in the final section.



### C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Prof. Achilles Emilianides</b>	Dean of School of Law	
<b>Dr. Christina Ioannou</b>	Associate Dean of School of Law	
<b>Dr. Christos Papastylianos</b>	Head of the Department of Law	

**Date:** 28/06/2024

