

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 23 January 2024

External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Vladimiros Kafkaridis Drama School
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
In Greek:
ΥΠΟΚΡΙΤΙΚΗ (4 Έτη, Πτυχίο)
In English:
ACTING (4 Years, Bachelor)
- **Language(s) of instruction:** ΕΛΛΗΝΙΚΗ
- **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. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The visit of the evaluation committee to the premises of the Drama School Vladimirov Kafkaridis took place on 22 January 2024 from 09:00 to 18:30. The evaluators had already received electronically a complete dossier for the evaluation of the three (3) year Acting Curriculum leading to the Higher Diploma and for the evaluation of the four (4) year Acting Curriculum leading to University Degree, which they studied in preparation for the visit.

During the visit, meetings were held at the School's library, with the Director, the Deputy Director, the School's Internal Evaluation Committee, the heads and all of the School's Secretariat and Administrative Staff, the School's faculty, students from the three-year and four-year Acting Curriculum and a group of graduates from both curricula. The members of the evaluation committee also attended an examination of a second year module in the curriculum. The evaluation committee visited and was guided by the staff of the school in the classrooms for theoretical courses, the rehearsal and practical classes, the two professional theatres where the Satyricon Theatre performances are presented and which are available to the students of the Drama School (when there is no performance), the main stage, which is exclusively for the use of the students, and all the workshops supporting the activities of the theatre and the Drama School: the wardrobe, the prompt storage room, the construction workshop.

The meetings were held in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere, questions were asked by the committee members and answered thoroughly by the respondents, additional material were provided to document activities and provide answers to the questions, and the committee's judgments and some suggestions for improving the operation of the school were made. It was immediately apparent that the Drama School had made improvements following suggestions arising from the completion of the evaluation process conducted in 2017. Specifically:

1. The teaching staff of the theory courses was enhanced with the recruitment of PhD holders in the relevant subjects following an open call for applications;
2. The curriculum was renewed and made more coherent on the basis of the recommendations of the evaluation committee;
3. The programme was divided into semester courses;
4. The process of admission of students was adjusted per recommendations of the evaluation committee to one period per year;
5. To address problems of the Library, cooperation with the University of Cyprus was agreed upon;
6. Building construction work was completed and parts of the building that had remained unfinished were handed over;
7. There have been improvements to the infrastructure to accommodate people with disabilities;
8. Steps have been taken to register the curriculum with the Erasmus programme and to internationalise it in collaboration with institutions based in other countries.



At the conclusion of the discussion, the members of the committee agreed that they had formed a clear picture of the operation and educational activities taking place at the Drama School Vladimir Kafkaridis, during the on-site visit and after the discussions and explanations, as well as after the delivery of all additional documentation requested.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
PLATON MAVROMOUSTAKOS	Professor, School of Drama, Faculty of Fine Arts	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
KONSTANTINOS THOMAIDIS	Associate Professor in Voice, Theatre and Performance	University of Exeter
KATERINA PARAMANA	Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) in Theatre	Brunel University London
NETA CHRISTOFOROU	Student	University of Cyprus

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
 - (a) sub-areas*
 - (b) standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - (c) some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite 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 to be dealt with, 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. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

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

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance**
- 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review**
- 1.3 Public information**
- 1.4 Information management**

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*

- *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The programme of the Vladimiros Kafkaridis Drama School is structured in four years of study, based on the appropriate curriculum for the acquisition of all necessary artistic and theatrical skills, as well as on a complete plan of practical courses, exercises and assignments aimed at acquiring all the indispensable skills for theatre acting. The programme comprises 72 courses (corresponding to 240 ECTS). The predominantly practical courses (acting, improvisation, kinesiology, etc.) follow a progressive course from semester to semester until the students graduate, while the progression of the theoretical or the history courses is similar. Consequently, the design of the curriculum meets the requirements for the acquisition of all skills required by the national qualification framework for Higher Education. The School has a sufficient number of teachers of all the necessary artistic and theoretical subjects, allowing the coexistence of experienced artists of the stage and younger teaching staff with the necessary relevant training, as well as professors of non-practical courses with higher studies at doctoral level. The School's infrastructure is fully adequate to serve the teaching tasks, while the coexistence with the two professional stages of the Satyricon Theatre offers opportunities for the students to get familiar with professional conditions and provides additional benefits in the educational process. It is, after all, a drama school of historical importance, the graduates of which have provided the Greek Cypriot theatre with many notable and important creators at all levels of the stage professions (directors, actors, stage designers and executives of public and private theatre and artistic organizations).

Strengths

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

- The symbolic and historical importance of the school for the Greek Cypriot theatre and the fact that its teaching staff includes some of the most important actors of Cyprus, which sets a high example serves as a strong motivating factor for the students.
- Similarly, the theoretical courses are taught by lecturers with higher academic qualifications, ensuring a high level of training.
- The possibility of using the infrastructure of the Satyricon Theatre with which the school is affiliated (two professionally equipped stages and wardrobe, prop storage, sets production workshop) offers a support to the teaching process which exceeds the usual possibilities of many drama schools.
- The immediate response of the Schools' managers to proposals of the evaluation process carried out in the past (2017) is a guarantee for the future operation of the School.
- More than anything else, the high level of dialogue and communication between students and teaching staff, the creation of a feeling of artistic community in which both students and graduates participate, the deep belief in the high artistic values and the artistic nature of theatre that they showed in their discussion with the evaluation committee creates the certainty that the educational work carried out at the Drama School Vladimiros Kafkaridis is of the highest quality.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- Despite the fact that the on-site visit and the dialogue with lecturers and students did not reveal the slightest friction or dysfunction, but rather the very good cooperation and the high level of communication, it is useful to draw up a Code of Conduct that will define the functional relations between staff and students.
- Although feedback to students on assignments and laboratory exercises is systematically given by lecturers, it is essential to provide written recommendations in all phases of the evaluation and especially in the final stage of evaluation.
- The internal evaluation of the functioning of the School needs to be strengthened through the systematic and frequent use of questionnaires and the related processing of the results in order to identify weaknesses and improve the performance of the educational work.
- The educational work needs to be strengthened by more systematic electronic support both in terms of the provision of material to support the subjects taught and in terms of the practices of administration, grading and, in general, all the functions of the School.
- It is necessary to update the School's website in order to provide all the information concerning the educational programme, the objectives and the operation of the School.
- Linking teaching to research is a major challenge for the fourth year in order to give the whole programme the characteristics of higher education. Increasing the number of publications in peer-reviewed and refereed journals and the participation or creation of personal or collective research projects at scientific and artistic fields should be one of the priorities of the teaching staff.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*

- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The 4-year BA Acting evidently embraces a tried-and-tested and rounded approach to student support, as well as collective and individual development. This is backed by appropriate teaching methodologies (e.g. combination of solo, pair and ensemble work in practical classes), which is also continually evolving to meet professional standards. Consideration has been given to teaching and assessment flexibility, including policies for resubmissions, reseats, interruption and year repetition. A range of responsive pedagogies is fostered, enabling all Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) to be met in both theoretical and practical modules. Multimodality of teaching and assessment, catering to individual needs, has been demonstrated throughout (e.g. in Film History, practice-research video creation is integrated with more conventional modes of assessment and Greek Literature includes statement on multimodality). All modules evidence student-centred teaching, with the student often treated as meaningfully agential and as co-creator of their learning. Technology is deployed in both practical and theoretical modules; in the latter, its effective use is also a criterion. The overall structure of the course is thoughtful and effective (e.g. as demonstrated in the overarching journeys across Acting, Movement and Voice/Music modules or Theatre History, Dramatology and Literature modules).

Assessment is consistently transparent, responsive to ILOs, objective and fair in terms of both design / implementation and student perception. Such assessment is plural and based on appropriate criteria that are publicized early in the teaching term. It is carried out through a rigorous system of staff peer observation (Παρατηρητής) or informal moderation, and, when needed, considers mitigating circumstances. Feedback is mostly appropriate and supportive, while adequate appeal processes are in place.

Strengths

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

- Teaching is carried out enthusiastically, enabling individual progress and group cohesion.
- Students are consistently encouraged to develop own interests and stretch their artistic and theoretical abilities.
- The mission of the school to be generative of socially active artists is tangibly materialized via a combination of theoretical and studio-based approaches.
- There is constructive alignment of criteria and learning outcomes throughout, alongside horizontal alignment of criteria across core, technical and theoretical modules.
- Risk-taking in artistic work is supported by solid pedagogical thinking and an atmosphere of genuine, committed care.
- There are multiple cases of excellent assessment and feedback strategies (e.g. the examples of feedback shared from Greek Literature modules, the tables used in these to outline criteria, as well as the form for peer evaluation).
- Theory and practice are holistically integrated; a perfect example is Year 3, where epic and political theatre is taught in Acting V/VI, Dramatology III, Greek Literature and Theatre History, and related repertoire in Music V/VI, allowing students to embody meaningful connections.

- The course - while intensive and fully adequate in coverage - is timetabled so that it allows students to work and support their study financially.
- The 4-year programme cultivates BA-level-appropriate interdisciplinarity (e.g. Acting on Screen) and further specialization (e.g. skills in clowning, fencing, mask, lights, theatre-in-education).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Improvement:

Diversity and Inclusivity: there are well-signaled Support Services for health and wellbeing services and financial support, a suggested research project on diversity, and a well-meaning state of intent to implement an accessibility policy on disability. All tutors informally shared cases of pedagogical thinking around kinetic ability, ethnic/linguistic integration and dyslexia or dyspraxia. Yet, we encourage the School to consolidate this rich but informal/disparate body of work into a **solid framework for Accessibility, Inclusivity and Diversity** (gender, race, ethnicity, ability, sexuality, religion, age). This would inform curriculum content (e.g. repertoire choices), teaching/assessment, and, crucially, infrastructure.

Major recommendations:

- Although most modules indicate clear criteria informing related feedback strategies, the **criteria for the 60% Final Presentation** in core modules (Acting, Speech, Improvisation) need to be outlined too.
- Similarly, although oral feedback for such Final Presentations seems appropriate and students appeared to retain some of this information, **feedback on performance-based assessments needs to be documented** for full compliance. This could take the form of a tick-box table or short written narrative prose or even a voice recording (using the feedback tools enabled by Moodle, for example).
- The School has to redesign **the Year-4 dissertation project**. Currently, this is part of another module (Παράσταση), it does not have dedicated criteria, the topic is pre-given by staff, and it is marked as pass/fail despite its length. To comply more fully with BA standards of student research, the Dissertation would need to become a separate module (by condensing a couple of other modules in Year 4), permit students to select own topics, outline clearer assessment criteria, allocate full range of marks, and set expectations for full-length feedback beyond the pass/fail threshold. Correspondingly, a **thorough reconsideration/restructuring of where theoretical and methodological preparation occurs** in prior years should take place (e.g. Dramatology or History modules could integrate Theatre Theory, Critical Theory and Research Methodology incrementally, and/or should the Dissertation run as a 2-term module, the Term 1 should consolidate such preparatory work).

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



Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Partially compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

- 3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**
- 3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
- 3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*

- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The institution's recruitment processes are clear, fair, transparent, and compliant with rules and regulations. The team of teaching staff is competent, appropriately qualified for the teaching they undertake, and able to take advantage of opportunities for research and development. They regularly engage in professional development and are fully competent to ensure the quality, sustainability, and objectives of the programme of study. There is a good number of teaching staff for the courses taught. The status of all members of the teaching team (full-time or part-time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study. The staff engages and collaborates in teaching and research activities within the institution and there is also industry and research activity with external partners. They publish within and in related disciplines and on topics relevant to the topics of study within the programme. There are efforts for teaching to be informed by individual staff members' research. The process of evaluation of staff teaching through student feedback and peer-feedback is appropriate.

Strengths

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

There are a number of strengths regarding the work of the staff members. Perhaps the most important strengths, as demonstrated by the conversation we had with current students and graduates, are the long-

term professional and inter-personal relationships staff develop with their students and graduates and the excellent professional/industry record of the teaching staff team. Our conversations with the teaching staff and the materials they provided us with also made visible their love for and commitment to the institution and the subjects they teach. They also evidenced a number of innovative approaches with regards to assessment and to ensuring students of different abilities and difficulties not only fully engage with and commit to the work, but that changes made to the teaching approach to accommodate different needs benefit the entire group of students.

Furthermore, there is important scholarly research being pursued in the institution. The research related to Cypriot culture and the practice-based research undertaken by staff are big strengths and can greatly contribute to new knowledge. There are also many research possibilities that can be pursued within and across institutions for interdisciplinary research. It is also evident from the previous report that the leadership of the team are willing and eager to improve their practices and to ensure they take on board feedback from the evaluation committee (as they did for example with the hiring of PhD qualified members of staff).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The suggestions for improvement and our recommendations relate to the areas of a) research and b) teaching evaluation.

a) research-related:

- All of the PhD holders are part-time members of staff. The institution would benefit from making one or two of these research-active members full-time to increase their research activity (i.e. research projects, collaborations, and publications) and ensure teaching is more research-led. There are many opportunities that can be taken advantage of in this area and, as mentioned in the strengths section, also in practice-based research.
- Since we have recommendations regarding the increase of teaching of critical/performance theory and research methods, the institution would also benefit from hiring a PhD holder with this specialism or ensuring current staff members are able to provide this teaching.
- The institution would also benefit from inviting researchers from abroad to offer lectures, workshops, and research talks in order to enhance its research culture.
- In order to ensure students understand that theory and practice are of equal importance, it is crucial that one of the courses examined in the final year is a theory or history course.

b) teaching evaluation:

- Staff have created excellent student and graduate questionnaires which will replace the more informal student evaluation of teaching. We would like to encourage them to also conduct formal (written) peer-evaluations in order to share good practice across the teaching staff team.



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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Partially compliant

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

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2 Student progression
- 4.3 Student recognition
- 4.4 Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The regulations regarding student admission, progression, and recognition are well-defined and published. Moreover, the necessary tools and processes for the collection, monitoring, and actioning related to student progression are in place. In addition, the access policies and admission processes and criteria are appropriate, transparent, and consistently implemented. Higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, and non-formal and informal learning are fairly recognized in student progression procedures. Furthermore, the institutional practice for recognition is in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, and the recognition procedures ensure coherent recognition across the country. In line with European and international standards, the certification of the HEI is accompanied by a diploma supplement and the regulations regarding student certification are well-defined and published. The issued degrees and transcripts clearly explain the qualification gained and the context, level, content, and status of the studies that were successfully completed.

Strengths

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

Both graduates and current students reported that, through the courses, they gain self-confidence and cultivate an excellent foundation for success. This is facilitated by the support and mentoring provided by exceptional staff who are highly esteemed for their work. Importantly, graduates are well-prepared for and find employment in the cultural sector following graduation, and their degree is well-reputed in the industry.

Lastly, both graduates and current students positively commented on the staff's openness towards student suggestions on how classes should be conducted during Covid-19 and on staff's continuous efforts to improve teaching and learning.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- It is highly important that the recommendations in the Report's Section 2 for an accessibility, inclusive and diversity programme are taken on board to ensure fair admission, progression, and recognition processes.
- It is also crucial that the recommendations in the Report's Section 2 regarding the Dissertation are taken on board to ensure that students who want to undertake postgraduate study are well-prepared for it and consequently their preparedness for it is clearly articulated and visible in the transcript.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

5.2 Physical resources

5.3 Human support resources

5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*

- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

As observed during the site visit, students are provided with more-than-adequate and readily accessible teaching resources. These include teaching material (module templates, session slides, readings, video recordings) and specialized aids/resources for practice-based work (e.g. costumes and props). These are all fit-for-purpose. Although no unified digital platform is currently in place to host relevant resources, staff have developed own channels for communicating information and material, which are functional and deemed by students as effective.

Physical resources are also of good standards. There are multiple rehearsal and seminar rooms, performance stages of varying sizes, a scenography studio, a costume and prop storage room, multiple dressing rooms, alongside administrative rooms and social spaces. Rehearsal rooms are equipped with minimal light and sound equipment, and seminar rooms have capacity for projection. The Library has been significantly enriched since the last evaluation and a new agreement has been put in place to gain access to University of Cyprus library services. Students are supplied with appropriate aids and equipment to support them in achieving their study programmes, including laptops in the Library.

Regarding Human and Student Support, there are stated procedures for accessing financial and wellbeing support and for facilitating diverse needs – all clearly demarcated in the documentation provided. Statements around mobility are also in effect. Internally, this is only permitted one-way: from the 4-year BA to the 3-year diploma, with justifiable reasoning.

School leadership and management exhibited a solid awareness of changing circumstances. They work towards promising avenues for safeguarding the School against these, also addressing changes in student numbers. In this respect, the multi-prong approach (participation in international programmes, research applications, potential cross-teaching across programmes, collaborations with institutions, societies and organizations, community-facing classes) is deemed reasonable. As discussed during the visit, the Committee encourages an Alumni network as a potential source of income (e.g. donations) and a sustainable teaching offer (e.g. visiting masterclasses).

Strengths

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

- The School benefits from its integration with a professional theatre venue. This offers students insider access to facilities and equipment and multiple opportunities to implement their learning in a real-life vocational context (and in some cases for financial support via work in Satirikon theatre leading to fee reduction). This is a particular strength of the School, making it both distinctive in its offer and highly appealing to candidates.
- As observed by the student member of the Committee, alongside tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff who are engaged in supporting the study programme, a learner-supportive approach was further inculcated through the stated expression of a sense of “love and warmth” vividly conveyed by graduates and students alike. All learners remarked that they found themselves immersed in a community based on care, akin to an ever-growing “family”. It is evident that the teachers are genuinely caring towards, and proactively responsible for, student

wellbeing and progression. Alumni at various stages visit the school and maintain longlasting relationships, which act as professional and personal networks for much-needed career/vocational support.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Improvements:

- The School – as per own statement – has signed for, and are in the process of implementing, the **Moodle platform**. We are firmly favourable of this action, as it will make teaching material and assessment guidelines readily accessible and well organized withing a single, student-facing platform. Moodle functions and add-ons can also support accessibility and provide further opportunities for cohesive feedback as well as for tracking records of both theoretical and studio assessments. A dedicated Moodle page for research training, including a research toolkit, training videos around ethics and further material on research approaches and ethics, would be a significant resource for the Year-4 Dissertation project.
- Currently, a key portion of the sound work (e.g. recording) is outsourced to a voice/music member of staff with professional background in the area and personal equipment. For long-term sustainability, it would be advisable for the School to invest in such equipment and – given the increase in sound-based modes of performance (music theatre, soundwalks, immersive audio, podcasts etc) – potentially think about expanding its **in-house capacity for sound capture and editing** (e.g. converting a small space, such as a dressing room, into a rudimentary sound studio, the extent of which will depend on financial capacity).
- Although there are currently elevators, we would strongly encourage the School to reflect on **accessibility to all its premises** as part of our recommendation to design and implement an Accessibility, Diversity and Inclusivity framework (see Report Section 2 above).
- For the Year-4 Dissertation, we note the significant improvements in research resources and the collaboration with the University of Cyprus. For further improvement, we encourage access to key resources in the field of performance studies and performer training (such as the *Theatre, Dance and Performance Training, Performance Research* and the *Voice & Speech Review* journals), if deemed appropriate for BA-level research. Trial subscriptions may be a good first step.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**
- 6.2 Proposal and dissertation**
- 6.3 Supervision and committees**

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *the minimum word limit*
 - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*

- reports per semester and feedback from supervisors
- support for writing research papers
- participation in conferences
- The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.

You may also consider the following questions:

- How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?
- Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?
- Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
6.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable



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 programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

In accordance with our commentary and recommendations above, we are convinced that the programme of study is compliant and corresponds with EQF.

Ample evidence of high quality frameworks, teaching, learning, student support and resources has been provided, evidencing a high quality of pedagogy and training.

Our sole recommendations for fuller compliance relate to processes of feedback giving and the integration of research with teaching (see sections 2.3 and 3.3 above).

We wholeheartedly congratulate the staff at the School, we thank them for their cooperation, and we wish them continuous success in all their activities.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>
Platon Mavromoustakos
Konstantinos Thomaidis
Katerina Paramana
Neta Christoforou

Date: 23 January 2024