

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 28.03.2023

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

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Institute of Professional Studies (IPS) at
UCLan Cyprus
- **Town:** Pyla, Larnaca
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Institute of
Professional Studies
- **Department/ Sector:** n/a
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Επαγγελματικό Δίπλωμα στην Γεωργοκτηνοτροφία /
Αγροεπιχειρηματικότητα (2 έτη, 120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

In English:

Professional Diploma in Agriculture/Agribusiness (2
years, 120 ECTS, Diploma)

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



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].

- Concentrations (if any):

In Greek: n/a

In English: n/a

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The composition of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) is listed in table B below.

The EEC met for preliminary discussions with the representative of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA), Mr. Costas Constantinou, in Nicosia on Monday 27.03.2023, at 8:30 am.

The EEC was joined by Ms. Emily Mouskou of the CYQAA during the site visit.

The on-site in-person visit took place on Monday 27.03.2023, from 9:30 am to 5:30 pm, on the campus of UCLan Cyprus in Pyla, Larnaca.

We would like to thank the CYQAA organisers and the UCLan hosts for the comprehensive preparations of our visit, the submission of documents in advance and the efficient planning of the proceedings during our visit. We would also like to thank the students and graduates who made themselves available for very insightful discussions. The schedule included meetings and discussions with various teaching staff and support staff, IPS staff, students, as well as a tour of buildings and facilities, and a live lecture.

The EEC received a list of documents in advanced. These included the following:

1. Document 200.1, which the application submitted to the agency (CYQAA)
2. The previous evaluation report of the EEC dated 24 January 2017

The documents comprise the relevant information on the programme specifications, structure, list of modules, as well as detailed module descriptors, the CVs of the teaching staff, description and layout of the facilities, admission requirements, and KPIs of the performance of the institution.

The first meeting was with Mr. Constantinos Voniatis, Manager of the IPS, and Ms. Stella Komodromou, QA Expert, and gave the EEC an overview of the IPS.

The next series of meetings was with Ms. Athanasia Angelou, Course Leader, and Ms. Stella Komodromou, QA Expert, and dealt with the IPS structure and governance as well as the curriculum, admission criteria and general course content. Next, an overview was presented on teaching methods and equipment and software. This was followed by a detailed discussion of the individual module descriptors, their content, learning outcomes, teaching methods, and assessment types, weighting and duration.

After lunch, the EEC had a very informative meeting with students from Year 1 and Year 2 as well as graduates of the programme (10 in total).

The EEC then met with all teaching staff associated with this programme, to discuss the module contents, teaching methods and assessments. The staff who participated were: A. Angelou, S. Komodromou, S. Socratous, E. Vanezi, A. Saouros, S. Evgeniou.

The EEC also met with key members of the university's administrative and support services, including IT services (C. Panayiotou), the Library (C. Filippou), HR (D. Papamichael), Marketing (T. Tsolakki), and Student Supports (E. Kyriakou).

This was followed by a tour of relevant facilities, including the Library, lecture rooms, study rooms and open study areas, the Agriculture laboratory.

Concluding the on-site visit, the EEC attended a live lecture/seminar delivered by S. Evgeniou and observed student participation.

The site visit concluded at 5:30 pm.

This joint evaluation report was compiled by the EEC on Tuesday 28.03.2023.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Iosif Bizelis	Professor	Agricultural University of Athens, Greece
Yiorgos Gadanakis	Associate Professor	University of Reading, UK
Olaf Schmidt	Professor	University College Dublin, Ireland
Maria Christoforou	Student	Cyprus University, Nicosia
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

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 EEC would like to note that we did not have access to official overarching university documents on quality assurance, academic policy, rules and regulations such as the Academic Policy, Admissions Policy, Policy on Academic Integrity. However, it was clear from the EEC's interactions with the staff that these policies, rules and regulations exist and that they are being followed and implemented at the IPS.

Some specific observations relating to students are as follows:

- Opportunities for international students are limited to Greek speakers.
- The drop-out rate is very low.
- Students have a say in the development of course content.

Strengths

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

Overall, the EEC is of the opinion that all staff of the institution (IPS) know about quality assurance, adhere to policies and are compliant with the standards and follow processes. The IPS director and the course leader demonstrated full knowledge of the organisational structure, facilities, responsibilities and processes. An example of excellent practice is the student support services which was also confirmed by the students themselves. Another strength highlighting the good standards is that the programme structure and content is continuously reviewed and modified, taking industry and stakeholder needs into account. The relevance of modules is monitored and reviewed. Consequently, pathways to employment are clear and the programme also has strong links with previous graduates.

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 was unable to locate online official policy documents pertaining to quality standards and the responsible Academic Boards, Exam Committees etc.

The process of reviewing and updating the course curriculum is happening internally every year, involving relevant staff and also student opinion. However, this process should be formalised and documented.

Also, the 'agribusiness' component suggested in the programme title does not seem to be represented adequately in the course content. Furthermore, the 'specialisations' are unclear and need to be articulated and advertised online clearly (the online information is outdated).

In general, online information on the programme is not satisfactory.

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	Partially compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Partially compliant
1.3	Public information	Partially compliant
1.4	Information management	Partially 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.

Overall, learning, teaching and assessment are of a good standard and appropriate for the programme. The EEC is of the opinion that student learning and teaching methodology meet standards, but improvement are required in terms of practical training as well as a review of student assessment.

Strengths

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

The EEC were impressed by the flexibility of the teaching staff to make module content relevant to industry and employment needs, by the students being actively involved in teaching (e.g. discussing case studies or businesses), and also by the fact that individual student learners being encouraged in their development (e.g. if they have a special interest such as equine studies). Visits to local producers and businesses, as well practical placements, are major strengths.

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 observed some inconsistency in the usage of 5 and 10 ECTS credit ratings for modules and the assessments allocated. It is recommended to review this.

The reading lists in several module descriptors need to be updated to reflect modern teaching content and approaches and to increase student engagement (e.g. through selected material from the popular media, podcast). Note that reading lists also need to be linked to actual books and sources stocked in the library (see Point 5.1 below).

In terms of assessments, the EEC has observed a number of aspects that should be improved. In general, the type of assessment should be relevant to the practical nature and skills of the course. For example, written exams could be replaced by herbaria, laboratory exercises and worksheets, field visit reflections, blogs and similar more engaging assessments.

Given the nature of the course, the EEC recommends that practical, hands-on learning opportunities are expanded. For instance, practical laboratory or field based opportunities should be offered to acquire identification skills of crops, weeds, crop pests, crop diseases, livestock parasites. This view was reinforced by the students themselves.

One deficient but cross-cutting area in terms of course content identified by the EEC relates to 'sustainability', which should permeate all modules. This includes topics such as climate change, soil protection, biodiversity decline, water conservation, animal welfare, along with the technologies and solutions.

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	Partially 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 course is delivered by a range of teaching staff, from within and outside of the IPS. Overall, the staffing and staff training is in line with expected standards and is adequate.

The EEC observed that most teaching staff are not research active and do not engage in scholarly publishing. However, the EEC acknowledges that this may not be a requirement for a professional degree.

Strengths

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

A clear strength is that specialised expertise is feeding into this course through a number of part-time teachers who typically work in the industry or state agencies. The staff are approachable and supportive of their students, as highlighted by the students themselves.

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.

In general, standards for teaching staff need to be reviewed and improved. Given the high proportion of part-time teaching staff, it is particularly important that full staff training is provided in all areas of Teaching & Learning (e.g.



pedagogy, teaching technology, assessment strategies, student engagement).

The EEC did not gain insights into the recruitment, development and promotion policies and procedures. However, they are paramount (especially for the full-time staff) and need to be considered by the institutions. One example is opportunities for staff mobility through appropriate EU and national schemes such as ERASMUS, which could improve both teaching skills and exposure to research that, in turn, would enhance teaching.

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	Partially compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Partially compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Not applicable

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.

Student admission processes and criteria are in order. While the EEC did not see full documentation on student progression and certification, we assume this is all in order.

Strengths

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

Student recruitment is inclusive and targets a diverse audience including male and female school leavers.

Students have opportunities (subject to a Distinction) to transfer to Bachelor degrees.

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.

No observations.

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.

Overall, the physical environment, the teaching and learning facilities, as well as the full range of student supports are of excellent standard. Student diversity and special needs are supported.

Strengths

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

The building, teaching rooms including AV technology, common areas and catering facilities are of excellent standard and quality. Teaching technology (including Google Classroom) is up-to-date and further modernisations are planned (e.g. interactive whiteboards). Student supports are also well-resourced and of excellent standard; all staff were student-centred and very helpful. Outside of the university, the modern, on-campus student halls are also worth noting because they greatly support the overall university experience.

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.

Related to student mobility, introducing opportunities such as residential field trips or short-term international placements should be considered.

It is the opinion of the EEC that the teaching laboratory is not adequate for this programme. To enhance practical learning (this is linked with Point 2.2 above), these facilities need to be upgraded. As was also identified in the previous report, access for student teaching to other facilities (such as livestock premises, greenhouses, experimental fields) should be sought.

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	Partially 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.

The EEC concludes that, overall, this programme is well-placed to produce qualified graduates for the agricultural sector in Cyprus and beyond. The programme is well-structured, the teaching staff are motivated, and the students enjoy full supports from the university services as well as excellent physical facilities. Student satisfaction is high and the links with industry and employment are strong.

The EEC identified a number of areas that need to be improved. Specifically, some quality assurance processes need to be formalised (e.g. annual programme review); teaching materials and assessments need to be updated regularly; more training and development opportunities for teaching staff are needed; scientific laboratory facilities should be upgraded.

Detailed suggestions are contained in the body of the report.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Iosif Bizelis	
Yiorgos Gadanakis	
Olaf Schmidt	
Maria Christoforou	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 28.03.2023