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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 5 March 2024

External Evaluation Report

(Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:** Neapolis University Pafos

- **Town:** Pafos

  - **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities

  - **Department/ Sector:** Department of History Politics and International Studies

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

  In Greek:

  Πτυχίο στις Διεθνείς Σχέσεις και Ασφάλεια

  In English:

   BSC IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND SECURITY

  (4 years / Full-time / 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Science (BSc), Conventional)

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

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

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations
  In English: Concentrations

A. Introduction

The onsite visit of the EEC took place on 4 March 2024 from 9.00h till 18.35h. The current report was written by the EEC members on 5 March 2024 from 9.00h till 17.00h.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Professor Luis Lobo-Guerrero	Chair	Groningen University
Professor Annika Björkdahl	Member	Lund University
Professor David Galbreath	Member	University of Bath
Mr. Alexandros Evgeniou	Student	Open 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.***

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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*

- o *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*
- o *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- o *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*
- o *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:*
  - o *selection criteria*
  - o *intended learning outcomes*
  - o *qualification awarded*
  - o *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
  - o *pass rates*
  - o *learning opportunities available to the students*
  - o *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

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

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

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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?*

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Findings

The BSc programme in International Relations and Security runs over 4 years. The structure of the programme includes 40 courses (each 6 ECPT) totaling 240 ECTS. There are 36 core modules (216 ECTS) and 4 elective courses (24 ECTS). The programme is designed to meet the ambitions of Neapolis University Pafos, as well as national and local needs. It is given in English. The programme aims to have strong policy and practice relevance.

1.1. Quality Assurance
TheBScprogramme on International Relations and Security is clearly aligned with the University's quality assurance policies and practices. The Committee found that the University has a clear engagement with academic practitioners and policy-makers, which in turn contributes to the quality of the degree. The EEC recognised the positive approach that the University takes towards the overall learning environment for staff and students.

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
The EEC were informed of induction support for students and were made aware of the wider student facing support that was available, including pastoral and study support.

The EEC had some concerns about the extent to which students would have opportunity to engage in more critical and challenging academic studies as theBScprogramme on International Relations and Security progresses given the range of modules that students undertake.

The programme of study:

The EEC found that in general terms the overall programme objectives are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit learning outcomes. However, the EEC was concerned with the label of the programme of study as 'BSc in International Relations and Security' since the learning outcomes were clearly geared towards Strategic Studies. As it stands, the Committee found that the label Security does not correspond to what is normally expected from a bachelor degree programme on this area in Europe, which normally involves a widened security agenda, with multiple epistemological perspectives.

The information that was provided in the documentation prior to the visit combined with the overall discussions and presentations during the visit demonstrated that the University has a strong understanding of its student body and an awareness of the ways in which quality assurance operates.

The EEC was impressed with the engagement with stakeholders, namely security agencies, when designing the curriculum and teaching activities. However, when examining the programme in relation to the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe, it found that more emphasis on research training would benefit students in their sustainable employment and future career development.

Progression of students along the programme was found to follow a logical structure that could, however, benefit from a modernisation of the curriculum to include various aspects of security studies and more emphasis on more contemporary approaches to International Relations.

1.3 Public information

The information in the documentation provided an understanding and awareness of the overall structure with regard to the nature of the selection criteria, pass rates, graduate learning opportunities, and the qualification being awarded. There was an understanding of the alignment with learning outcomes.

1.4 Information Management

The Committee was impressed with the management information systems in place for quality assurance and standards. However, information on Key Performance Indicators for the programme were not provided in advance. They were again requested during the site visit and were not received.

The Committee were given information relating to the way in which student feedback is collected and processed according to University policies. However, it was not possible to compare student feedback across courses to appreciate how it works in practice. Some qualitative information was provided during the visit through one specific course. However, it was not clear how feedback fed into the programme's overall quality enhancement approach.

Students demonstrated a strong satisfaction with their overall courses and this seems to be influenced by the positive staff student ratios.

The EEC were impressed by the learning resources that were available, both in terms of the teaching spaces and the investment that was visible such as in relation to the use of new technologies for teaching and learning purposes. The Committee were impressed by the learning resources in the library and the access to wider electronic journal and book resources that students and staff could access.

The University takes great pride in the overall career progression of its students, where the Committee were informed of the high employability rate that many students had. However, this needs to be viewed within the context that many of the students were already in employment and therefore the high graduate employability rate was contextualised by the overall nature of the student body.

Strengths

The overall design of theBScprogramme on International Relations and Security benefits from interdisciplinarity including international law, strategic studies, international political economy, and international relations.

- The BSc programme on International Relations and Security benefits from external contributions that enhance the student and staff experience. This includes the positive collaborations as demonstrated by the signing of Memorandums of Understanding with the University of Buckingham and Haifa University.
- The program has strong student endorsements as evidenced in the discussion with alumni and current students.
- An awareness and understanding of the quality assurance enhancement procedures is clear.
- An understanding of the local student market and the development of Erasmus partnerships is very strong.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The EEC felt that some elements of the BSc programme on International Relations and Security would benefit from further consideration with regard to the alignment of the teaching courses with more recent trends and direction of the disciplines of International Relations and the subdiscipline of Security Studies.
- The EEC found that including recent epistemological trends in the study of International Relations, and widening the agenda of security studies, to include, for example, the varieties of critical security studies, will benefit the formation and future employability of students.
- The EEC found that more emphasis on research methodologies would allow the programme to enhance the sustainable employment of its students allowing them to encompass a wider variety of phenomena in their professional analyses.
- The EEC had concerns with the level of criticality encouraged amongst students. For example, the BSc programme on International Relations and Security learning outcome refers to a 'basic understanding' and the Committee considered that this could potentially be presented in a more advanced manner.
- The EEC would like to recommend the development of critical skills from the start of the program.

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

Sub-area		*Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant*
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)*

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Sub-areas

    2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology
    2.2 Practical training
    2.3 Student assessment

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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

Neapolis University Pafos has within a relatively short period expanded its portfolio of programmes and now provides a BSc, a MSc and a PhD programme in International Relations and Security. The EEC was provided with a vast number of documents, course descriptions relating to the structure of the proposed BSc programme in International Relations and Security but all were not necessarily of relevance to the evaluation. The degree programme follows a structure where all students take the same 36 courses with only 4 elective courses available. The programme has elements of interdisciplinarity. The programme does not include a BSc-thesis nor does it include placement or internships. The process for assessment is transparent and fair. Compulsory online student evaluations take place after the completion of the course and in order for accessing the course grade.

The EEC finds that the process of teaching supports students' individual learning and development. The teaching faculty takes care to ensure that the teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and tools in order to assist the students in meeting the PLOs and CLOs.

The course descriptions are not detailing how students are encouraged to take an active role in the learning process or developing the course curricula. Nor is it clear to the EEC how the feedback from the students feed in to revising the course curricula.

The student-centered learning and teaching could encourage the autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.

Neapolis University Pafos has appropriate procedures and structures for dealing with students' complaints regarding for example grading, access to teaching staff etc.

Practical training is mainly ensured through various forms of teaching and assignments.

Strengths

- The interdisciplinarity of the programme is regarded by the EEC as a strength and the department may want to consider formulating this as one of the PLOs of the programme. The EEC finds that this is providing the students with a broader view of international relations.
- The Programme provides courses with a local and regional focus that the EEC finds motivating and engaging for the students.
- The PLOs and CLOs are aligned and help guide the students in their learning process.
- The courses provide for a variety of teaching forms including lectures, seminars, teamwork, roleplay catering to different students' learning processes.
- Moreover, some of the courses also encourage critical and creative thinking already from semester one which is in line with a student centred approach to teaching and learning.
- The students are provided with much support in terms of academic counsellors and mentors that helps the department to attend to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths. The student support staff and the academic staff collaborates well.
- The programme is centred around connecting theories to policy and practice of International Relations and Security. Thus, the EEC finds that the connection between policy and practice is a strength of the BSc programme.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The EEC suggests that the Department makes clear to the students the logic behind the organization of the courses within the semesters and between the semesters.
- The Bloom's taxonomy is an important tool not only for teachers and for course curricula, but also for informing students about the expectations of skills and competences to be developed. This latter part needs to be made clearer to students.
- The EEC suggests that the student-centred approach could be strengthened by encouraging elements of critical and creative thinking already from semester one.
- The EEC recommends the workload of the students in terms of required readings and examinations to be re-considered.
- The EEC recommends that the BSc Programme could consider including a BSc thesis. This will be an opportunity for students to select a topic based on their own interests and focus on doing independent research. It will also allow them to bring together the different elements they have been taught throughout the programme including, theory, methods and empirics.
- The EEC finds that the teaching methods, tools and approaches are modern, with the caveats mentioned in section 1 above, and support the students' learning process. Yet, there is room for improvement in terms of regularly procedures for updating the course curricula and particularly the course literature which the EEC finds relatively outdated and missing out some of the key journals in the disciplines involved.
- No student evaluations were provided thus, the EEC finds it challenging to assess the student-centred approach from a student perspective.

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

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

The panel found that the teaching staff were more than qualified and competent to deliver a programme of this nature. We found that the range of staff was also commensurate with what was to be expected for such a programme.

The EEC found that the department was less diverse in terms of the epistemologies and methodologies that would be expected in a politics and IR programme. The EEC also noted a remarkable low number of female staff, even if it was quite clear the contributions they are currently making. It was not clear, however, whether female staff were on permanent contracts, and how this compared to the ration of male staff on this category. Altogether, the EEC found that staff competences matched the expectations for such a programme.

Strengths

- Staff have obtained high standing doctoral degrees and have had international experience in education and/or employment.
- Evidence shows the important role of teaching staff in programme development, student advising and learning achievements.
- Strong support from the University and College in supporting the department to deliver this programme.
- Staff research performance through publications and funding is of the standard expected.

- The provision of teaching development programmes for staff and inclusion of teaching outcomes as part of the promotion system.
- The EEC recognised the excellent support that is provided to the teaching staff by the education pedagogy and technology support team at the University.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- To consider growing the epistemological and methodological areas of the department to better complete a picture of International Relations in the BSc.
- To consider the gender balance of the department in future appointments.
- To consider the appointment of visiting female scholars to add to the breadth of the learning experience.

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

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

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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

From our review and from the meeting with the Head of Department, who is also the coordinator of the BSc programme, relevant administrative staff and with alumni and students from current courses, the panel agreed that the pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place and that access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in an institutionally transparent manner. However, the panel noted that information regarding student progression was lacking from the information pack and was not shown during the meeting. Yes, the EEC recognised the 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 also in place. Finally, the Committee found that pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are according to expected practice.

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:
1) Institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention
2) Cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country.
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.

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Strengths

- The EEC commends the work of the IT department (CIO) who has illustrated a continued excellence in supporting staff and students with student admissions and progression.
- The EEC noted the planned improvements of the VLE (Moodle).
- The work of the educational technologist in working with academic staff to provide innovative solutions to learning was commended by the Committee.
- From the evidence provided and the interviews, the EEC can also commend the academic staff for engaging with innovative solutions to learning, whether driven largely by the pandemic or through new pedagogies.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The EEC was not provided with information on student progression or recognition. This has made it difficult to comment directly on these points.
- That innovations and best practices in education and learning could be more transparent and celebrated in the department. Through the interview, the EEC found it difficult to identify such within the BSc.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
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.*

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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

The proposed courses have a complete syllabus plus highly detailed weekly student-centred study guides, which include relevant information: objectives, learning outcomes, material to use, interactive activities to perform, complementary bibliographic references, and recommended study

time. In addition, study guides include a Student Handbook very well presented in an engaging way, which motivates students in the learning process. This is considered by the EEC as a good practice.

The university's BSc is responsible for providing pedagogical support for the creation and evaluation of in person and online materials. This unit is supported by a Pedagogical Planning Committee (PPC), which ensures study materials, interactive activities, and both formative and summative assessments align with international standards.

Currently, the BSc programme is exploring the integration of cutting-edge technologies, such as AI, into their teaching and assessments. The EEC acknowledges the efforts and concerns of the academic staff to continuously innovate pedagogy and the student learning experience.

Strengths

- The EEC noted the important role of e-learning technologies and the role that they play on the BSc.
- The committee also noted that the BSc benefits from having a successful MSc distance learning programme that can help the e-learning elements of the BSc continue to innovate.
- The EEC recognised the work of the department and the Pedagogical Support Unit in delivering a contemporary digital learning environment for undergraduate students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The EEC recommends that both the study guides and the student handbook be updated to include policies and best practices related to generative AI, along with academic guidance for students on the opportunities and risks these technologies present in education.
- This advice should also be extended to faculty staff.

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

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

D. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Prof. Luis Lobo-Guerrero	
Prof. Annika Björkdahl	
Prof. David Galbreath	
Mr. Alexandros Evgeniou	

Date: 5 March 2024