

Doc. 300.1.3

Date:

Feedback Report from EEC Experts

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Neapolis University Pafos
- **Town:** Pafos
- **School/Faculty:** School of Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities
- **Department:** Department of History, Politics and International Studies
- **Programme of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

In Greek:

Διεθνείς Σχέσεις και Ασφάλεια (4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο, Εξ αποστάσεως)

In English:

International Relations and Security (4 academic years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor, E- Learning)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

A. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Professor Alasdair Blair	Professor (Chair)	De Montfort University
Professor Annika Björkdahl	Professor (Committee member)	Lund University
Professor Christothea Herodotou	Professor (Committee member)	The Open University UK
Professor Georgios Karyotis	Professor (Committee member)	University of Glasgow
Ms Anna Tzamantaki	Student (Committee member)	University of Cyprus



B. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

The EEC based on the external evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) and the Higher Education Institution's response (Doc.300.1.2), must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.

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

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>1.1. The Committee felt that some elements of the BA 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 discipline</p>	<p>Done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ See attached Annex 1: Revised Study Guides with updated and more diverse bibliographies to address more recent trends and direction of the discipline ✓ Additionally, recent trends and direction of the discipline are also addressed in Y3 and Y4 whereby more specific issues are addressed. See NUP link for the existing accredited undergraduate program in International Relations and Security : https://www.nup.ac.cy/bsc-international-relations-security/ , as well as the Application for Accreditation p.111-113 where the program of Study is stated. <p>Namely the following issues are addressed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • IRS151: Economic Sustainability and Security • IRS153: Conflict Resolution • IRS162: Energy, Security and Foreign Policy • IRS163: Environmental Sustainability and Security • IRS166: Peacebuilding • IRS177: Human Security • IRS185: Migration, International Relations and Security <p>Fully developed Study Guides for the courses above will be submitted in due course upon the CYQAA regulations whereby for DL Undergraduate programs what we submit is the first 2 years Study Guides</p> <p>https://www.dipae.ac.cy/index.php/el/neaekdiloseis/anakoinoseis-el/163-2018-06-26-glossaodigon-meletis-gia-ex-apostaseos-programmataspoudon .</p> <p>The courses and the issues addressed above are already part of the already accredited Undergraduate program in International Relations and Security.</p>	<p>Thank you for this update, which is helpful in clarifying the situation. It is good to read about the courses that are being planned for delivery. We would continue to encourage the faculty to keep abreast of the changes in the discipline and it is good to see important courses such as that focusing on environment, human security, conflict resolution and migration from which important points such as gender can be addressed.</p>
<p>1.2. The Committee considered the University might wish to consider the use of survey based on Likert questions for student evaluations. The evaluation at the moment appears to be based more on qualitative statements which will be more complex to analyse and it was less clear to the</p>	<p>Since the EEC report states “the University might wish to consider” we confirm that It will be discussed among the Internal Quality Assurance Committee to assess implications.</p>	<p>Thank you for this update.</p>

<p>Committee the procedures for analysis and how this formed part of a more holistic approach to enhancement that takes place on an annual basis.</p>		
<p>1.3. The Committee did have some concerns with some of the learning outcomes, such as in relation to some language and the extent to which this demonstrated a sufficient level of criticality. For example, the BA 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</p>	<p>The PLOs are the following: PLO1. Explain the basic features of the contemporary international system. PLO2. Identify the major players (states, international organizations etc.) in the international environment. PLO3. Define the main theoretical approaches on international relations and security. PLO4. Describe the interdependence between international relations and security in the 21st century. PLO5. Identify the main sources of instability and insecurity in the international system. PLO6. Analyze international issues and formulate arguments in a clear, concise and effective manner, both orally and in writing.</p>	<p>Thank you for this update.</p>

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

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>2.1. The programme requires to broaden the content to include more contemporary and critical security studies, and be better linked to contemporary research on international relations and security studies. This includes updated and more diverse bibliographies.</p>	<p>Done.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ See attached Annex 1: Study Guides with updated and more diverse bibliographies ✓ See our response in 1.1. 	<p>Thank you for this update which addresses our concerns.</p>
<p>2.2. The programme requires greater clarity regarding the progression of knowledge expected between the courses. Here the Committee suggests that the programme makes better use of the Bloom's taxonomy and updates the understanding of knowledge progression and production with contemporary pedagogical approaches.</p>	<p>Done. See Annex 2: Mapping CLOs - PLOs attached whereby the progression of knowledge expected between the courses is apparent from "understanding" in the first years of study to "explaining" and "analyzing" in the 3rd and 4th year of study.</p>	<p>Thank you for this update which addresses our concerns.</p>
<p>2.3. The EEC considers that there is a need for a better connection between research and teaching to ensure that the teaching is research-based, in line with contemporary research within the fields of international relations and security studies.</p>	<p>Done. See some of the recent publications of NUP staff members involved in the program which address the issue the EEC has raised: Cyber Security:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Future of Democracy in a Cyber-Security Framework, in Efthymiopoulos M.P. & Kyriakidis K., (2021), in Curran & Ijeh (Ed. 2021): "Crime Science and Digital Forensics: A Holistic View" London: CRC Press (Taylor and Francis Group). https://www.routledge.com/Crime-Science-andDigital-Forensics-A-Holistic-View/IjehCurran/p/book/9780367322557 • NATO's Current and Future Cyber-Defence Adaptability, in Efthymiopoulos M. P. (2021), , in Curran & Ijeh (Ed. 2021): book on Crime Science and Digital Forensics: A Holistic View, London: CRC Press (Taylor Choose an item. 6 and Francis Group). https://www.routledge.com/Crime-Science-andDigital-Forensics-A-Holistic-View/IjehCurran/p/book/9780367322557 • Cyber-Security and Sustainable Development: The Case of Dubai In Handbook 	<p>Thank you for this update. It is good to read about these developments. We would encourage colleagues to keep themselves engaged with relevant professional associations.</p>

	<p>of Cyber-Democracy, CyberDevelopment & Cyber-Defense, October 2018, http://www.springer.com/la/book/9783319090689, by Springer</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Efthymiopoulos M.P. (2019), A Cyber-security framework for development defense and innovation at NATO, Journal of Innovation and Entrepreneurship, Springer USA (2019) Vol 8:12 https://doi.org/10.1186/s13731-019-0105-z <p>Energy Security and Clean Energy, Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flouros, Floros. 2022. Energy Security in the Eastern Mediterranean Region. Palgrave Macmillan: Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-09603-7. https://link.springer.com/book/10.1007/978-3-031-09603-7?sap-outboundid=73915FE67A8B5F7757F96F9DBA4F5945DEF990B1 • Flouros, Floros, Pistikou, Victoria, and Vasilios Plakandaras. 2022. "Geopolitical Risk as a Determinant of Renewable Energy Investments." Energies 15, no. 4: 1498. https://doi.org/10.3390/en15041498. • Maris, Georgios, Flouros, Floros and Ioannis Galariotis. 2022. "The Changing Security Landscape in SouthEastern Mediterranean: Assessing Turkey's Strategies as a Rising Power, Journal of Balkan and Near Eastern Studies 24, no. 5: 795- 814, https://doi.org/10.1080/19448953.2022.2037962 • Flouros, Floros. 2022. "Green Energy in Europe and Socioeconomic Impact". Journal of Management and Strategy 13 , no. 1: 31- 38. https://doi:10.5430/jms.v13n1p31 • Maris, Georgios, and Floros Flouros. 2021. "The Green Deal, National Energy and Climate Plans in Europe: Member States' Compliance and Strategies" Administrative Sciences 11, no. 3: 75. https://doi.org/10.3390/admsci11030075 <p>Economic Security and Power</p> <p>Spyridon A. Roukanas (University of Piraeus, Greece) and Pantelis G. Sklias (Neapolis University Pafos, Cyprus), 2021. The Political</p>	
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	Economy of UAE Branding From Marketing to Economics and Power, Handbook of Research on Future 7 Policies and Strategies for Nation Branding, DOI: 10.4018/978-1-7998-7533-8.ch001	
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>3.1. The Committee noted a gender imbalance in the profile of teaching staff. The number of female instructors is significantly lower than the equivalent number of male instructors (7 out of 47). The number of senior female instructors is also disproportionate, which may reveal structural or unconscious biases.</p>	<p>NUP is an equal opportunities employer. We strongly look for female candidates.</p>	<p>We appreciate that this is an important area. There are some very useful networks that the Faculty may wish to engage with to assist the work in this area.</p>
<p>3.2. The Committee strongly recommends that the Institution should seek to rectify the gender imbalance by actively facilitating and supporting the recruitment and career progression of female instructors. The Department should also prioritise the recruitment of teaching staff who can provide more critical voices and perspectives in international relations and security (e.g. post-colonial; feminist; constructivist; normative), as noted in section 2.4 above.</p>	<p>See point above</p>	<p>Our point here was the potential to look at the linkage to the curriculum and the way that might have a positive impact on gender balance.</p>
<p>3.3. Academic instructors are also advised to raise their research ambitions, by pursuing external research grants and publishing their work in international journals with a high impact factor, which will further enhance both their</p>	<p>Done. Academic staff is already submitting proposals for external research grants. This is already pointed out in the EEC report. Staff is already publishing in international journals with high impact factor as well as in reputable publishing houses (e.g. Palgrave Macmillan). Indicatively see: https://www.mdpi.com/journal/admsci/special_issues/PAPFSED https://www.mdpi.com/2076-3387/11/3/75 https://www.amazon.ca/Energy-Security-EasternMediterranean-Region/dp/3031096029 See also our response in p. 2.3.</p>	<p>Thank you for this update which clarifies matters.</p>



own career progression and research-led teaching.		
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
4.1. The Department should consider raising the English language requirements to a minimum of a level of B2.	Done. Actually, it is already stated in p. 14 of the application as per below: "5.2. English language requirements Satisfactory knowledge of English is essential. The minimum language requirement is a B2 certificate in the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages scale or any other equivalent degree. In the absence of such a certificate/degree, candidates will be asked to sit English language exams in order to prove their satisfactory knowledge."	Thank you for this update which clarifies matters.

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>5.1. An additional function of the distance learning unit would be to enable research into teaching that can improve quality provision across NUP, by supporting teaching staff to design and assess the quality of their teaching, students' interactions and engagement etc. This activity would result in elearning related publications. Also, initiatives mentioned during the visit including identification and support of students at risk and ways of identifying use of ChatGPT are highly encouraged.</p>	<p>Done. ChatGPT. The I.T. Department is currently looking into different solutions for identifying machine-made writing. NUP's software vendor Turnitin is developing/testing an AI writing and ChatGPT detection capability plugin to be implemented in our Learning Platform. The University is planning to implement this feature as soon as they release this tool.</p>	<p>We appreciate that this is an ongoing area of development and that there are various networks and groups that are looking into this. It is good to hear about the work that you are attaching priority to in this area.</p>
<p>5.2. NUP would be advised to explore ways to make the EUwide Eduroam network available to students and staff.</p>	<p>Done. The I.T. Department has Eduroam, Edugain, and EduVPN Services running in NUP infrastructure and we are currently upgrading those services to the latest version with dedicated infrastructure. Those upgrades are performed with the help of the Cyprus Research and Education Network (CYNET), which provides these services for all Cypriot Universities and Research Centers.</p>	<p>Thank you for this update which clarifies matters.</p>



6. Additional for doctoral programmes – NOT APPLICABLE
(ALL ESG)



7. Eligibility (Joint programmes) – NOT APPLICABLE
(ALL ESG)

C. Conclusions and final remarks

The EEC must provide final conclusions and remarks, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

EEC's final conclusions and remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>The present report highlights areas of strength and areas where we identify room for further improvement. The Committee was impressed with the overall achievements of Neapolis University in a short period of time and their commitment to further investment and plans for the development of provision in international relations and security. The Committee recognised the overall merits of the programme and were impressed with the support that was provided to staff with regards to the delivery of elearning. At the same time, the Committee did think that there were some aspects that may benefit from further attention. Most importantly, the content of the BA programme in International Relations and Security needs to expand to include more critical and contemporary research in the field. The Committee hopes that the points outlined in this report will be of value to the University as they continue to grow. The Committee was grateful for the support provided by the University on the day and the materials that were distributed in advance. We are grateful to the contributions from staff and students and are particularly grateful for the excellent</p>	<p>Many thanks for the positive outcome and remarks of the EEC report, which is quite encouraging for the efforts and quality assurance upgrade of NUP. Finally, we want to sincerely thank the CYQAA representative Mrs. Emily Alexandridou for her patience and the great job she did throughout the day.</p>	<p>Thank you once again for the support that you provided during our visit and also for the detailed correspondence that you have provided. We are happy with the comments that have been provided and wish the university well and the staff teaching the programme with the continuing success of their work.</p>



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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



support from the CYQAA, in particular Emily Alexandridou.		
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D. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Professor Alasdair Blair	
Professor Annika Björkdahl	
Professor Christothea Herodotou	
Professor Georgios Karyotis	
Ms Anna Tzamantaki	

Date: 27 July 2023

