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Date: 7 April 2024.

External Evaluation Report

(Programmatic within the framework of Departmental Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

University of Cyprus

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **School/Faculty:** Faculty of Humanities

- **Department:** French and European Studies

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

Programme 1 – BA

In Greek:

Γαλλικές και Ευρωπαϊκές Σπουδές

In English:

French and European Studies

BA in French Language & Literature

BA in French & European Studies

Language(s) of instruction: French, German, English, Spanish, Greek

Programme 2 – MA

In Greek:

Μάστερ στη Διδακτική της Γαλλικής ως Ξένης Γλώσσας

In English:

MA in French as a Foreign Language (distance/blended)

Language(s) of instruction: French

Programme 3 – PhD



In Greek: Διδακτορικό στις Γαλλικές Σπουδές

In English:

PhD in French Studies

Language(s) of instruction: French



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



A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

Thursday 4 and Friday 5 April were spent on site at the University of Cyprus, meeting members of academic staff, administration and students from the programmes under evaluation. There was also a site visit to the University Library and University rooms, and attendance at a representative class from the BA programme in French Language and Literature.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Anita THOMAS	Professor	University of Fribourg (CH)
Tannelie BLOM	Professor	University of Maastricht (NL)
Bernadette CHARLIER	Professor	Université catholique de Louvain
Edward WELCH	Professor	University of Aberdeen (UK)
Fivi CHRISTODOULOU	PhD Candidate	Open University of Cyprus (CY)

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:*
 - sub-areas*
 - standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - 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 each 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.

Findings for BA in French and European Studies/French Language and Literature

- QA policy for the department has been well described in the self-report and follows University policies
- There is clear evidence of continuous self-evaluation and improvement of the courses and the programmes for both degrees (French Language & Literature and French & European Studies)
- Consistent implementation of the MEQ policy which enables student input into the design of the programme
- Excellent student representation through membership of the Departmental Committee which meets monthly
- BA student representatives reported in meetings that they felt their views and ideas were taken on board by the department in programme development
- Public information on outcomes, skills and competencies is clearly displayed and detailed, and follows necessary standards

Findings for MA in FLE (on campus/distance/blended)

- QA policy for the department has been well described in the self-report and follows University policies
- There is clear evidence of continuous self-evaluation and improvement of the overall MA programme
- Self-evaluation process is in development for the new blended/online programme with clear evidence of substantial reflection and progress
- MA student representatives reported very strong and consistent engagement with the teaching staff and transparent mechanisms for feedback and evaluation
- Public information on outcomes, skills and competencies is clearly displayed and detailed, and follows necessary standards
- There is an error in the Information given on the University website relating to the credits needed for the degree in FLE (French language version) - website states 240 ECTS when the required number of credits should state 90 ECTS
- Lack of clarity in relation to how decisions will be made on the choice between delivery online or via blended mode for the new MA programme (see below under improvement)

Findings for PhD in French Studies

- Clear evidence of improvement in the design of the PhD programme since the last evaluation, particularly in relation to skills development and training, networking and conference attendance
- PhD student representatives reported excellent supervision conditions and researcher development
- Evidence of clear alignment between student project and supervisor expertise and interesting and relevant topics

Strengths

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

Strengths for BA

- Scope and design of both programmes are clearly informed by the research expertise of the department and reflect structure and design of similar programmes in other European HEIs
- Coherent ethos and philosophy underpinning the programme design in relation to student-centred learning and the fostering of critical and analytical skills
- Student representatives had a strong understanding of the programme aims, intentions and ethos

- Input of the Law Department was a strength of the European Studies programme
- The French Language & Literature programme is very well designed in terms of language training and pedagogy (EEC witnessed excellent of French language competency in the classroom)
- Interdisciplinary character of both programmes facilitated by shared electives between the two programmes
- Effective and valuable range of language combinations in the European Studies programme which give a variety of pathways for the students
- Strong encouragement from the department to take advantage of Erasmus+ study opportunities
- Very low dropout rate (5%) which confirms the excellent academic and pastoral support provided by the Department
- Effective involvement of student representatives in evaluation and feedback process via MEQs and participation in Departmental Committee

Strengths for MA

- Overall content of the MA in FLE is of high quality, enhanced by excellent collaboration with Departments of Education and Psychology
- Current students emphasised the great benefit of being able to combine theoretical reflection and practical application in the classroom
- Many MA thesis topics also show this combination of theoretical and applied science which students representatives identified as a real strength of the programme in terms of professional development
- Pedagogical design of the new blended/online programme is well structured with precise student activities and formative evaluation
- Programme design has also taken careful consideration of teacher input and workload requirements
- In planning the blended/online programme the teaching staff are strongly aware of the need to adapt the programme during its first iterations
- Support given by the pedagogical and technical members of the Distance Learning Unit is of high quality with sustained input from members of the Department

Strengths for PhD

- Financial support and strong encouragement for PhD students to attend and present at international conferences
- Opportunity to contribute to the organisation of departmental research activities including conferences and seminars
- Excellent supervisory support highlighted by the PhD student representatives
- Well-structured system of monitoring through progress self-report form
- Innovation of an annual doctoral studies day in 2018 to bring together PhD students in the Department

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BA

- Bibliographies in some courses in French Language and Literature could benefit from include more recent scholarship from the 2010s and 2020s
- Bibliographies across the French Language & Literature programme could include work by Anglophone scholarship in French & Francophone Studies so students can benefit from engaging different methodological, theoretical and critical approaches
- European Studies programme should ideally include work on power structures, role of bureaucracies and power politics within the European Union

- European Studies programme could include more work on quantitative methodologies and statistics as a support for causal analysis
- Skills development could be expanded, particularly in relation to negotiation skills
- For both programmes the EEC recommends increased scope for independent research through longer essays and ideally a compulsory BA thesis in order to foster and cement skills of independent research and thinking and to ensure students are in a position to progress to postgraduate programmes across Europe
- In order to accommodate a compulsory BA thesis in staff teaching workloads elements of the thesis course could include a dissertation seminar and peer review alongside a reduced number of one-to-one supervisions

Areas of improvement and recommendations for MA

- The EEC **strongly recommends** that the Department should run the MA in FLE in **only one mode** and the EEC **would further recommend** this mode be **blended** learning
- In adopting the blended learning mode the EEC also recommends that the in-person element of the programme should be announced at the start of each term and that the in-person element take place between two and four times a term at the same time for all courses
- The EEC believes that a blended programme will be more attractive to a range of students and will cement the strength and identity of a programme that is unique to the region
- Further to this the Department should revise its recruitment and programme materials for the new programme in order to present more clearly the overall programme approach (*approche programme*) and pedagogical principles in terms of aims, objectives, outcomes, competencies and alignment with assessments
- Given the tendency of current MA students to adopt quantitative methodologies for their MA thesis the EEC recommends introducing more focused training on relevant methods including statistics and how to interpret them
- The EEC recommends greater standardisation of the length of the MA thesis to c. 60-80 pages without annexes, which can be placed e.g. on OpenScience or other servers
- The fact that the University has halted the Evagoras and Praxandros scholarship programmes has negatively affected the number of students on the MA programme. The EEC therefore makes a strong request to the University to reintroduce these funding programmes

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD

- Move from a University-level Graduate School to doctoral schools based in each Faculty to enable more tailored skills courses and training
- PhD thesis supervision should be formally recognised and accounted for within the workload allocations of academic staff in Department
- Final approval of the thesis after the defence and any corrections should devolve from the University Senate to individual Faculties
- The fact that the University has halted the Evagoras and Praxandros scholarship programmes has negatively affected the possibility of students to remain on the PhD programme. The EEC therefore makes a strong request to the University to reintroduce these funding programmes

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



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

Findings for BA

- Good diversity of assessment method across both programmes to enable students to demonstrate learning in different ways to assess the range of skills appropriately, e.g in relation to language competency and critical skills
- Clear evidence from the observed classroom session of dialogic teaching methods and sustained teacher-student interaction, with further evidence of high levels of French language competency amongst the students
- Student representatives spoke very articulately about the overall vision and ethos of the programme, its design and how it developed and assessed their competencies
- Documentation provided by the Department demonstrates well considered and coherent programmes with pathways enabling students to explore different aspects of French Language and Literature and French & European Studies

Findings for MA

- Clear evidence of supportive and respectful relationship between teachers and students throughout the programme
- Very effective combination of theory and practice through school placements in the third semester
- Introduction of the new blended programme will enable even greater support for individual learning needs and approaches
- Presentation of the new programme by the Department made clear that the blended format will mobilize a range of pedagogical methods to support the relevant learning outcomes
- There is a risk of confusion between learning activities and evaluation, and the consistency between learning outcomes and summative assessment needs to be made more explicit to avoid workloads for both students and staff becoming too burdensome

Findings for PhD

- Very well-structured programme which supports students effectively through the doctoral journey
- Clear evidence of strong commitment on the part of the supervisors

Strengths

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

Strengths for BA

- See findings above. The EEC **strongly commends** the Department for its powerful account of the vision and ethos underpinning the programme which was echoed explicitly by the students we met

Strengths for MA

- See findings above. The EEC **strongly commends** the Department for the effectiveness with which the programme combines theoretical and practical training

Strengths for PhD

- See findings above. The EEC **strongly commends** the Department for the care and attention with which it has designed its PhD programme and the support it gives to its students

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BA

- The EEC recommends that the Department reviews the use and design of multiple choice quizzes as part of the assessment for its different courses, in particular the excessive use of True/False questions
- In the discussion with student representatives it was noted that the level of French proficiency amongst some students when entering the programme was under the expected level, and this can affect the motivation of the more and less advanced learners. The EEC invites the Department to reflect on how to deal with the different levels of proficiency amongst the cohort during the first year (students representatives further noted that the proficiency gap diminishes in subsequent years)
- As stated in Section 1 above the EEC encourages the Department to make greater use of term papers, essays and longer forms of discursive writing in summative assessment

Areas of improvement and recommendations for MA

- The programme could make much more explicit the extent to which it combines theoretical and practical training, which is a distinctive and valuable feature of the programme
- The overall learning outcomes of the programme could reflect more explicitly the practical training content of the programme
- The programme should state more clearly the alignment between the competencies acquired during the programme and the methods of summative assessment, including the evaluation of the final MA thesis enabling it to recognize the practical skills acquired

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD

- The EEC recommends that the University devolves to Faculties the requirements for PhD length

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

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

Findings for all programmes:

- The EEC notes that the current staff profile is well aligned with the requirements of all the programmes evaluated and that the Department has recently made a number of key appointments in relevant areas, including Distance Learning and Digital Humanities. Moreover these appointments will enable the Department to embark on its innovative and ambitious plans for development
- However the EEC also notes that there are retirements forthcoming at the professorial level and that there is substantial pressure on earlier-career members of staff, including the new appointments, to meet the requirements for promotion in terms of both teaching and research activity. The EEC therefore **urges the University to ensure that at least one of the current professorial members of staff is replaced directly at professorial level** so that appropriate leadership of the Department remains in place

Findings for BA specifically

- There is clear alignment between staff expertise and the requirements of the programme in French Language and Literature
- The EEC notes that in relation to the BA in French & European Studies the programme could benefit from more expertise in areas of European Studies and Political Science including policy analysis, administrative science of the EU, political science and power relations in the EU and quantitative methodologies

Findings for MA specifically

- The MA in FLE has been significantly strengthened by new appointments in the field of Digital Humanities, with specific competencies in e-Learning
- Academic staff have excellent international networks which have facilitated the development of the new hybrid/online MA programme
- Moreover these new appointments are making a major contribution to the work of the whole University in the domain of e-Learning

Findings for PhD

- No specific findings for the PhD

Strengths

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

Strengths for all programmes

- See Findings above

Strengths for BA

- Nothing specific to add

Strengths for MA

- Nothing specific to add

Strengths for PhD

- Nothing specific to add

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendation for all programmes

- As noted above the EEC **strongly recommends** that at least one of the current professorial members of staff is replaced directly at professorial level so that appropriate leadership of the Department remains in place

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BA

- For the BA in French & European Studies the EEC **strongly recommends** that the University of Cyprus invest in additional staffing to help develop the programme in a way that can make it the strongest programme in the region in this domain, in particular by supporting the areas indicated in Findings above



Areas of improvement and recommendations for MA

- See Findings above

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD

- See Findings above

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

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

4.2 Student progression

Standards

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

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

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

4.4 Student certification

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

Findings for BA

- Entry criteria as well as student certification are clearly stated for both programmes
- Very rigorous entry procedures are enabled by the limited number of places available
- Student progression is monitored by academic staff at course and programme level

Findings for MA

- Entry criteria are clearly stated with a threshold of entry appropriate to the requirements of the programme, with additional training made available for candidates who lack specific skills through relevant BA courses
- Very rigorous entry procedures enabled by the limited number of places available

Findings for PhD

- Entry criteria for entry on to PhD at University level are clearly stated, but the Department could state more explicitly its requirement for a Masters-level qualification

Strengths

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

Strengths for BA

- Nothing specific to add

Strengths for MA

- Nothing specific to add

Strengths for PhD

- French language proficiency assessed by means of application interview

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.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BA

- No recommendations to make

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [Title 2]

- No recommendations to make

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD

- The Department could state more explicitly its requirement for a Masters-level qualification

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

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

Findings for all programmes

- A world class Library with excellent physical and electronic resources and well-designed study and reading spaces
- Spacious and appropriately equipped teaching rooms seen as part of the site visit
- Meetings with student representatives underlined the excellent academic and pastoral support provided by academic members of staff
- Student representatives also commented very favourably on the University student support services available, particularly in relation to psycho-social support
- Meetings with administrative and IT support officers highlighted the robust technical systems and support available to staff, including business critical planning
- Excellent embedding of the Virtual Learning Environment in BA and MA programmes, with specific attention paid to Blackboard as the delivery mechanism for the new online/blended MA programme

Strengths

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

Strengths for all programmes

- See above under Findings

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 areas of improvement and recommendations for any of the programmes

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

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

- See findings for PhD programme in sections above

Strengths

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

- See findings for PhD programme in sections above

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 **strongly recommends** that the specification of entry requirements for PhD programmes is devolved to Faculties

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

Sub-areas		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Compliant
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Compliant
6.3	Supervision and committees	Compliant



D. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks, which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of each programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

The EEC **commends in the highest terms** the work of the Department of French & European Studies at the University of Cyprus. Meetings with staff and students made very clear the strong sense of collegiality, vision and ethos that defines the Department's strategy.

The EEC was struck by the Department's ambition and desire to innovate, pioneering work in several important areas for the University, including e-Learning and the introduction of the annual doctoral students conference. Moreover, the Department has cultivated an excellent research culture and environment which includes Masters and PhD students. It is proving to be a centre of excellence within the institution in terms of the support it provides to students at all levels and the way it fosters interdisciplinary collaboration within the institution

The EEC also notes the Department's success in persuading the Cypriot Ministry of Education to introduce French as a compulsory second language at primary and secondary levels. This initiative should help sustain recruitment of students into the Department's BA programmes into the future as well as strengthening employment opportunities for its graduates. The EEC would like to thank the staff and students of the Department for their warm welcome and the quality of the discussions over the two days of its site visit.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Anita THOMAS	
Tannelie BLOM	
Bernadette CHARLIER	
Edward WELCH	
Fivi CHRISTODOULOU	

Date: 7 April 2024

