

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: May 25, 2024

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

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
The University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Faculty of Social Sciences and Education
- **Department/ Sector:** Social and Political Sciences
- **Journalism (4 years, 240 ECTS, BA)**

**In Greek:**

Programme Name

**In English:**

Programme Name

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **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. Introduction

*This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.*

The committee consisted of three academics and one student representative with a relevant disciplinary background.

The evaluation took place at The University of Cyprus. The committee met with senior management, lecturers, administrative staff, and a group of current and former students. They attended presentations on the history of the College and the structure of the programme before being given a tour of the campus. They had the opportunity to view the library and technical facilities used by journalism students in the College.

The EEC would like to thank all parties involved for their cooperation and support during the evaluation, as well as the CYQAA coordinator for their help managing the process.



## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Christian Christensen</b>	Professor	Stockholm University
<b>Anastasia Veneti</b>	Associate Professor	Bournemouth University
<b>Rozane De Cock</b>	Professor	KU Leuven, Belgium
<b>Giannis Christodoulou</b>	Ph.D. Student	Cyprus University of Technology
<b>Name</b>	Position	University
<b>Name</b>	Position	University

## C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

### **Findings**

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

### **Strengths**

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

### **Areas of improvement and recommendations**

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

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

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

### **Sub-areas**

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

### **1.1 Policy for quality assurance**

#### Standards

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

### **1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review**

#### Standards

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

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

### 1.3 Public information

#### Standards

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

### 1.4 Information management

#### Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
  - *key performance indicators*
  - *profile of the student population*
  - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
  - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
  - *learning resources and student support available*
  - *career paths of graduates*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

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



## Findings

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

The university has established quality assurance processes that are transparent and inclusive. Such processes and policies underpin the on-going review and development of the programme. Teaching and administrative staff were aware of the relevant policies and procedures. Moreover, the teaching staff has extensive working experience in the field of journalism which is used in the monitoring and development of the degree in light of the latest developments in the given discipline. Periodical reviewing and processes for quality assurance are in place.

Admissions criteria are clear and appropriate for this level of study. Information related to the programme's admissions' criteria, rules of studies and expectations are available publicly in the up-to date web pages.

The teaching team uses Turnitin to monitor plagiarism and ensure academic integrity. The teaching staff is vigilant and well aware of potential dangers revolving around the use of new technologies such as ChatGPT etc. They have innovated by incorporating such applications in their assignments so as to more efficiently monitor its use. Moreover, the program caters for students with disabilities.

The EEC also noted that the university has a considerably high retention rate of its students which best reflects students' satisfaction and how the university programs address the needs of the students. Students should complete their studies in a maximum of six-year period. The EEC was informed that 75-80% of students graduate each year.

From the discussion with the teaching team, current and former students and the material that the EEC examined, it is evident that this is a well-designed sustainable program. The BA in Journalism has clear objectives and learning outcomes. It has been designed so that it enables smooth student progression. Exams and assignments' content correspond to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS. Student satisfaction is monitored through in house surveys and student feedback is seriously taking into account by the Programme staff for the improvement of the programmes of study. So, on-going monitoring and review processes are appropriate and in place. Moreover, the Programme team holds close ties with external stakeholders from the relevant industry to support both the development of the program and its internship scheme.

The program is also supported by media studios and relevant technological equipment keeping it in line with the latest developments, and a fully equipped library.

The Program and the Administration teams informed the EEC about information management. The EEC noted that a very well organised and effective information management system is in place that collects, monitors and analyses information about KPIs, students' profiles, drop-out rates etc.

## Strengths

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

Robust processes can ensure that the academic team is focused on the operationalization and delivery of the teaching and on support the students' academic development.

ECTs are clearly defined signalling the corresponding student workload in the programme of study.

Teaching staff with extensive working and research experience from which students can strongly benefit.

Excellent infrastructure including university premises, library, cutting edge studios and relevant equipment.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

It is recommended that the Program team updates the suggested readings in some modules so as to better reflect new developments in the respective fields.

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

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

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

### Sub-areas

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

**2.2 Practical training**

**2.3 Student assessment**

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

#### Standards

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

### **2.2 Practical training**

#### Standards

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

### **2.3 Student assessment**

#### Standards

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

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

*You may also consider the following questions:*

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

### Findings

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

The main staff of the bachelor in journalism program of the University of Cyprus consists of experienced teachers and domain experts. Students express their confidence in the teaching staff and are positive about the approachability of the staff whenever they have questions or need guidance. It is clear that the assessment of the courses is well thought of, structured, diverse, and paying much attention to the achievement of the planned learning outcomes of the students.

The equipment for journalistic production available at the University of Cyprus (camera's, podcast material, editing software and hardware, ...) and the infrastructure (separate recording room for audio, editing room, green key TV studio, control room, library access and physical and digital collection, ...) are fully developed and state-of-the art for the practical training of journalists. This guarantees an alignment with the demands and needs of the current working field and the quality of practical training.

There is a formal procedure for dealing with student complaints regarding teaching, learning and assessment, but the fact that this has not been called into practice yet, points at an appropriate and transparent way of grading, offering formal feedback and assessment.

Courses apply different ways of teaching (group assignments, individual tasks, news room collaboration and simulation sessions, ex cathedra classes, discussions, presentation sessions, hands on practical trainings etc) which offers an overall balanced and varied teaching methodology.

### Strengths

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

Nearly no drop-outs of the program. Well-established student support, also for students with a disability and extra learning needs. Extra exams are offered when needed by the staff.

Strong alignment with the demands and needs of the working field of contemporary journalism.

State-of-the-art journalistic equipment and infrastructure.

Strong variety of teaching methods and variety of assessment techniques (within and beyond courses, at least three sources of information are needed for final grading of students).

Formal and summative feedback on assignments, mid-terms and final exams. The criteria for assessments and marking are communicated to students in advance. Rubrics are in place.

Positive responses from students and stakeholders from the working field regarding practical training and preparation for the working field.

Positive evaluation outcome of teaching quality by students (average of 4.2/5).

Successful internship program and good employment rates one year after graduation (75-92%).

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 recommends to involve the bachelor students more in ongoing research conducted by the staff members. The involvement right now is only done sporadically and lacks consistency. An improved and systematic connection would help the students to better understand and see the added value of being trained within the social sciences as a journalist and it would benefit the research-teaching cross-pollination for professors as well.

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

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

### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

#### **Sub-areas**

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

#### **3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**

##### Standards

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

#### **3.2 Teaching staff number and status**

##### Standards

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

#### **3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

##### Standards

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

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

*You may also consider the following questions:*

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

### Findings

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

The University of Cyprus has in place a clear and comprehensive policy/practice for the hiring of academic staff. Teaching levels for university staff are mandated by a clear policy, and staff promotion (to assistant, associate and full professorship) is also done according to transparent and achievable. The staff for the proposed BA in Journalism and Creative Industries are qualified with Ph.D. degrees from excellent universities. As will be noted under "Areas for Improvement and Recommendations," the EEC sees a need for the proposed program to have an expanded number of instructors.

### Strengths

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

The teaching staff for the BA in Journalism is made up of individuals with an excellent track record in teaching and a good track record in research. All core staff have Ph.D.s and have been engaged in teaching for many years. Staff have published in high-level international journals and international books, and have clearly integrated their research into their teaching in the work they have done. Curricular development, student evaluations and faculty promotion are all clear, and staff present a unified and well-bonded group.



### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

In order for the BA program to reach its maximum potential, the EEC feels that the following areas are in need of attention. (1) Hire 1-2 more full-time faculty member (at the assistant, associate or full professor level) to ease the burden on existing staff. While this is an evaluation is of the BA program in Journalism, this evaluation cannot overlook the fact that the current 5 teaching staff responsible for the BA program will also take responsibility for the proposed MA program. It was noted in interviews that teaching levels are regulated by state and university policy and that staff are not over-worked, but the recommendation to hire 1-2 additional full-time staff is about more than teaching levels. Additional faculty members will allow for an expansion of teaching and research competence, and will also insulate the program from serious problems should teaching staff leave the program.

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

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

Pre-defined and published regulations are in place. The admissions criteria are suitable for this level of study are in line with the EEC's expectations. The university has a high reputation and through the Pancyprian exams recruits well qualified students. There is a notable, healthy growth of the Programme throughout the years.

Regarding student progression, pre-defined and published regulations are in place, as well as processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression.

Similarly, all mechanisms and procedures are in place for recognition and certification.

##### Strengths

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

Coherent and well-planned procedures for admission, progression, recognition and certification.

##### 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.*



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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



N/A



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

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

## 5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

### **Sub-areas**

#### **5.1 Teaching and Learning resources**

#### **5.2 Physical resources**

#### **5.3 Human support resources**

#### **5.4 Student support**

### **5.1 Teaching and Learning resources**

#### **Standards**

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

### **5.2 Physical resources**

#### **Standards**

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

### **5.3 Human support resources**

#### **Standards**

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

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

## 5.4 Student support

### Standards

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

*You may also consider the following questions:*

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

### Findings

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



Established in 1989, University of Cyprus is young, public University with around 7,000 students. Within a few years of its establishment has emerged and established itself in the eyes of society and the international scientific community as a higher education institution that offers quality study programs, produces research work of a very high level and contributes substantially to upgrading of society. The university is supported financially by government, tuition fees and donations. The university supports financially the new researchers, and it has an agreement of co-operation with 185 universities and research centres in Europe, Asia, Australia, Canada and USA. The procedure to hire academic staff takes about 9 months to complete. This procedure was launched from the very beginning to avoid political influence in the university. The course launched in 2012 with the first senior faculty member joining the university in 2018 and additionally, four junior faculty members were hired by 2021. In 2019, the programme was entirely revised to introduce new courses such as AV, labs, and connection with the media industry. The permanent staff consists of five faculty members and the non-permanent staff consists of two special scientists and four teaching assistants. The total number of students is 126 and admissions primarily through national exams. The course is taught in Greek language, and this is the reason that all students are Greek and Cypriots. The university provides an athletic club, radio station, 23 student clubs, 208 rooms student accommodation, shops, banks, restaurants, coffee shops and system of continuous assessments.

In addition, the university provides public lecture series, workshops, seminars, cultural festivals, free psychological counselling services. Kids from high school come and participate during summer, they provide summer school to the students. Language centre such as English, Turkish, Chinese, Spanish, French, sign language and Italian. Students must attend 3 semesters in the language centre.

### Strengths

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

The university has an excellent reputation giving the opportunity to the graduate students to find job easier. The recognized high-quality teaching and the well-connected professors makes graduate students a priority for the organizations as per stakeholders. The external stakeholders stated that the students at University of Cyprus are ready to work since they are more prepared about what the organizations need by following ethics principles. The course provides an internship to 3<sup>rd</sup> year students with a minimum GPA of 7.5 and written consent of the internship organization. The university has signed agreements with more than 30 host organizations in public, private sector and NGOs in Cyprus. Positions negotiated by the department. The university pays the minimum amount of money to the students during their internship. The internship program familiarizes students with the labour market. 92% of the graduated students have been employed 12 months after their graduation. 92% in full-time employment and 83% on a permanent or indefinite contract. Over 1 out of 3 with a salary of EUR 2,000. The university also provides to the Bachelor students an audio production booth, a TV studio and a special audiovisual production. It also provides the opportunity to 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> year students to participate in University's radio. In 2023, the university introduced the journalism lab. The lab currently conducts research on 5 distinct research areas such as journalism, practice, internet journalism, social media/data analysis and platforms. Each student has an advisor and faculty advises the students about their activities throughout the year. The University provides psychological support to the students, support to students with disabilities and financial problems. Career centre supports students offering a wide range of expertise and services such as professional guidance, information about universities abroad, seminars, events, partial employment.

### 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.*

Students are concerned about employment opportunities since the market is limited due to the small size of the country. Also, other relevant degrees are being offered from other private universities. Also, the university has a limited number of academic staff which will need to be increased to support the academic material and vision of faculty 100%. The academic staff wants more resources and consequently more students. Apart from the development issues, they can add more practical within the second year outside the teaching hours which will help and prepare students to work properly during the internships. Within the next 6 years, they need to achieve the employability of another two academics, increase technical staff and they want to see the program to slowly be independent.

Library is very good however the university needs to increase the quantity of books. They do not provide enough copies to the students forcing them to return the books back within 4-5 hours. Students want university to provide more practical courses to the students. It is not possible for each student to participate in an internship program during their studies. The students enjoyed most the projects and not the theoretical lessons.

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

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

## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

### **Sub-areas**

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

### **6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**

#### **Standards**

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

### **6.2 Proposal and dissertation**

#### **Standards**

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

### **6.3 Supervision and committees**

#### **Standards**

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

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

### Findings

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

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

## D. Conclusions and final remarks

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

In conclusion, the EEC would like to begin by noting that we were impressed with the academic credentials of the staff for the proposed MA program, and well as the organizational and technical infrastructure at The University of Cyprus. Established praxis for things such as promotion, teaching evaluation, student progression is in place, and appears to work well for existing programs. There is no doubt in the minds of the EEC members that the University of Cyprus is an organization devoted to high quality and excellence in education and research, and encourages staff to continue in the pursuit of such quality and excellence.

Some suggestions:

1. The program is in need of 1-2 additional staff members, at least one with a Ph.D. It might be an issue to consider if one of these new staff members is a permanent non-Ph.D. who can teach multiple areas in the practical courses.
2. The program should pay attention to the use of Ph.D.s in the teaching of practical courses. It appears that there are some courses where the technical skills of the instructor may not match the intended learning outcomes of the course (also a reason for the suggestion that additional staff with practical skills be hired on a permanent basis).
3. There was an articulated feeling among students that the transition from theory/research to practice was somewhat abrupt, making that transition less smooth than it could be. This links to the broader issue of the theory/research-practice nexus. The program may consider how practice and theory could be integrated at an earlier stage of the program.
4. It was unclear to the EEC if the BA in Journalism is a theory program with practice, or a practice program with theory. Clarifying this would likely aid in the marketing of the program to future students and to stakeholders.

## E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Christian Christensen	
Anastasia Veneti	
Rozane De Cock	



<b>Giannis Christodoulou</b>	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

**Date:** May 25, 2024