

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

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

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Faculty of Letters
- **Department/ Sector:** History & Archaeology
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
In Greek:

Νεότερη και Σύγχρονη Ιστορία (19ος -20ος αιώνας) -Master

Νεότερη και Σύγχρονη Ιστορία (19ος - 20ος αιώνας) -Ph.D.

In English:

Modern and Contemporary History (19th – 20th century) -

Master Ph.D. in Modern and Contemporary History (19th –
20th century)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Language(s) Greek
- **Programme's status:** Choose status
- **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 meeting took place at the premises of the University of Cyprus in Nicosia on Friday 26 May 2023, from 9am to 5pm. The members of the External Evaluation Committee attended a series of meetings with the Rector, the Head of the Department, the postgraduate teaching team involved in the delivery of the two Programmes, the administrator, and a representative group of students (alumni and current). The committee commended the Department for the detailed documentation that they provided ahead of the review meetings and identified only a small number of gaps in the documentation (student feedback analysis from the programmes under review). This extra documentation was sent to the committee members very shortly after the conclusion of the visit to the campus.

The briefing provided by the representatives of the University and the Department was comprehensive and impressively transparent. The evaluation committee members were offered four briefings: the first (led by the Rector) was strategy-focused, contextualising the Programmes and the Department's place within the University strategic goals; the second (led by the Head of the Department) offered a comprehensive overview of the Department's operations, strategy, ambitions, and challenges; and the third and fourth (led by the Co-ordinator of the two Programmes under review) covered a wide variety of educational and operational parameters specific to the MA and PhD programmes. The four presentations/briefing sessions highlighted areas in which the University has made significant progress (international rankings, internationalisation, partnerships, infrastructure, commitment to research and student experience but also promoting public-facing activities); as well as areas where there are challenges, whether for the University as a whole or for the Faculty of Letters and the Department of History and Archaeology (staffing, student recruitment, financial situation, competition with private institutions).

Taken together, the printed documentation and oral presentations provided the External Evaluation Committee with a detailed overview of the Department's operation and the highly qualified, committed teaching team that has been delivering the two programmes under review. The members of the External Evaluation Committee were impressed by the way that the teaching team have been working together effectively and maintained very high standards of teaching and student support in spite of significant workload challenges. They also noted with satisfaction the decision to appoint a new member of staff (joining the Department in the autumn of 2023), who will bring new areas of expertise and will strengthen further the delivery of the programmes under review. In addition to core learning activities (teaching, research supervision), the Department provided detailed information about all channels of student support, which the committee members found reassuringly versatile and effective.

The meeting with the administrative staff also illustrated their dedication to the student experience. It was noted that this administrative support, so critical for the smooth operation of the programmes, is currently provided by an insufficient number of administrative staff, who have to work above and beyond to perform their role properly. The (temporary) appointment of extra support in this area was welcomed by staff and has had a positive impact on the programme administration.

The meeting with representatives of the student body demonstrated clearly that the students (past and present) of the programmes value very highly their learning experience and the help and inspiration that they received from members of the teaching team. This impression was further confirmed by the student feedback statistics supplied by the Department on the committee's request.

A tour of the campus allowed the members of the External Evaluation Committee to appreciate the quality of learning spaces and services offered to students. In particular the new library premises add real value to the University and provide a unique space for the University students to pursue their learning.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Iakovos Michailidis	Professor of Modern and Contemporary History	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki, Greece
Aristotelis Kallis	Professor of Modern History	Keele University, Great Britain
Athanasios Christou	Professor of Modern and Contemporary History	University of Peoloponnese, Greece
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

Findings

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

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

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

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

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

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

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

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

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

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

1.3 Public information

Standards

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

1.4 Information management

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

Both programs comply with the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education, which was designed by the Cyprus Agency for Quality Assurance in Higher Education. The objectives of the study programs align with the strategic goals of the institution and aim to prepare students in accordance with the four pillars of higher education outlined by the Council of Europe. In terms of points 1.3 and 1.4, it is clear that the selection criteria, student progression, certification, and their connection to the academic market are well-defined.

Strengths

Both programs demonstrate high quality in terms of their learning outcomes and the monitoring of students' academic progress, from the selection process and continuing via the management of progression to graduation.

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 program curriculum could be enhanced by incorporating courses related to digital humanities. This is also a demand from students and could potentially be fulfilled, especially considering that the Department of History and Archaeology has recently strengthened its focus on Digital Humanities with the appointment of a dedicated chair.

The information provided on the program's web page could be expanded to offer more comprehensive details.

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 Department and Programme teaching team have clearly invested a lot of thought and energy in supporting student-centric learning. The best guarantee of this approach is provided by the very high levels of personal supervision provided to students (something that the students themselves praise). Course descriptions provide a clear rationale and statement of learning objectives. Developing student skills is embedded into the curriculum but there is always scope for extending this to include more competences, including new digital skills. The student assessments correspond to the EQF and interface well with the programme and course objectives.

Strengths

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

- The exceptional commitment shown by teaching staff in supporting the students' individual interests and needs;
- Promoting high standards of historical learning that is rigorous, flexible, and outward-facing
- High levels of student satisfaction with the process of learning, as evidenced by the student feedback surveys over the last years;
- The expansion of the programmes' teaching team with the arrival of a new member of staff, bringing new areas of expertise and further enriching the learning apparatus of the programmes.

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.

- More flexible 'pathways' can be created to attract students from different backgrounds and with different development goals;
- Similarly, assessment practices can be diversified (including options for 'authentic', public-facing types) in order to align with a wider set of different student learning styles and development needs.

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 teaching staff of both study programmes is highly qualified. There are currently four full-time staff members who cover a wide range of topics. One specializes in early modern European history, another focuses on 19th-century Greek history, and a third covers 20th-century European and Greek history. The fourth staff member specializes in the history of Cyprus in the 19th and 20th centuries. No visiting staff is utilized in either program, but academic staff from other universities are involved in assessing students' master's and doctoral theses.

Starting from September 2023, an additional teaching staff member specializing in Mediterranean history will join the team. This new member is expected to bring fresh perspectives to both programmes and contribute to research and teaching initiatives.

Strengths

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

The existing teaching staff members are actively engaged in various research projects and maintain collaborations with universities and research centres in Cyprus, Greece, and other parts of Europe. They have a strong international presence and have made notable contributions to the field through their literary production.

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 worth noting that the current teaching staff members are heavily burdened with the supervision of master's and doctoral theses, even though this additional workload is not factored into their weekly workload.

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.

The processes for student admission, progression, and certification are aligned with the guidelines set by the University of Cyprus for graduate and doctoral study programs. The regulations outlining these procedures are readily available to students, as they are published on the websites of both study programmes and the University of Cyprus. Additionally, the diploma supplement provides detailed information about each student's individual profile.

Strengths

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

The procedures pertaining to student admission, progress, and assessment adhere to the highest standards.

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 worth noting that both study programmes do not have any students from outside Cyprus and Greece. This may be attributed to the predominant use of the Greek language in the programmes, which could pose a barrier for non-Greek speakers.



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?*

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.

It was noted that the learning resources are of very high quality. This applies as much to course content and quality of delivery as to infrastructure and IT. The physical resources (classrooms, campus facilities, learning support spaces) were deemed by the members of the review panel as excellent. Human support resources were also considered of very high standard. Students' learning and particular needs are supported through a variety of university and departmental channels. Opportunities for student mobility are offered in the form of participation in international student exchange programmes.

Strengths

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

- The variety of mechanisms in place for student support have demonstrated their responsiveness to student needs based on the yearly student feedback questionnaires. These show very high levels of satisfaction with the programmes and underline the ways in which learning support was received.
- Infrastructure (teaching spaces, campus facilities, library and other learning resources) is a real strength of the programmes and adds real value to the offering.

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 way in which the Department and the University impart digital information to the students could be improved in a more user-friendly direction. Some students commented that it was difficult for them to find the information they wanted from the website.

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.

The PhD program is in accordance with the framework designed by the University of Cyprus. The selection criteria and the regulations of the program are clearly and thoroughly explained to the students. Guidelines for the presentation of the dissertation and a plagiarism check system are also implemented. An effective management system, in compliance with the university's regulations, ensures the quality and effectiveness of the PhD program.

Strengths

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

This is a high-quality program, particularly suited for students with a focus on the modern and contemporary history of Cyprus.

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.

To obtain more information, it is recommended to visit the PhD program's webpage rather than relying solely on the university's main page.

To make the PhD program more appealing not only to Cypriot and Greek students but also to students from other backgrounds, it is important to enhance the connection between Cypriot history, Middle Eastern history, Mediterranean history, European history, and global history.

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	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 the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

Both programmes clearly adhere to the quality assurance policy of the University of Cyprus. The admission, progression, and graduation requirements for students are well-defined. A stringent monitoring system is in place to track student progress throughout the courses, thereby reducing the dropout rate. The teaching staff, consisting of four full-time members, is distinguished by their high quality and unwavering dedication. Their commitment extends to monitoring PhD candidates, even though it is not officially included in their weekly workload. The infrastructure at the University of Cyprus is also top-notch, as the new campus provides excellent working conditions. Furthermore, the academic resources are abundant, with the University's new Library serving as a valuable hub. Both programmes engage in noteworthy activities, such as organizing conferences, workshops, and educational trips. They also maintain regular contact with their alumni through social media platforms. Typically, the master's degree either enables students to pursue a doctoral study programme or secures improved conditions in their workplaces. Some PhD programme graduates have already found employment in public or private sectors related to history.

These two programmes hold a strategic position within the Department of History and Archaeology at the University of Cyprus. They are among the few programs that focus on the modern and contemporary history of Cyprus, integrating it into the European, Mediterranean and international context.

However, despite the positive reputation they currently enjoy, there are potential challenges for the future. The sole administrative support person, who assists both the undergraduate program of the Department of History and Archaeology and other graduate programmes, may face difficulties due to an overwhelming workload. This situation has sometimes resulted in delays in student services and may lead to more significant problems in the future.

As reported to the External Evaluation Committee, the teaching staff of the program will be strengthened from September 2023 by adding another member specializing in the history of the Mediterranean. The Committee considers this a highly positive development as it distributes academic responsibilities among more individuals and opens up new research and teaching opportunities.

The External Evaluation Committee also expressed concern about the extensive length of the final essays in both programmes. Specifically, the master's programme stipulates a final thesis of up to 50,000 words; the equivalent figure for the doctoral programme is up to 150,000 words. The Evaluation Committee believes that these requirements are



excessively long and recommends reducing them. Furthermore, within the strategic development of the programmes, the committee believes that this aspect may discourage prospective students, particularly in the master's programme, from applying. The length of the final essay likely contributes to the declining number of admitted students in recent years, along with the rise of competing academic institutions and tuition fees.

In conclusion, the External Evaluation Committee recommends that the two study programmes seek ways to attract new students from target groups within and beyond Cyprus and Greece. Implementing the proposed modifications, which include incorporating digital methods courses in the humanities, strengthening the study of Cyprus' history within the broader context of the Mediterranean, Middle East, Europe, and the world, and fostering stronger connections with public and private stakeholders to enhance student research and practice, will enable the two programmes to maintain their high academic standards and attract a satisfactory number of students.



E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Iakovos Michailidis	
Aristotelis Kallis	
Athanasios Christou	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 2/6/2023