

Doc. 300.1.1/2

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report (E-learning programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Open University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Humanities and Social Sciences
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

ΜΕΤΑΠΤΥΧΙΑΚΟ _ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑ _ΣΠΟΥΔΩΝ
_«ΠΟΛΙΤΙΣΤΙΚΗ _ΠΟΛΙΤΙΚΗ _ΚΑΙ _ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗ» _

In English:

Magister Artrium “Cultural Policy and Development”

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme’s status:** Registered but not evaluated
Choose status



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 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].

A. Introduction

Although the online visit was very well prepared, the preparation (which took place one week before) was made more difficult because the course is taught in Greek and therefore only some of the material was available in English. The English module descriptions thus appeared to be partly not updated, and it was also difficult to get an idea of the students' everyday work and the course structure using the materials. The module "Museum Studies" provided a very detailed description.

During the online visit announced members of the university, the students, the teaching and the administrative staff were present at the indicated times and gave the evaluation team a very good impression of the working methods, processes and challenges. The atmosphere was very open, friendly and unexcited. An open and sincere conversation was possible at all times. All participants were very motivated to answer the questions, to give room for discussion and to give the evaluation team an authentic impression, which also included challenges and difficulties of the programme. The coordinator of the programme always gave the impression that she attaches great importance to the ideas and recommendations of the evaluation team.

After the meeting with the Vice-Rector and the members of the internal evaluation team, the Dean of the faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences presented the structure and the study programmes of the Faculty. This was followed by an intensive discussion with the programme coordinator, members of the internal evaluation team and individual lecturers on the programme standards, followed by detailed discussions with some of the lecturers. Both discussions were characterised by openness and authenticity. The challenging situation of teachers with short contracts (only the coordinator in permanent employment) was openly discussed. Despite this unsatisfactory situation of precarious working conditions, the enormous commitment of the teachers became obvious. After the lunch break a discussion with the students followed. They conveyed a very positive picture and particularly emphasised the qualifications and commitment of the study coordinator and the teachers. The subsequent meetings with the administrative staff were very informative. There was open discussion about challenges with increasing tasks.

In the final discussion with the programme coordinator and the coordinator of the Quality Assurance Office, the Rector of the University also joined in. In this discussion, the programme coordinator was also very open to the impressions and recommendations of the commission. In conclusion, it should be mentioned that the presentation slides uploaded shortly before give a very differentiated picture of the programme.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Julius Heinicke	Professor	University of Hildesheim
Peter Wagner	Professor	University of Barcelona
Jonathan Vickery	Associate Professor	University of Warwick
Marco Kalz	Professor	Heidelberg University of Education
Nicolas Georgiades	Student Member	University of Cyprus
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.*



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.

From the onsite visit, we discussed the course with every level of staff — tutors, course director, e-learning support, administration and governance (Dean, Rector). We were impressed by the concern to maintain standards, and the close monitoring of the course management — from module delivery, to student learning, to the learning outcomes of assessed submission and graduation. The course — within the governance of OUC is subject to three levels of scrutiny (departmental, University-wide and European/international). This is documented and sufficient: this course is already established and running successfully.

The course is stretched across two years, with each thematic unit spaced to accommodate the range of professional needs in evidence by the student cohorts. The course benefits from three levels of ‘feedback’: by students in their monthly meetings and individual discussion groups, module evaluations, and the comment of guest lectures (professionals from the sector). And while there is concern over the use of adjunct faculty to such a systematic extent, each faculty member evidently contributes significant professional value to this course and what it offers. Given the profile of the average student, the curricular is substantial.

We gained an insight into the origins of the programme (in a national-UNESCO series of funded projects — indeed, the programme remained featured on UNESCO’s website under the rubric of ‘Diversity of Cultural Expressions’). We applaud how each module is constructed within a broad and scholarly understanding of the discourses of international research, with the references sections of each thematic unit offering an informed and expert selection. The degree is known to European spheres of university teaching and has acknowledged European standards and practices (both EQF and Bologna). The ECTS system is transparent and internationally understandable. The academic qualifications and profile of each tutor is accessible online; each publish publicly available research papers, and most participate in cultural events and exhibitions. The modes of assessment (continuous and module specific, with an in-person final examination) is justified and clearly advertised. The identity of the subject of study, the sectoral skills acquired, and the demands on the student, are communicated in advance. There are also standard procedures for missed deadlines, counselling for students in difficulty, pastoral attention (with group tutorials and consistent individual access to tutors through email and video conference).

For the onsite visit, we were sent a comprehensive folder of documents, allowing us to inspect the CV’s of staff, module structure, assessment and degree awarding procedures, rules and regulations, one example of a Study Guide. The onsite visit itself allowed us access to tutoring staff (four in total), support and administrative staff, and management. We gained a very helpful and holistic understanding of the course in the context of its delivery, students, procedures and outcomes. We were also enabled in our understanding of the history and institutional framework of OUC, the public funding restrictions and developmental prospects of the course and its faculty.

Strengths

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

The course design combined broad ‘foundational’ modules, covering basic concepts and theories of culture, policy and management, and economics and social context. There is an explicit vision for the course as equipping students for both sector-specific skills but also social engagement and international cultural citizenship. The course, while maintaining Hellenic culture as a central fulcrum, maintains a European framework of reference (both in its academic skills-set, case examples and research references). While there is a strong emphasis on skills development (in policy and management for the cultural sector) the emphasis is on knowledge and the construction of knowledge through research, interpretation and debate. To this end 12 interactive exercises and Self-assessment questions for each thematic unit are valuable teaching mechanisms. The recommended study time per week (of a minimum of 27 hours) is underlines the extent of the academic commitment. The tabulation of tutor feedback on the Grade Analysis Form (with 2 weeks of submission) is good practice.

The strengths of the course are as follows:

- The course structure of delivery and standards are comparable with European norms: the course content possibly exceeds the European average.
- The course leadership is convincingly invested in the quality and professional delivery of this course.
- The course leadership closely coordinates the range of adjunct faculty involved in delivery, and ensures they work according the policy frameworks.
- All course tutors are cognisant of international standards of teaching (and research).
- The course (its range of thematic units) offer a broad and detailed coverage over an expanded contemporary cultural sector.
- The Study Guides (according to an OUC methodology) offer a detailed and highly structure model of delivery, allowing students a transparent insight into the rationale for the way the course is structured and delivered (with assignments and submission details, annotated bibliography, self-assessment questions and subject outlines).
- Each thematic unit is taught by a suitably qualified and highly motivated tutor (draw from a highly competitive and well qualified labour market of freelance tutors).
- The 15 week term is punctuated by subject sections, assignments, group work, and self-assessment exercises: this ensures a flexible engagement with students who are of a mature age and otherwise with other responsibilities (work or family).

The student population of the course is overwhelmingly a working and ‘mature’ (average age of mid-thirties), and we can understand the course content more accurately in taking into account the profile of the student population. The learning resources and student support available was of a slightly traditional variety given the innovations in online learning taking place across Europe (or globally) – particularly in the rise of US educational corporations (e.g. Coursera). The students we interviewed testified to the importance of the course to their career paths and their great satisfaction with the course.

Achievements: this course has achieved in the aim of establishing a credible masters level degree, which possesses the facility to engage with new developments and opportunities in the realm of cultural policy and management (European, and global, UNESCO).

Innovation: The online delivery frameworks are supported by a capable IT ‘Lab’ an eClass virtual learning environment, which have the potential for innovation — one example demonstrated by our visit was a virtual reconstruction of a museum or gallery environment for curatorial training

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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While the quality of the course is not in question, there remains a question on the capacity of the course management for development in response to evolving policy norms in a European context.

- Empower course leadership to become networked within European Graduate Schools and the 'international relations' that OUC is involved.
- Make resources available to an adjunct tutor, similarly, to engage in European networking as a means of developing teaching methods and quality across the programme.
- Academics: we gained the impression that the admissions (course entry) requirements combined with course marketing, did not establish a strong commitment to academic skills as valuable in their own right. Indeed, course staff articulated a sense of ambivalence in how the course demands the highest level of academic investment (in reading, research and writing) – as distinct from the acquisition of sector-specific knowledge.
- While the pedagogic approach and module content is perfectly adequate and evidently working well, there should be the facility for innovation in line with new methods in digital media. The course staff obviously require investment in this development.
- While there exists the facility for cultural site visits and guest (professional) lectures, the percentage of such activities in relation to the breadth of the course, is minor: site visits should be part of a broadened field methodology, and guest speakers could be integrated more explicitly into the professional skills dimension of the course aims.
- We remarked on the lack of differentiation in the content and learning aims of and between the three mandatory modules and the elective modules: we recommend making the mandatory modules more explicit in their provision of the tools by which the electives are worked upon, and the trajectory from the (broad-based) mandatory subjects to the specific electives (and the decision-making involved in that process).
- The public facing profile of the degree requires a little attention in its emphasis on 'development' as a subject of teaching and vocational opportunity: there is little in the course to offer a connection with current evolving models of sustainable development (particularly at UN level, but also European, as in European urban policy and new Green initiatives).
- We are able to understand intended learning outcomes, the relation between standards and the qualification awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures. We made no specific demands in any other regard, but in retrospect there was a lack of available data on marketing, admissions and conversion ratios; on student progress, drop out and comparative measures of attainment (over previous years); on fee levels, scholarship numbers and student financing; on feedback analytics and student experience; on job success or alumni careers (or the measures used or potentially used for assessing the added value of this masters to a career in the cultural sector).

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
- 2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

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

Standards

- *The e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*
- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
 - *among students*
 - *between students and teaching staff*
 - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of e-learning 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 e-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

- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on e-learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *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 e-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.*

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with e-learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
 - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
 - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
 - ***Weekly schedule of interactive activities and exercises (i.e. simulations, problem solving, scenarios, argumentation)***
 - *Clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
 - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
 - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*
 - *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
 - *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

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.

As the Open University of Cyprus is a recognised university in distance learning, the E-Learning methodology is very appropriate for the study program and it provides a good mix of pacing and flexibility. The students emphasised the helpful and clear structure of Blackboard and the high flexibility that the online tools of the programme allow. Both teachers and students can work effectively with each other and are remarkably well introduced to the programmes and their possibilities. The different needs of the students can also be met. Training, guidance and support are provided to the students. Overall, all participants were satisfied with the online tools and the students play an active role in creating the e-learning process.

Due to the situation that only the programme coordinator is permanently employed at the university and most of the teaching staff seems to be on 5-month contracts for a limited period of time, continuous work on the contents of the individual modules is challenging. When viewing the application documents, the initial impression was that the courses convey decisive and fundamental topics of cultural policy, but leave little room for current processes and further developments in practical training. Also, some of the literature references were outdated and not up to date. The teaching methods and learning paths are not clear in these descriptions, too. However, the discussion with the teachers and the presentations uploaded some days before the visit painted a completely different picture. Due to their activities in research and practice, they adapt the respective teaching content to the respective developments, which was confirmed by the students.

Since the students are for the most part in professional life, they also bring their experiences and questions to the seminars and encourage further development. It also became clear that the interaction between teachers and students is very intensive and that teachers take the students' needs seriously and include them in their programmes. The library provides e-books and scans so that the seminars can draw on important relevant literature.

The assessment framework is elaborated, and a diversity of assessment formats is provided. Seminars are held weekly during the semester, and students have one to two weeks to prepare for the exams. The students felt very well supervised and individually prepared by the lecturers, even if they sometimes lack interaction in presence. With regard to the power point presentations of the courses, it can be noted that the courses contents are clearly defined and the weekly work steps and work tools are clearly presented to the students. The courses of the examinations and the examination results are comprehensible and correspond to the usual standards.

The students find their way around the e-learning situation well. The administrative staff is very motivated to meet the students' wishes, but their capacities are limited.

Strengths

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

Everyone involved is highly motivated. The mutual feedback was remarkably good. The teachers are very committed and try to respond to the students' needs and give continuous feedback. They are available at all times and respond promptly to students' questions. The study guides are providing a very clear overview about what is expected from students.

The same applies to the work of the administrative staff. They supervise the assessment and the student assessment intensively and provide many opportunities. The student-centred methodology is well embedded in the programme,

The important role of the coordinator of the study programme should be emphasised here. She is the decisive interface for the processes between lecturers and students. She is also responsible for teaching the online tools and methodology. The communication between the participants also works very well.

In principle, the link between teaching content and the expectations of students seems to work very well. They are also motivated to work independently and to adapt the course content to their individual professional needs.

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 further development of the teaching content and the adaptation of teaching to the students' wishes is not visible in the module descriptions. These should be continuously adapted, or the space and opportunity for current debates and needs should be made clear.

If the current situation will span over a longer time, it is recommended that specific onboarding and community building procedures are implemented to ensure a successful start for new cohorts of students. The development of self-regulated learning skills should have a special focus in the first semester.

In addition to teaching preparation and teaching, the teachers are responsible for many areas of online organisation. The administrative staff is also very much involved in this area. Both sides seem to be at the edge of their capacities, here too, consideration should be given to making further resources available in order to maintain the high level of e-learning

In principle, it should be noted that the high motivation of all those involved in the study programme should be supported more strongly by the faculty and the management of the university and that active support for further development should also be provided here.

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
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	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.*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *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.*

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 on the programme is composed of one staff member of the university supported by adjunct tutors who are recruited for the teaching of specified teaching units (modules). The staff member serves as the co-ordinator of the course. She has worked in this function over several years and is highly qualified for the task. The adjunct tutors are recruited on short-term contracts for any given semester. (For contractual reasons, the evaluation committee has been able to meet only the adjunct tutors employed for the ongoing semester.) There are clear recruitment criteria, in particular the requirement of holding a PhD degree and of having done research in the area of teaching. The committee was assured that these requirements can always be fully met, given the high demand of qualified scholars for these teaching positions. Adjunct tutors can be re-employed for successive years, dependent on evaluation, including student evaluation. However, they are not assured of any kind of continuity while teaching. Provisions for staff development at the university do not generally apply to adjunct tutors.

Between staff member and adjunct tutors, there is a sufficient number of qualified teachers for the tasks of the programme. The staff member and course co-ordinator has the scholarly qualifications in the area of the programme and takes over the task of course development with high competence and commitment. The adjunct tutors are all well qualified in the area of their courses, not least due to the selective recruitment practice. They are research active, even though often not with projects based at this university.

The programme is committed to research-based teaching. The co-ordinator laid out compelling ambitions for further academic development of the course. The design of the teaching units showed the grounding in scholarly research, even though the courses were not all fully updated in terms of integrating recent research developments. However, this seems due to lack of time, given the recruitment practices for the adjunct tutors, rather than to lack of expertise.

Strengths

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

There is a very good match between the expertise of the teaching staff and the substance of the teaching units. As it seems, the highly flexible recruitment of the adjunct tutors allows good matching of the teachers' expertise with the course contents.

Furthermore, the committee observed very high commitment and dedication of the teachers to their tasks, mirrored as well in extremely positive judgement by the students interviewed. Similarly, the course co-ordinator is highly committed to the substance of the course, to securing its running at a high quality, and to its further developments. She is also very aware of existing constraints and works, wherever possible, at overcoming them.

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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.

While the overall impression of the teaching staff, in terms of both expertise and commitment, is highly positive, structural constraints that make themselves felt in the operation of the programme could be observed. They concern staff development and the synergies of teaching and research. In both respects, they have their roots in the employment practice for the adjunct tutors.

Given the reliance on teaching staff on short-term contracts without guarantee of continuity, the university lacks provisions for improving the qualifications of the large majority of the teaching staff on the programme. As a matter of fact, the current adjunct tutors contribute to the administration of the programme, to the monitoring and improvement of the course design, and to research on the course contents. But they do so out of their own commitment, without being supported by the university. The most benign way of describing this situation is to say that the university externalizes the cost for staff development and for the research base of teaching. However, it needs to be underlined that such a precarious structure risks to undermine the quality and sustainability of the programme in the medium- or long-term.

The committee is aware of the fact that there are financial and legal restrictions that stand in the way of completely remedying this situation. However, there also seems to be some lack of awareness of this inadequacy in the university management. Ways should be found to create a greater degree of commitment of the institution to qualified and positively evaluated adjunct teachers. This can include medium-term contractual continuity, support for acquiring research projects based at the university, enhanced allowance for staff development training at the university or externally, and adequate remuneration of time spent for administration and research, among possible other measures.

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	Partially Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Partially 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.*

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.

Regulations for admission, progression, recognition, and certification are clearly set out and made public.

The programme admits students with a bachelor degree of any area, good knowledge of English and good computer skills. Applicants have to upload every certificate needed for the application process (English certificate, ECDL certificate, Bachelor)

It regularly receives a sufficient number of applications, even though numbers have slightly decreased in the past year. As the combined effect of admission criteria and number of applications, normally all students who fulfil the formal requirements are admitted.

The criteria for progression are clearly set out and consistently followed. They are persistently monitored throughout the study programme.

The programme is structured in such a way that the degree as well as partial achievements are recognized within the country and internationally. This permits students to participate in international programmes, such as Erasmus, as well as incoming students to join the programme for a limited period.

Similarly, the certification is clear and detailed and permits the graduates, if intended, to continue study and research for other degrees or doctoral study in the country or elsewhere in the EU.

Strengths

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

The programme consistently attracts students who either work already in cultural policy or cultural institutions or intend to do so. This leads to the formation of groups of highly committed students who often also bring practical knowledge and expertise into the classroom. The study enables them to enter work or employment positions in this area or to improve their competence and working situation. There is a high degree of satisfaction with the programme among the students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The programme is feasible in terms of student numbers. However, numbers do not permit selection in terms of type and level of bachelor degree or other prior experience. Even though the achieved consolidation should not be put at risk, it may be advisable to raise and specify the admission criteria - not necessarily in terms of requirements but at least in terms of desirability.

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

- *Weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The e-learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
 - *Simulations in virtual environments*
 - *Problem solving scenarios*
 - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
 - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
 - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
 - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for e-learning, which is responsible for the support of the e-learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*
- *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 e-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.*

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.

During the site visit and from the documentation it was visible, that the study program is operating based on institutional standards with regard to services & infrastructure, student support and teaching and learning resources. These standards are met by providing access to a contemporary digital learning environment, a digital library specialized on distance learners and a student support unit responding to organisational and administrative questions. Students seem to be well informed about available resources and support options. Regular staff meetings ensure that resources are regularly updated.

Strengths

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

The study program implements a high level of student-centred learning, flexible learning and personalized feedback also due to a central pedagogical unit supporting the learning design and implementation. In addition, a central innovation unit seeks pro-actively the development of innovative and interactive learning resources. The (adjunct) lecturers show a very high level of dedication to the study program and students. They provide extraordinary modes of feedback and support to students. Transfer to practice is a shared value of all lecturers and students stress this transfer as an important aspect of the program.

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 current model of operation seems to work well. Nonetheless, it is not guaranteed that the study program can cope with a higher demand and it seems to be relatively unstable that the whole responsibility lies only on the coordinator of the study program. Furthermore, it is very unusual that adjunct lecturers are also responsible for contributing to the further development and innovation of the study program. It is highly recommended that some capacity is created to allow the program director to develop a strategy for the future development of the program (increasing the international focus, continuing with translating units in English etc.).

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	Choose answer
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
6.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer

7. Additional for joint programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 7.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement
- 7.2 The joint programme

7.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement

Standards

- *The joint programme is offered in accordance with legal frameworks of the relevant national higher education systems.*
- *The terms and conditions of the joint programme are laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement in particular covers the following issues:*
 - *Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme*
 - *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation, including funding, sharing of costs and income, resources for mobility of staff and students*
 - *Admission and selection procedures for students*
 - *Mobility of students and teaching staff*
 - *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures*
 - *Handling of different semester periods, if existent*

7.2 The joint programme

Standards

- *The partner universities apply joint internal quality assurance processes.*
- *The joint programme is offered jointly, involving all cooperating universities in the design, delivery and further development of the programme.*
- *Aims and learning outcomes are clearly stated, including a joint syllabus, language policy, as well as an account of the intended added value of the programme.*
- *Study counselling and mobility plans are efficient and take into account the needs of different kinds of students.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- Does the joint study programme conform to the requirements of a study programme offered at the specific level?
- Is there a system that assures the quality of joint provision and guarantees that the aims of the programme are met?
- Do the mechanisms for ensuring the quality of the joint study programme take into consideration the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)? Are they adopted by all the universities involved?
- Is the division of responsibilities in ensuring quality clearly defined among the partner universities?
- Is relevant information about the programme, e.g. admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures, well documented and published by taking into account the specific needs of students?
- What is the added value of the programme of study?
- Is there a sustainable funding strategy among the partner universities? Explain.

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>
7.1	Legal framework and cooperation agreement	Choose answer
7.2	The joint programme	Choose answer

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

This course has been running for five years and so is now established and operating successfully. Our engagement with site visit was therefore as a means of evaluating a functioning programme. It was evident in our interviews with staff and students, that there is an institutional will for supporting this programme as a successful programme (though there was no evidence of an ongoing investment beyond its institutional functioning). Our virtual 'site visit' was essential in understanding the student environment and broader rationales for the curriculum design and course structure.

This programme has two strong areas for advancement: (i) the discourse of 'culture and development' is now evolving into a range of powerful tools for social and economic engagement, and with all kinds of professional skills; and (ii) the online and digital media environment is — certainly after the Covid-19 pandemic — a growth area and with emerging a broad spectrum of pedagogic possibilities. In terms of substance and in terms of online methods the course has strong potential that the university should make sure to develop fully.

While it is obvious that the course leader and adjunct faculty are well-connected with the cultural sector, the future development of the course might be served by a professional advisory board (from that sector, and European cultural spheres). Such advisory boards have many advantageous functions.

The course has a strong identity — as offering a masters-level education in the policy and management of culture. But it would make this more relevant by visibly engaging with the global politics of development, and further integration of course curricular into new emerging EU 'External Action' or broader global international cultural relations (ICR, cultural diplomacy, soft power, and so on).

The situation that only one teacher is permanently employed makes it difficult to further develop the teaching content of cultural policy in international contexts. Due to the short-term contracts, the programme coordinator has no opportunity to discuss and develop her ideas with colleagues who are employed on a long-term basis. Ways should be found to create a greater degree of commitment of the institution to qualified and positively evaluated adjunct teachers. This can include medium-term contractual continuity, support for acquiring research projects based at the university, enhanced allowance for staff development training at the university or externally, and adequate remuneration of time spent for administration and research, among possible other measures.

E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Mr. Nicolas Georgiades	
Professor Marco Kalz	
Associate Professor Jonathan Vickery	
Professor Peter Wagner	
Professor Julius Heinicke	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 30.11.2020