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Date: 18-01-2023

External Evaluation Report

(Programmatic within the framework of Departmental Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

University of Nicosia

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **School/Faculty:** Life & Health Sciences

- **Department:** Life Sciences

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

Programme 1

In Greek:

Επιστήμη του Αθλητισμού (4 χρόνια, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

In English:

Sports Science (4 years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Science)

Language(s) of instruction: Greek

Programme 2

In Greek:

Επιστήμη της Άσκησης και της Φυσικής Αγωγής (1.5 έτος, 90 ECTS, Μάστερ)

In English:

Exercise Science and Physical Education (1.5 years, 90 ECTS, MSc)

Language(s) of instruction: Greek

Programme 3

In Greek:

Επιστήμη της Άσκησης και της Φυσικής Αγωγής (3 χρόνια, 180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό)



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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In English:

Exercise Science and Physical Education (3 years, 180 ECTS, PhD)

Language(s) of instruction: Greek



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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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 evaluation committee was introduced to the bachelor of science program, master's programme and PhD by the programme coordinators. The committee was pleased with the presentations and generally impressed by the program and effort put into them by the staff. Our overriding impression was a very positive one for all three programmes and this was reflected and confirmed by the students we spoke to at all three levels of study. There are of course some areas for development which we have highlighted below.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Nikolai B. Nordsborg	Professor, Head of Department	University of Copenhagen, DEN
Lee Ingle	Professor, Head of Sport, Health & Exercise Science	University of Hull, UK
Ralf Brand	Professor, Head of Sport and Exercise Psychology	University of Potsdam, GER
Andreas Evagorou	Professional Body - Physical Education and Sports Science Registry Board	
George Papgrigoriou	Student representative	Cyprus university of Technology

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

Findings

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

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

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

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

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

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

1.3 Public information

Standards

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

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*



- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- **How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?**
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*



Findings

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

Findings for B.Sc. Sports Science

The bachelor of sports program is well developed.

Findings for M.Sc. Exercise Science and Physical Education

The master of science program is well developed.

Findings for Ph.D. Exercise Science and Physical Education

The ph.d. program needs attention.

Strengths

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

Strengths for B.Sc. Sports Science

Well developed course structure and scientifically sound course content.

Strengths for M.Sc. Exercise Science and Physical Education

Well developed course structure and scientifically sound course content.

Strengths for Ph.D. Exercise Science and Physical Education

All students reported to have been excellently supported by their supervisors.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for B.Sc.

It must be considered if enrollment criteria secures high level students. The committee is concerned that the uptake of all applicants and that the low course failure rates indicate that the scientific demands may be too low.

It may be considered to implement more research based project work.

It must be ensured that the scientific level is secured by sufficient external evaluation of student exams (for example that 25% of exams are censored by an external expert from another university).

Areas of improvement and recommendations for M.Sc.

It is recommended that most students should complete an experimental research assignment.

It must be ensured that the scientific level is secured by sufficient external evaluation of student exams (for example that 25% of exams are censored by an external expert from another university).

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Ph.D.

The committee has several important recommendations for the researcher education program:

- It is very problematic that phd students are required to pay tuition fees while not receiving any type of salary during their education as researchers. The systems in Europe vary. However, most countries consider ph.d. students an invaluable part of the research ecosystem and it must be ensured that the students have the

possibility to engage fully in their scientific education. Several solutions exist. One is that phd students are provided a salary from externally funded research projects. Another that the university offers competitive phd scholarships. A third is that phd students are offered a fixed 3-4 year contract that includes teaching obligations and supervision of for example master students. Thus, the problem has many possible solutions but must be addressed.

- According to what we have learned from a phd student some amount of ongoing costs for lab work (i.e. consumables) have to be invested by the phd students themselves. If this were true, we think it is an unacceptable situation. The department should hold a budget to support these activities.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

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

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-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 and method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

You may also consider the following questions:

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



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



Findings

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

Findings for B.Sc. Sports Science

The style of teaching and the teaching methods are well developed.

Findings for M.Sc. Exercise Science and Physical Education

The style of teaching and the teaching methods are well developed.

Findings for PhD Exercise Science and Physical Education

Phd students reported to have benefited greatly from the very direct way of working with their supervisors.

Strengths

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

Strengths for B.Sc. Sports Science

Students praise that their teachers are easily approachable to discuss difficulties and provide straightforward help. Students can gain experience with laboratory-based performance testing while still in the undergraduate program.

Strengths for M.Sc. Exercise Science and Physical Education

Students praise that their teachers are easily approachable to discuss difficulties and provide straightforward help. Students can deepen experience with laboratory-based performance testing in the master's program.

Strengths for PhD Exercise Science and Physical Education

It looks like the University of Nicosia has found an exemplary positive way of student-centered learning.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [BSc]

We did not see examples of student assessment and feedback from staff. All students should be invited to provide their reflections on each course that they have studied. Staff should present the students with examples of how they have listened to the students feedback and acted to remedy any problems. Something like a "You Said - We Did" report.

We would like the University management team to reflect upon the view that some courses may be over-assessed. If the learning outcomes for a module can be assessed by one form of assessment then why not do this? This would free up academic time to focus on other academic areas including research.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [MSc]

The issues highlighted in the BSc programme also apply here.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [PhD]

We did not see evidence of how progress for PhD students is monitored and how any potential problems may be circumvented in a more formalised and structured way.

For the three courses that students must successfully undertake at the start of the PhD - could the University award a postgraduate certificate of research training on successful completion? This would mean that students are leaving with an extra qualification which may be helpful in their future careers.

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

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

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

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

3.1. Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

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

3.2. Teaching staff number and status

Standards

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

3.3. Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

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

- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

Findings for B.Sc.

1) Teaching staff recruitment and development

Recruitment and development appeared well functioning for permanent staff. Part time staff seemed well qualified but development possibilities appeared limited.

2) Teaching staff number and status

The education is very much based on part-time employees which is a risk for continuity, development and research-based teaching.

3) Synergies of teaching and research

B.Sc. students are given the opportunity to see and be introduced to the professor's lab-work for research. We consider this to be good practice.

Findings for M.Sc.

See comments for the B.Sc. program.

Findings for Ph.D.

1) Teaching staff recruitment and development

All ph.d. supervisors are well qualified researchers.

2) Teaching staff number and status

No lack of capacity for ph.d. supervision was apparent.



3) Synergies of teaching and research

PhD students were engaged as teachers but apparently more often for personal financial reasons than because their field of phd studies were relevant for current students.

Strengths

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

Strengths for B.Sc.

All permanent staff had international research profiles.

Some part time staff had international research profiles whereas others were more national oriented.

Strengths for M.Sc.

As for B.Sc.

Strengths for Ph.D.

Supervisors possess international research profiles.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for B.Sc.

The number of permanent staff compared to part-time staff appeared as a point of concern, as we fear that the good commitment of part-time employees could disappear at some point because they have to focus on other activities to secure their financial existence.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for M.Sc.

The number of permanent staff compared to part-time staff appeared as a point of concern, as we fear that the good commitment of part-time employees could disappear at some point because they have to focus on other activities to secure their financial existence.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Ph.D.

The department should hold a budget to help support PhD students.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
	B.Sc.	M.Sc.	Ph.D.
3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant



3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Partly compliant	Partly compliant	Partly compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant	Compliant	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

4.1. Student admission, processes and criteria

4.2. Student progression

4.3. Student recognition

4.4. Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

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

4.2 Student progression

Standards

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

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

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

4.4 Student certification

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

Findings for B.Sc.

1) Student admission, processes and criteria

Criteria for admission was presented together with strategies for development of students who did not meet the criteria initially.

2) Student progression

Student progression initiatives were presented.

3) Student recognition

Examples of student scholarships and recognition of especially sport performance skills were presented.

4) Student certification

Certification practices are in place.

Findings for M.Sc.

As for B.Sc.

Findings for Ph.D.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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



Strengths for B.Sc.

1) Student admission, processes and criteria

It is a strength that clear strategies to support students who have difficulties in meeting formal criteria are defined.

2) Student progression

It is a strength that clear strategies to support students who have difficulties in meeting formal criteria are defined.

Strengths for M.Sc.

1) Student admission, processes and criteria

It is a strength that the MSc program has capacity to take up all interested students.

2) Student progression

It is a strength that MSc students follow a well structured program and that defined actions are in place to support students who have difficulties.

Strengths for Ph.D.

It is a strength that a process is defined for enrollment of ph.d. students where several faculty members and entities are involved.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for B.Sc.

A way should be found to allow teachers to fail very underperforming students in the program without having to spend a great many hours on individual support before.

It would be helpful to provide data on student entry and progression level for BSc students. How many students applied? What percentage were accepted? What percentage progressed from year to year? Provide these data for the past few years to compare.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for M.Sc.

It should be considered to strengthen the emphasis on a practical research project as a part of the M.Sc. progression.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Ph.D.

The university and the department (possibly with the help of external funders from local organisations, entrepreneurs and businesses) should find ways to help Ph.D. students find funding for their studies, because we are sure that the department and the university would greatly profit from Ph.D. students who are able to focus even more on their research performance (instead of thinking about how to secure their daily living).

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

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

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

- 5.1. **Teaching and Learning resources**
- 5.2. **Physical resources**
- 5.3. **Human support resources**
- 5.4. **Student support**

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

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

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*

- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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Findings

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

Findings for B.Sc.

A higher level than what can be expected from a European standard was apparent.

Findings for M.Sc.

A higher level than what can be expected from a European standard was apparent.

Findings for Ph.D.

Activities of the phd students should be prioritised.

Strengths

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

Strengths for B.Sc.

Teaching and learning resources, physical resources, human support resources as well as student support is of very high standard.

Strengths for M.Sc.

Teaching and learning resources, physical resources, human support resources as well as student support is of very high standard.

Strengths for Ph.D.

Access to infrastructure appears adequate.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for B.Sc.

We consider the extant learning resources and the student support (for learning) one of the particular strengths of this program.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for M.Sc.

We consider the extant learning resources and the student support (for learning) one of the particular strengths of this program.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Ph.D.

It should be considered to support ph.d. students more intensively in the research situation. This could for example be by close interaction with master thesis students or partly allocation of support staff. At the moment, the risk of

ph.d. progression to be delayed by unforeseen events is high since the ph.d. students appear to be solely responsible for progression. Areas of attention is methodological problems, logistical problems and personal situations (ie. pregnancy).

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		[BSc]	[MSc]	[PhD]
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	compliant	compliant	compliant
5.2	Physical resources	compliant	compliant	compliant
5.3	Human support resources	compliant	compliant	partially compliant
5.4	Student support	compliant	compliant	partially 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 has a clear organisational structure in place addressing all critical issues.

Strengths

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

There is a broad base of academic supervisors from multiple disciplines available for students to work with as part of a supervisory team. The evaluation panel were particularly impressed with the number of multidisciplinary projects which were currently being delivered. PhD students were encouraged to publish their research work and the department has a solid track record of achieving these publications over the past few years.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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



In our view the Ph.D. students, but also all others doing research in the department, might profit from collaborating and developing a clear and concise mission statement on practices of Open Science and Reproducible Research. The following resources might be useful to reflect upon this issue:

Open Science Framework: [The Open Science Framework \(cos.io\)](https://cos.io)

FAIR principles: <https://www.nature.com/articles/sdata201618>

The low number of applicants for phd studies raises a concern that the incentive to enrol less qualified candidates is possibly too high.

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

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



D. Conclusions and final remarks

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

The panel has been convinced that the evaluated programmes offered by the University of Nicosia were of the highest standards in Cyprus based on the feedback from professors, management, students and external stakeholders to the University. The educational programmes evaluated were of a standard commensurate with other European programmes that the panel is familiar with. However, we strongly encourage that the University invests in research support services. What is clear from the evolution of the most successful universities worldwide is that researcher independence and excellence in research provides the basis for excellence in teaching and education.

Whilst investment is required this will have a positive impact on other University KPIs. Investment in research not only increases the quality of the University. Investments can also be expected to provide economic return in the form of more and larger grants with overhead as well as increased international recognition followed by elevated student application rates (and further success in international University rankings not the least). It should be noted by the University of Nicosia that the EU funds for research in 2023-2024 is 13.5 billion EUR. Several of the EU research topics are relevant for researchers in the evaluated programs. The panel notes that permanent staff at the evaluated department are relevant and competitive in this regard.

Finally, we would like to thank everyone involved in the evaluation process - the panel received fantastic support from Emily at the Agency through to all the staff and students at the University of Nicosia. Thank you all. We hope you find our recommendations and suggestions helpful and we are convinced that they will help the sport science programmes at the University of Nicosia continue on an upward trajectory over the next 5 years.



E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Nikolai B. Nordsborg	
Lee Ingle	
Ralf Brand	
Andreas Evagorou	
George Papgrigoriou	

Date: 18 January 2023

