

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report

(Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Central Lancashire Cyprus
- **Town:** Larnaca
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School of Sciences
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Πτυχίο στην Παραγωγή Οπτικοακουστικών Μέσων

In English:

BSc (Hons) in Media Production

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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



A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

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

Given the current circumstances due to the on-going pandemic, the evaluation took place online. The committee had the opportunity to meet with the senior management of the University and the School, the academic faculty and administrative/support staff, and the students. During the online meetings, the committee had the chance to attend presentations related to the University, the Department and the proposed program and ask questions pertinent to the under-review programs. The EEC committee also had the chance to watch via live stream a lecture. Overall, staff and students has been very open and responsive to all questions of the members of the evaluation committee. The committee also had the opportunity to review the physical infrastructure via the videos provided and examine the relevant documents.

The external evaluation committee would like to thank all parties involved for their cooperation and support during the evaluation. The committee would also like to thank the CYQAA coordinator for managing the process both efficiently and effectively.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Christian Christensen	Professor	Stockholm University, Sweden
Iben Have	Associate Professor	Aarhus University, Denmark
Anastasia Veneti	Associate Professor	Bournemouth University
Markos Souropetsis	PhD Student	Cyprus University of Technology
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

Findings

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

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

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

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

Sub-areas

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

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

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

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

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

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

1.3 Public information

Standards

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

1.4 Information management

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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



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

Findings

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

Admissions criteria are clear and appropriate for this level of study. Information related to the programme's entry requirements and expectations are available publicly and are in line with expectations.

The EEC also noted that the university has a considerably high retention rate of its students which best reflects students' satisfaction and how the university programs address the needs of the students. Moreover, having discussed with former and current students of programs in the School of Sciences, it became apparent that students felt that their feedback is seriously taken into account by the Programme staff for the improvement of the programmes of study.

This is a new Program that has been designed having a strong industry focus. It does so successfully by incorporating modules that have strong applied elements and which are taught by highly qualified staff with relevant working experience. The programme in Media Production does have explicit intended learning outcomes both for the program as a whole and individually for each module. The program is also supported by media studios and relevant technological equipment keeping it in line with the latest developments. Furthermore, the University has the necessary infrastructure to check for plagiarism cases (among which the use of Turnitin) and the processes to deal with such instances.

Nonetheless, with regards to section 1.2, while the on-going monitoring and review processes are appropriate and in place, the EEC holds some reservations with respect to the design of Programme. As noted above, the Committee felt that the programme featured appropriate learning objectives at the programme level, but to the taught modules level of the proposed BA, it looks like the practical modules dominate to the extent that creates a gap in the theoretical grounding of the programme. The EEC felt that while the program has been designed having in mind the latest developments in the field, these are basically focused on the practical aspects, and not considering as much as it should have been the theoretical aspects necessary for the development of analytical and critical skills of the students.

Further to the lack of sufficient theoretical modules, the EEC committee would also like to draw the attention on an area of concern related to the methodology course offering and a final research project (dissertation type). As things stand, the methods module (Research Project) is optional. This is highly unusual compared to other relevant programmes in European and American universities. A taught module on methods is important to help students familiarize themselves with different methodologies and the ethics of research.

Strengths

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

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

ECTs are clearly defined signalling the corresponding student workload in all programmes. The practice around the definition of ECTs is along the expected lines.

There is evidence of strong industry links and community outreach (for e.g., work for Red Cross).

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

The programme offers modules that build strongly on transferable skills and as such enhance students' employability.

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.

We strongly urge the Program Team to rectify the deficiency in required theoretical offerings and provide a better mixture of theoretical and practical modules to the students. The practical elements of this programmes will strongly benefit from theoretical and critical components. As the current programme of study stands, there is opportunity to create space for theory-focused modules on communication and critical media studies that will be specific to this program. For instance, modules of a more generic nature (shared among programmes), such as Contextual Studies can be replaced by program specific modules with a clear theoretical focus on the discipline.

Faculty members may also consider changing the status of the "Research Project" module from an elective to compulsory.

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

	<i>Non-compliant/</i>
--	------------------------------



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

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

Sub-areas

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

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

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

Standards

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

2.2 Practical training

Standards

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

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

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

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

- The program has a detailed and comprehensive practical training for students, and there is ample evidence that the future program has a well-structured system for student evaluation. Student evaluation processes are in place, and evidence from interviews with current and previous students (although from separate programs) indicate that there is a high level of willingness on the part of faculty to receive and take student feedback into account. As in other areas of this review, however, the issue of the balance in the program between theory and practice is a central one, and will be addressed below.

Strengths

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

- Students interviewed (from other programs) commented on high quality of interaction with staff, and a very high degree of satisfaction with the student-centered nature of the program.
- Student evaluation processes are well-formed and coherent.
- Teaching proposals and current teaching practice within the faculty demonstrate use of up-to-date teaching methods.
- Good access to modern teaching technologies.

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.

- As noted in other areas of this evaluation, it is a point of concern for the EEC that practically-oriented courses and teaching dominate the proposed program. In the area of student-centered learning and teaching, this over-representation, we feel, means that all of the possible teaching tools are not being used (critical thinking skills, theory) and students are thus not being allowed to reach their full potential. If the student is at the center of the teaching philosophy, then it is not simply a question of being given technical skills, but also critical. In addition, this heavy over-representation of practical courses goes against the guideline in Section 2.2. that “practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.” At the present time, this is simply not the case.

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	Partially Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Non-Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant



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



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:

The EEC finds that the teaching staff is very engaged and qualified and has a strong relation to the students and to the topic they teach. The numbers and status (rank, full/part time) of the teaching staff is appropriate and the majority is active publishing research internationally in acknowledged journals. The publications of the staff in general reflects the discipline as described in the application, however to a less degree what could be expected of a university programme in Media Production.

The competences of the teaching staff reflect the programme's STEM-profile and the priority of the practical approach to media production. The EEC finds that this very strong bias towards teaching practical skills leaves out important knowledge of the academic field of media production in a broader theoretical and critical context including societal, social, and cultural contexts and critical reflections on academic methodologies and epistemologies.

Many administrative and teaching responsibilities appear to be placed on course leader, associate professor Christos Karpasitis. It makes the programme vulnerable to be so dependent on one person only, and the EEC find it important to secure a more long-term sustainable structure of shared knowledge behind the programme.

Strengths:

The teaching staff reflect the STEM-profile of the programme, which the EEC finds original both in a European and an international context. The staff is updated on new technologies and methods of production and are apparently able to achieve the learning outcome in courses as they are described in the application.

The teaching staff indicate to be engaged in their field of teaching, in teaching practice, and in the students. The feedback to students' work and the student evaluation seems to work impeccably at the School of Sciences at UCLan Cyprus.

The staff demonstrates a strong connection with collaborative partners outside the university, which the programme and the students can benefit from.

Areas of improvement:

The EEC acknowledges the STEM-profile of the programme in Media Production but finds that it needs to be developed and needs to create a better balance between practical knowledge and academic theory and critical reflection.

To make the programme internationally competitive and to secure an academic level essential for a university programme the EEC recommends to develop the teaching staff by recruiting one or two staff members to cover fields like *social and cultural theory* and *media and communication theory*. That will improve the synergy between teaching and research so practical skills and media products and productions can be framed within a broader and stronger academic context. The EEC finds, that to add such competences in the study programme are necessary, also to meet a core objective for the University's strategy about encouraging a high academic performance of the students (p. 39 in the application)

By adding these competences to the staff, the program has a strong potential for offering highly skilled teaching from people with professional, practical knowledge combined with the academic theoretical framework and the epistemological and methodological reflections expected from a programme in Media Production at a university level.

The EEC also recommends securing a kind of back-up for the responsibilities placed on the course leader, associate professor Christos Karpasitis. It could be in the form of a vice course leader.

[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>
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.*

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

The admissions criteria are suitable for this level of study are in line with the EEC's expectations. The university has put in place a number of recruitment events to attract national and international students, such as Open Days (in campus and virtual via Unibuddy), events organized by the university international agents, social media advertising etc.

In general, recognition and certification work smoothly and all mechanisms and procedures are in place. Students who successfully complete their studies are awarded a double degree by UCLan Cyprus and UCLan UK.

With respect to section 4.2 the EEC found that pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place. However, the committee identified some weaknesses with regard to student progression related to what has been mentioned above in Section 1.2 Design of program. The current lack of a final research project that could offer evidence of student progression throughout their years of study, makes it hard to measure progression. Traditionally, a terminal project in the final year of study offers the students the chance to bring together what they have learned and subsequently that is evidence of how they have developed academically.



Strengths

Coherent and well-planned procedures for admission, progression, recognition and certification. The university uses ECTS credits for each module, which evidence its commitment to European standards, and allows for smooth recognition of attended courses outside UCLan Cyprus.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC recommends that a final project that builds on students' research and analytical skills will be incorporated in the compulsory provision of the taught modules. Such a project could be developed from the existing course "Research Project" with the improvements described in the recommendations in area 1.

That will facilitate the monitoring of the students' learning journey and skills development not only internally (UCLan), but also externally (for e.g., for students that wish to continue with postgraduate studies at UCLan or at other universities).

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	Partially Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

5.2 Physical resources

5.3 Human support resources

5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

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

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

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

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

5.4 Student support

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

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

Findings

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

The provision of a great student experience and the encouragement of high student academic performance are core objectives of the University's strategy. The University has developed a policy for academic student support to encourage high student academic performance. The policy articulates the statutes, the mechanisms and the processes of academic student support at the University.

In order to address students' wellbeing matters and to monitor any patterns in student engagement, the Student Support Services monitor student engagement on a monthly basis. During the academic year, students are expected to attend timetabled lectures, seminars, workshops, practical sessions and laboratory sessions and as such, attendance is recorded. Students identified with very low attendance are contacted and invited to discuss any difficulties they are encountering with their studies or their student life.

Student Support is in close contact with academic advisors, module leaders and course leaders to monitor students who may appear to have difficulties with their engagement in the modules' delivery.

The UCLan Cyprus Psychological Wellbeing and Counselling Centre provides professional services and support to all UCLan Cyprus students. The services offered include individual psychological sessions, group therapies, psychometric assessments. Within a safe and caring environment, counsellors can provide support to students who are dealing with any challenges (academic and/or personal) low self-esteem or self-confidence; lack of motivation to attend lectures; low academic performance; stress and anxiety; depression; grief; interpersonal or social problems.

The UCLan Cyprus Language Academy offers a range of language learning courses, tools and services for prospective and current students. This service provides numerous academic skills development opportunities and applies 21st century methodologies and innovative approaches to language teaching.

UCLan Cyprus provides modern teaching facilities to support the delivery of classroom-based teaching and learning sessions. Auditorium 1 - a large 300 seat capacity lecture and performance theatre; Auditorium 2 - 106 seat capacity lecture theatre, both equipped with high-end sound and visual infrastructure; 28 classrooms as well as specialised rooms (e.g. Moot Court Room, two Engineering labs, a Sport and Exercise Science lab, A Networking Lab (Cisco Lab), 4 Computing Laboratories, a Psychology lab and a Media Lab), which all are fitted with interactive white boards, computer-based data projection facilities and audio system.

The UCLan Cyprus Library covers an area of 465m² and has a capacity of 77 people. The Library has a central role in supporting teaching, learning and research at the University. It has responsibility for purchasing and providing access to all learning resources, both physical and electronic.

University students can use PC's which are located in the four University Computer Laboratories or alternatively they can use the Library, which has a total of 20 open access PCs, and 20 laptops available to students on loan.

Students have access to Lynda.com, an online training and learning site with over 6,400 courses.

Strengths

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

The University's Career office operates within the University Student Support Services. The UCLan Cyprus Career Hub aims to establish links with industry partners who offer internships, placements or permanent employment opportunities; informs students about job vacancies (as they occur) and external events related to employment;

organises the annual career fair and plans workshops that will create opportunities for students to improve their employability skills.

For each year of each programme of study, one student is elected as the student representative of the cohort. Course representatives are contributing to their fellow students' academic engagement by receiving feedback from them using different means, such as email, videoconferencing, forum, etc., to address issues that may arise.

Students with special educational needs or learning/physical difficulties are welcomed and treated equally from the first day of contact.

Blackboard Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is the core technology used to provide flexible access to a variety of online learning resources, information and activities to support students with their studies. The system can be accessed on and off-campus, transforming closed-door classrooms into communities where students can remain connected to their educational experience 24-hours a day. Through Blackboard, instructors upload relevant learning material for their students as well as supplementary e-resources to aid their learning (e.g. video/audio and other media files, weblinks). Students are also provided with quick and easy electronic access to e-books, journal articles and websites recommended for their modules.

Media Lab contains specialised equipment related to Digital Media Production. This equipment includes professional camcorders, DSLR cameras, camera lenses, camera accessories, microphones, sound recorders, tripods, video production lighting equipment, lighting accessories and a green screen.

The Audiovisual Recording & TV Production Studio is a highly flexible environment where all audio and video feeds can be configured via hardware and software routing. The studio consists of a control room and a separate recording room which are both equipped with necessary audiovisual recording, broadcasting, production and lighting equipment/hardware. Moreover, It features autocue equipped UHD and 4K studio cameras on broadcast specification pedestals. The production gallery contains a full complement of digital vision equipment including video/audio manipulation, tapeless recording, graphics software and a digital audio mixer.

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.

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



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



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

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.

We would like to begin our concluding remarks by saying that we were in general impressed with the proposed program, the department and the university. There was a great deal of clarity and openness, and the materials provided to the EEC provided almost all of the information needed. We found during our discussion an engaged, enthusiastic and qualified staff who were clearly committed to the program. The sense of departmental solidarity was obvious, as was a clearly good working relationship between staff and university/faculty management. This positive feeling was confirmed by our interactions with the students, who were, without exception, positive about their educational experiences at the university. The challenges (but also the advantages) facing a smaller institution were faced head-on.

The function of the EEC is, nevertheless, to provide the institution in question with recommendations that will maximize the potential of their programs and department by addressing problems, gaps and deficiencies that the group feel hinder such maximization. As noted above, in the case of the of the BSc in Media Production at the University of Central Lancashire – Cyprus, we find a program that is, in terms of the experience and material framework required to run the program – skilled instructors, physical teaching infrastructure, clear student evaluation and recruitment procedures, clear course outlines and learning outcomes – one that is well-equipped to provide a high-quality education. The issue for us, however, is in the area of what we will (for the sake of simplicity) call the “Theory-Practice” balance. For the EEC, the under-representation of not only courses addressing media/communication theory, but also elements within practically-oriented modules that address media/communication theory, is significant. At the moment, the course offerings for the program are such that it is difficult to argue that there is a meaningful difference between the proposed BSc in Media Production (in its current form) and the offering from a trade or vocational college. What differentiates university education from trade or vocational school is precisely the teaching of theory and critical thinking skills as not only a mere compliment to practical skills, but as a fundamental component of the overall education. This is in no way a comment on a lack of experience or skills of the part of the staff of the proposed program, but rather a comment on the structure of the program in terms of course offering and intellectual development, and on the institution’s priorities of these skills as they appear to us in the written material.

With this in mind, we conclude that addressing the following recommendations is central to bringing the proposed program up to an acceptable standard which is competitive with comparable international programmes in Media Production. These are suggestions present in the previous sections, but distilled for the purposes of clarity and brevity here:

- 1. The EEC acknowledge the original STEM-profile of the programme in Media Production but finds that it needs to be developed and needs to create a better balance between practical knowledge and academic***

theory and critical reflection. In this sense, “theory” is not the theory of practical skills, but theory in relation to media sociology, political economy, reception, etc.

- 2. The practical elements of this programmes will strongly benefit from theoretical and critical components. As the current programme of study stands, there is opportunity to create space for theory-focused modules on communication and critical media studies that will be specific to this program. For instance: modules of a more generic nature such as Contextual Studies can be replaced by program specific modules with a clear theoretical focus on the discipline.*
- 3. Faculty members may also consider changing the status of the “Research Project” module from an elective to compulsory, and expand the number of ECTS credits above 10 to give it more weight.*
- 4. To make the programme internationally competitive, and to secure an academic level essential for a university programme, the EEC recommend to develop the teaching staff by recruiting one or two staff members to cover fields like social and cultural theory and media and communication theory. That will improve the synergy between teaching and research so practical skills and media products and productions can be framed within a broader and stronger academic context.*
- 5. The EEC also recommend securing a back-up for the responsibilities placed on the course leader, associate professor Christos Karpasitis. It could be in the form of a vice-course leader.*
- 6. The EEC recommends that a final project that builds on students’ research and analytical skills be incorporated in the compulsory provision of the taught modules. That will facilitate the monitoring of the students’ learning journey and skills development not only internally (UCLan), but also externally (for e.g., for students that wish to continue with postgraduate studies at UCLan or at other universities).*

It is (in part) for these reasons that the EEC has given a verdict of “Non-Compliant” for criteria 2.2. as the Practical Training component clearly requires that, *“Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.”* In addition, while we have marked criteria 3.1. (Teaching staff recruitment and development) as “Partially Compliant,” we would note that is this a criteria that needs special attention in relation to the recruitment and/or development of staff able to help the program address the weaknesses from criteria 2.2 (through hiring of staff who specialize in theory/critical areas, or enabling existing staff to develop the competencies in theory/critical areas).



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Christian Christensen	
Iben Have	
Anastasia Veneti	
Markos Souropetsis	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: March 22, 2022