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# External Evaluation Report (Programmatic within the framework of Departmental Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
Philips University
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Education
- **Department:** Educational Studies
- **Programme(s) of study - Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**  
Programme 1 – Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4  
Years / 240 ECTS/ BA  
**In Greek:**  
Programme Name  
**In English:**  
Programme Name  
**Language(s) of instruction:** Language(s)
- Programme 2 – Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years  
/ 240 ECTS/ PhD  
**In Greek:**  
Programme Name  
**In English:**  
Programme Name  
**Language(s) of instruction:** Language(s)
- Programme 3 – [Title 3]  
**In Greek:**  
Programme Name  
**In English:**  
Programme Name  
**Language(s) of instruction:** Language(s)



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 EEC reviewed two applications to approve a BA in Primary Education (240 ECTS) and a PhD in Education (240 ECTS). In addition to this, the EEC team were tasked with the considering the overall approval of the Department of Education Studies. Therefore, there were three discreet components to be explored during the site visit. The EEC received the paperwork in plenty of time and additional material was provided in the lead up to the site visit as it became available. The EEC had time to analyse the documentation prior to the site visit. The site visit took place on February 27<sup>th</sup> 2025. The team spent the full day at the university. The day was spent hearing presentations from the President, the Rector (our gratitude to him for joining online while on leave) and other staff who held leadership roles either in the Department/School or on programmes/modules. The committee had requested that the presentations would be kept short, and all of the presenters were mindful of this in their presentations. Consequently, while time was short there was adequate time for questions and time for elaborations on different elements of the applications. The overall atmosphere at all the meetings was cordial and relaxed, most of the staff members present contributed frequently to the discussions. All of the scheduled meetings were held and worked as per the timetable with the exceptions of the stakeholders meeting which was cancelled. All of the leaders of each of the programmes/ programme components were present and the Dean of the School took the lead in outlining the overall structure of the School and the Department. These group of leaders spent most of the day with the EEC with the result that the appropriate people were always in the room when questions arose.

As the programmes and the Department, itself have yet to be approved, the EEC had to rely on documentation and evidence from previous practice and current practice elsewhere in the university to triangulate our findings. The EEC (see section B below for the list of evaluators) appreciated the opportunity to meet the different leaders and staff in the department and we had the opportunity to meet with several students online. Some of the students (all masters) were on distance learning programmes in the Department and they provided a very positive picture of student life at Philips University in Cyprus. We do recognise that on campus undergraduate students present with different needs and demands but there is clear evidence that there are tried and tested support structure in place to support the students in their learning.



## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Professor Gerry Mac Ruairc</b>	Chair	University of Galway
<b>Professor Barbara Schulte</b>	Member	University of Vienna
<b>Professor Sarah Anderson</b>	Member	University of Glasgow
<b>Ms Agelina Aggelidou</b>	Student	University of Cyprus
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 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 Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

The programme does not yet have a formal status, so programme-related information is not publicly available but has only been provided to the evaluation committee in the form of an application and related documents. At the university as a whole, and for existing programmes of study, the provided documents suggest that appropriate structures, regulations, and processes are in place to support the organisation of the quality assurance system. Teaching and administrative staff are highly involved in quality assurance procedures, with a relatively clear awareness of tasks, responsibilities, and procedural steps to take. Student involvement in quality assurance takes place mainly through student evaluations of courses. Student feedback is taken very seriously by staff and programme committee, as well as analysed and addressed systematically in the subsequent development of the programme.

There are clear policies and procedures in place regarding issues of academic integrity, and a clear awareness of the on-going development and emanating challenges of Generative Artificial Intelligence (such as ChatGPT). There are clear policies and procedures in place regarding issues of discrimination and grievances. In terms of designing, running, maintaining, and developing the programme as well as assuring the programme's quality, there is a lack of information and strategic planning regarding the question how external stakeholders have been, and will be, involved. During the site visit, no concrete information was provided (for example, positions or names) as to who external stakeholders are, or what their role has been, and will be, for the programme. The scheduled meeting with an external stakeholder was cancelled by the evaluation committee due to this stakeholder's irrelevance for the programme (a meeting was planned with the ExChief-Executive Director of the Cyprus Stock Exchange). There is a lack of critical reflection, and where appropriate, inclusion of frameworks designed at the national and transnational levels for education and primary education, such as those developed by UNESCO or the Council of Europe.

Strategic planning regarding promising areas of research in primary education and potential institutional structuring in the form of research clusters are currently at a very early stage. Given the current lack of strategic mapping and related expertise in primary education, there is no clear alignment between institutional strategy, programme objectives, and learning outcomes. Some essential areas in primary teacher training are currently underrepresented, including, for example, a clear conception, and related teaching, regarding different literacies as well as practice-related challenges. While there are solid mechanisms in place to ensure smooth student progression in the academic settings, there is less consideration of potential challenges arising from practice-related aspects of the programme. While placements are clear parts of the programme, aspects relating to the operation of placements are currently underdeveloped. The described workload adequately reflects the credits given according to the ECTS, and there are solid mechanisms in place to revise the programme's progression based for example on feedback procedures and on the work of the programme committee. There is little information on how the courses will be kept up-to-date. The course bibliographies in the syllabi provided show a large number of dated references. We cannot evaluate how public information is provided regarding selection criteria, intended learning outcomes, qualification awarded, teaching, learning and assessment procedures, pass rates, learning opportunities available to the students, graduate employment information, as the programme is not yet offered and there is no public information to be evaluated. However, the information provided

with regard to existing programmes suggest that there are appropriate mechanisms in place. Similarly, we cannot evaluate information management for the programme under evaluation but have a positive impression as to how this is done for existing programmes.

#### Findings for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD

The programme does not yet have a formal status, so programme-related information is not publicly available but has only been provided to the evaluation committee in the form of an application and related documents. At the university as a whole, and for existing programmes of study, the provided documents suggest that appropriate structures, regulations, and processes are in place to support the organisation of the quality assurance system as well as to support smooth student progression. Teaching and administrative staff are highly involved in quality assurance procedures, demonstrating a relatively clear awareness of tasks, responsibilities, and procedural steps to take. Student involvement in quality assurance takes place mainly through student evaluations of courses. Student feedback is taken very seriously by staff and programme committee, as well as analysed and addressed systematically in the subsequent development of the programme.

There are clear policies and procedures in place regarding issues of academic integrity, and a clear awareness of the on-going development and emanating challenges of Generative Artificial Intelligence (such as ChatGPT). There are clear policies and procedures in place regarding issues of discrimination and grievances.

In terms of designing, running, maintaining, and developing the programme as well as assuring the programme's quality, there is a lack of information and strategic planning regarding the question how external stakeholders have been, and will be, involved. During the site visit, no concrete information was provided (for example, positions or names) as to who external stakeholders are, or what they role has been, and will be, for the programme. The scheduled meeting with an external stakeholder was cancelled by the evaluation committee due to this stakeholder's irrelevance for the programme (a meeting was planned with the Ex Chief-Executive Director of the Cyprus Stock Exchange).

There is a lack of critical reflection, and where appropriate, inclusion of frameworks designed at the national and transnational levels for education, such as those developed by UNESCO or the Council of Europe. Strategic planning regarding promising areas of research in education and potential institutional structuring in the form of research clusters are currently at a very early stage. Given the current lack of strategic mapping and related expertise in the broad field education, there is no clear alignment between institutional strategy, programme objectives, and learning outcomes. Some essential areas in educational research are currently underrepresented, including, for example, foundations of education, philosophy of education, sociology of education, curriculum research, to name but a few.

The described workload adequately reflects the credits given according to the ECTS, and there are solid mechanisms in place to revise the programme's progression based for example on feedback procedures and on the work of the programme committee. There is little information on how the courses will be aligned with on-going cutting-edge research in the educational sciences internationally. We cannot evaluate how public information is provided regarding selection criteria, intended learning outcomes, qualification awarded, teaching, learning and assessment procedures, pass rates, learning opportunities available to the students, graduate employment information, as the programme is not yet offered and there is no public information to be

evaluated. However, the information provided with regard to existing programmes suggest that there are appropriate mechanisms in place. Similarly, we cannot evaluate information management for the programme under evaluation but have a positive impression as to how this is done for existing programmes.

### Findings for [Title 3]

Click or tap here to enter text.

### **Strengths**

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

#### **Strengths for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

At the university as a whole, and for existing programmes of study, there are established and transparent procedures for quality assurance, including issues such as programme development, academic integrity and freedom, and discrimination and grievances.

#### **Strengths for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD**

1. At the university as a whole, and for existing programmes of study, there are established and transparent procedures for quality assurance, including issues such as programme development, academic integrity and freedom, and discrimination and grievances.
2. There are solid mechanisms in place to ensure smooth student progression.

### Strengths for [Title 3]

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.*

#### **Areas of improvement and recommendations for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

1. Students' involvement in quality assurance and the development of the programme could be expanded beyond student evaluations of courses, for example in having student representatives in (some of the) Programme committee meetings.
2. It is highly recommended to strategically involve external stakeholders at a very early stage of designing the programme. An early involvement, and thereafter continuous and regularized

participation, of external stakeholders in the field is of crucial importance, particularly in a practice-related programme such as Primary Education.

3. While a certain openness and flexibility is due to the fact that staff needs yet to be recruited, the chosen focus on primary education makes it essential that relevant expertise in this field is adequately represented in the teaching staff of the programme. It is therefore highly recommended to map existing expertise and strategically think about what kind of expertise will be needed to prepare students to become teachers who can critically reflect upon the complexities of primary schools, and who can successfully, professionally, and empathetically teach, and interact with, children in primary education.
4. As an alternative recommendation, we would like to add that choosing a different field for designing a BA programme can be a viable option. Teacher training in primary education is a highly demanding field that needs to take into consideration a wide range of theoretical and practical approaches, making necessary rather extensive resources regarding organisation of study and training, mentoring, mock classrooms and equipment, etc. It may be worth considering less complex BA programmes to be offered.
5. It is further recommended to discuss the direction and structuring of the programme with the Scientific Advisory Board for external expertise. We were informed that such a Board is yet to be established for the (prospective) Department of Educational Studies. We strongly suggest having a (preliminary) group of external advisors at the earliest stage possible so that the design of the programmes can profit from their expertise.
6. It is recommended to take into consideration national and transnational frameworks for education, such as those developed by UNESCO and the Council of Europe.
7. More planning and procedures are needed regarding the practical parts of the programme in order to ensure smooth student progression, particularly for the operational aspects regarding the placements. This includes in particular the diverse challenges arising from student experiences in the classroom, and developing a professional identity as a primary teacher.
8. Given the awareness and expertise regarding learning objectives and teaching methodologies among management and staff, it is recommended to systematically map these within and across courses so that it becomes more visible how learning objectives and teaching methodologies match, and how the range of different teaching methodologies spreads across individual courses in order to provide a diversity of methodologies to the students throughout the programme.
9. Given the awareness of the challenges emanating from GenAI, it is recommended to integrate the process of text production/academic writing more systematically into course work to be done by the students. Measures such as writing logs, mutual peer-review of work in progress, uploading work in progress as well as reflections on how to build on this work could be used to adequately address these challenges; as well as measures to instill joy in creating and writing.
10. It is recommended to design effective mechanisms that can ensure that course bibliographies are continuously kept updated, in order to familiarize the students with most recent developments in research and practice.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD

1. Students' involvement in quality assurance and the development of the programme could be expanded beyond student evaluations of courses, for example in having student representatives in (some of the) Programme committee meetings.
2. It is highly recommended to strategically involve external stakeholders at a very early stage of designing the programme. An early involvement, and thereafter continuous and regularized participation, of external stakeholders in the field is of crucial importance and the selected group of stakeholders should reflect the diversity of the field of educational studies.
3. While a certain openness and flexibility is due to the fact that staff needs yet to be recruited, the decision to offer a PhD programme in the broad field of education makes it essential that relevant expertise in this field is adequately represented in the teaching staff of the programme. It is therefore highly recommended to map existing expertise and strategically think about the directions in which educational research at the Department should be established and supported, and to which areas the Department wishes to contribute in particular, in order to build an environment in which PhD students can meaningfully embark on their PhD projects, and in which PhD students will be trained to, through their thesis and other contributions, develop the field of educational sciences in ways that are in alignment with international standards.
4. As an alternative recommendation, we would like to add that narrowing down the field of Education for designing a PhD programme can be a viable option. Depending on the academic staff's expertise and plans for further recruitment, it may be wise to focus on a specific area within the broad field of Education, also to ensure a good match of supervisors and PhD topics.
5. It is recommended to discuss the direction and structuring of the programme with the Scientific Advisory Board for external expertise. We were informed that such a Board is yet to be established for the (prospective) Department of Educational Studies. We strongly suggest having a (preliminary) group of external advisors at the earliest stage possible so that the design of the programmes can profit from their expertise.
6. It is recommended to take into consideration national and transnational frameworks for education, such as those developed by UNESCO and the Council of Europe.
7. Given the awareness and expertise regarding learning objectives and teaching methodologies among management and staff, it is recommended to systematically map these within and across courses so that it becomes more visible how learning objectives and teaching methodologies match, and how the range of different teaching methodologies spreads across individual courses in order to provide a diversity of methodologies to the students throughout the programme.
8. Given the awareness of the challenges emanating from GenAI, it is recommended to integrate the process of text production/academic writing more systematically into course work to be done by the students. Measures such as writing logs, mutual peer-review of work in progress, uploading work in progress as well as reflections on how to build on this work could be used to adequately address these challenges; as well as measures to instill joy in creating and writing.
9. It is recommended to design effective mechanisms that can ensure that PhD students, through course work and other activities, can familiarize themselves with the latest development in the field.



1.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [Title 3]

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<b>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</b>		
		<i>Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA</i>	<i>Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD</i>	[Title 3]
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Partially compliant	Partially compliant	Choose answer
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Non-compliant	Non-compliant	Choose answer
1.3	Public information	Not applicable	Not applicable	Choose answer
1.4	Information management	Not applicable	Not applicable	Choose answer

## 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)?*



## **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 Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

The e-learning instruction provided in existing programmes for teachers currently offered within the School supports the development of students and provides a foundation for offering further programmes. Teaching staff articulate respect in the learner-teacher relationship. The university has procedures in place regarding student complaints; current students in other programmes were aware of processes and emphasised they have not needed to use these procedures.

The teaching methodology as described in the study guides for proposed courses is standard and consistent across courses, is noted as a mixture of lectures and small group teaching (called classes, seminars, workshops or tutorials) and assignment/group assignment. Many of these courses appear to be new and are yet to be fully developed or are on offer in other programmes. All courses appear to have a similar structure which contributes to clear expectations of processes.

It is unclear through the evidence provided and site visit discussions that appropriate pedagogical methods are planned to facilitate the achievement of learning outcomes for primary education. Considering the Bachelor level of the programme and the intended teacher qualification, it is not evidenced that students have suitable training in the core knowledge, skills, and dispositions of primary education. Elective options as planned would result in some essential learning outcomes possibly being missed by students who choose not to take this elective. With a new programme, it is unknown how active a role in the learning process students will have. Reading lists are very limited and dated. Digital technologies are primarily implemented through the Moodle LMS which support the teaching process. There appears to be available space on the premises for in-person courses to be delivered.

Evidence as not provided that practical training is organised to support the achieving of the objectives of the study programme. It is unclear in what ways student will receive comprehensive feedback on their practical training which occurs in school experience. The study guides did not sufficiently reflect school placements in primary education settings which are sufficient to support learning outcomes established in the field of teacher education at the primary level. Discussion revealed a conflict of information as to the plans and intention to implement EDC 245 School Experience 1 (year 2 semester 4) and EDC 365 (year 3 semester 6). EDC 482 is indicated as the 20 ECTS in which selected teachings will be monitored and evaluated by specialized professors of the University; it is unclear which staff have specialism in primary education to conduct the evaluation. The Ministry requirement for students to complete 30 ECTS in School Experience will be reflected if all 3 placements are carried out as planned. During discussion it was stated there is intention for application of theory to practice to occur. Students without any teaching post (pre-service teachers) will only experience their teaching practicum online with students who are physically present in school. It is unclear in what ways the needs of stakeholders have been considered.

With a new programme, there is no information available to ensure assessment is carried out in accordance with stated procedures. No examples of assessments were provided or rubrics connected to learning outcomes. Discussion established a general approach of assignment completion and final exams. The percentage of examinations for courses as planned in the study

guides appears to comply with the university expectation of no more than 70% attributed to examination. Staff articulated that ongoing formative assessment in other programmes is a common practice. During discussions and presentations on site, a list of student-led options to demonstrate learning was provided; it is unclear in which courses this would apply, how learning outcomes would be ensured through the various formats, or how it would be reflected in the planned assessments across the programme. Without clear identification of the core competencies a primary teacher must demonstrate, it is unclear that planned assessments are appropriate. Assessment of school experience is undefined; this reflects an unfamiliarity with examination methods in primary education. It is unclear that mitigating circumstances are considered for school experience.

#### Findings for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD

The PhD programme follows a structured approach to teaching and learning that aligns with the university's academic framework and the noted researcher development framework. Doctoral students actively shape their research topics through independent projects and self-directed study, supported by regular supervision, seminars, and peer discussions. However, it is unclear from the evidence provided and site visit discussions that appropriate pedagogical methods are planned to facilitate the achievement of learning outcomes for a PhD in the field of Education. Considering the doctoral level of the programme and the intended research focus, it is not evident that students receive sufficient training in core research methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and analytical skills required for advanced study in Education. There are three shared courses with another PhD programme and plans for faculty mentorship and academic collaboration with international partners. There is no clear rationale provided for the inclusion of EDU 712 Selected studies in Education and Management.

As a new programme, it remains unknown how actively students will engage in the learning and research process. Reading lists are limited and outdated. Digital technologies are primarily implemented through the Moodle LMS to support course delivery. Available space on the premises appears sufficient for in-person sessions and supervision. The programme's flexible, individualized approach accommodates diverse student needs, particularly professionals. There is a clear process for how students will receive comprehensive feedback on their research progress and dissertation development, however the study guides provided do not sufficiently reflect structured doctoral research training in the field of education. There is a lack of faculty expertise in supervising doctoral research within the field of education.

With a new programme, there is no available information ensuring assessment is conducted in accordance with stated procedures. No examples of assessments, rubrics, or research proposal evaluations were provided. Discussions established a general approach of assignment completion and dissertation evaluation with information on formative assessments and structured research progress reviews provided. The percentage of examinations in the courses as outlined in study guides appears to comply with the university's expectation of no more than 70% attributed to final assessment. The evaluation of doctoral research progress and dissertation work is defined reflecting familiarity with practices in doctoral supervision. Faculty guidance in established programmes is adequate, but expertise in education and associated research methods is limited,

raising concerns. The university has well-defined and accessible process for students to raise concerns regarding their learning experience.

The needs of key stakeholders, including external research partners and funding bodies, appear to have been insufficiently considered. Furthermore, additional information regarding clear provisions for mitigating circumstances in research completion could have been outlined.

### **Strengths**

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

#### **Strengths for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

1. The School has established procedures and processes carrying out programmes and supporting students.
2. Some learning activities, exercises and projects are designed to promote collaboration among students. A variety of digital tools and the Moodle LMS are used to support student learning.
3. Good staff-student relationships were reported both by teachers and students involved in other programmes.
4. The EEC found satisfactory coverage of some basic foundational topics in the first years of the planned programme.

#### **Strengths for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD**

1. The School has established processes for PhD supervision, clear timelines for progression, and procedures for supporting development of international research project portfolios.
2. Strong, individualised support was expressed by the one PhD student from another department. The instructors intend to work in close contact with a small cohort of students providing the guidance and the encouragement that will be needed especially in the doctoral, research setting.

### **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 Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

1. The bibliography of the courses should be updated to include more recent publications and explicitly reflect the field of primary education which is strikingly absent in the proposed programme. We remained concerned about the absence of up-to-date innovations in pedagogical approaches and teaching methods for primary education, and the references that are outdated. Of utmost importance is clarifying preparation of primary teachers in the area of reading/literacy and teaching students with multiple languages as well as classroom management. Needed is a more up-to-date curriculum that engages with core practices in the field.
2. The Department must ensure that effective partnership with schools and high-quality school experiences are central to the preparation of primary teachers. These experiences should be designed to develop students' knowledge, skills, and dispositions to positively impact the

diverse learners whom they will teach. Each of the school experiences must be of sufficient depth, breadth, diversity, coherence, and duration to ensure prospective primary teachers develop their effectiveness. These experiences should reflect an intentional, purposeful, sequence of deliberate experiences design to relate course work to the experiences and subsequent performance-based assessments. It is the opinion of the ECC the primary education programme requires substantial re-develop around agreed core competencies in the knowledge, skills, and dispositions for primary education to be considered fit for purpose.

- Given the commitment expressed to education as a human right as referenced by UNESCO, the ECC strongly recommends the Department to ground any/all programme(s) of teacher education on the UNESCO Global framework of professional teaching standards.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD

- There is a limited presence of faculty members with expertise in teaching or supervising doctoral research in education. Expanding faculty capacity in specialised areas of educational research would enhance the programme's ability to support doctoral candidates effectively. A formal training programme for faculty supervisors should be introduced to ensure a standardized approach to student support.
- PhD programme lacks sufficient training in core research methodologies, theoretical frameworks, and analytical skills necessary for advanced study in the field of education. More structured coursework specific to education research methods should be integrated to ensure students acquire essential competencies. Additionally, the rationale for including EDU 712 Selected Studies in Education and Management should be clarified in relation to the programme's objectives.
- The bibliography of the courses should be updated to include recent and seminal publications in educational research which is clearly absent in the proposed programme. Needed is a more up-to-date curriculum that engages with core practices in the field of educational research (e.g., Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018; Thomas et al., 2025).

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

Sub-area	Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant		
	Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA	Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD	[Title 3]

<b>2.1</b>	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Non-compliant	Partially compliant	Choose answer
<b>2.2</b>	Practical training	Non-compliant	Partially compliant	Choose answer
<b>2.3</b>	Student assessment	Partially compliant	Partially compliant	Choose answer

### 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. Nc expertise in primary ed and doc*
- *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.nc*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff. NC*

#### **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 documentation provided for review and the site visit confirmed the high level of interest and commitment staff display in relation to their teaching. Processes and procedures in relation ensuring that teaching and research are included in staff development opportunities and promotion are detailed in the documentation provided. The commitment to developing new methods of teaching was evident in our discussions during the visit. There is a clear sense of the role and importance of research for staff in the University and supports are in place at university and school level to support staff to apply for funding to a number of different funding streams and to engage with a broad range of research partners in other universities. Consequently, staff are engaged in developing their research profiles. The focus of this activity in relation to education is problematic and consequently this lack of alignment between the profile and expertise of staff and the domain of research in education broadly and in relation to primary education specifically will frame the content of this section of the report. It is important to point out that the expertise and scholarly standing of the staff is not the issue here, on the contrary, in each of their fields they are very accomplished, this significant shortcoming is solely derived from the lack of explicit alignment with education of most of the staff in the Department

### **Findings for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

The staff present as very committed to this programme and to ensuring that they will provide a quality primary education undergraduate degree. This commitment to quality was a very strong message in all of the team's contributions to the discussions during the visit. There are, however, several issues that need to be addressed to ensure that the department can deliver on this commitment to high quality. As it stands at the moment there is a clear lack of alignment between the relevance of the qualifications and expertise of most of the staff in the field of primary education. The EEC could not identify the level of expertise in education that would achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the BA Primary Education. While the staff numbers in the school are evident, the number of the teaching staff with experience in primary education

broadly and in relation to school placement (experience) in particular is not at the required level to support the programme of study. The research and publication profile of most of the staff are not in the field of primary education. In this context, it is difficult to see how staff research and teaching will align. It became clear from the discussions during the site visit that an overall appreciation of the complexity of teacher education and all its component parts were not adequately explored by the staff in the development of this programme. Consequently, there are some notable omissions in relation to providing for some core competencies in the programme content.

#### *Findings for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD*

The commitment to a quality PhD experience for students is a core pillar underpinning this programme and the team's commitment to this work. The staff have developed an exceptionally strong structure and framework to support the achievement of the outcomes of this programme. The issue of staff expertise in the discipline of education is again a key factor here. Staff present as very accomplished in a number of fields with evidence of research, teaching and scholarship in each of their respective areas of expertise. A key issue for the evaluation team established in the document review and confirmed during the site visit was the relevance of the qualifications and expertise of the staff in the field of education to ensure a high-quality PhD supervision for students in education. The EEC could not identify the level of expertise in education that would achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of PhD programme, however it was evident that if the staff continue to explore and articulate the research clusters discussed during the visit, the foundations of more clearly identifiable areas for PhD recruitment will emerge. Expertise and capacity for PhD supervision is evident within the team, aligning this expertise with these research clusters will consolidate this capacity further.

#### **Strengths**

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

#### *Strengths for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA*

1. A strong commitment within the team to develop a high-quality teacher education programme for primary teachers
2. A clear commitment to high quality student experience while at the university
3. The overall ambition for the impact the programme will have on schools and children's school experience
4. Good practice in relation to staff collaboration in the developed of the programme to date

#### *Strengths for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD*

1. A very strong and explicit commitment to developing an exceptional quality PhD outcome for future students
2. A shared sense of commitment to developing this programme among the staff – ownership of this programme among the team is evident
3. The use of current expertise among the team in the development of modules at PhD level – on research related competency development
4. The overall quality of detail in relation to the procedures and processes that support PhD study to completion.



**Strengths for** [Title 3]

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.*

**Areas of improvement and recommendations for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

1. The level of expertise among the staff in relation to primary education is a notable gap in the current profile of staff
2. The recruitment of additional expertise in school placement (experience) and the education discipline more broadly
3. A more proactive approach to ensuring greater dispositions among the team to the primary education experience – while this may not be readily available among the current team, it is readily available and can be easily accessed

**Areas of improvement and recommendations for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD**

1. The development and articulation of strategic areas of educational research that will engage current staff research activity and frame the recruitment of future staff
2. These research areas should shape the future scholarship of the department to develop a departmental profile in the area of educational research
3. Ensure that future strategic recruitment of PhD students into research areas where there is demonstrable capacity for high quality supervision and scholarly development

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant		
		Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA	Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD	[Title 3]
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Non-compliant	Non-compliant	Choose answer
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Non-compliant	Non-compliant	Choose answer



3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Non-compliant	Non-compliant	Choose answer
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#### 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 Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA

All of the evidence provided indicates that student-centred approaches are in place and are part of the established culture. There is considerable evidence indicating protocols are in place to monitor and support student progression exist. In terms of assessment, the department uses a combination of summative-final assessment and continuous assessment.

While, the learning outcomes for the programme are in accordance with the European Qualifications Framework, there is a need to review and revise these in line with the recommendations of this evaluation. Greater consideration needs to be given to the type of graduate teacher that this programme will produce. This refers specifically to teacher formation during the four years of the programme and the competencies and dispositions that will be developed in students during their time on the programme. Explicit high expectations for the formative component of a teacher education programme is vital if the quality outcomes committed to in the documentation are to be achieved. This is a new programme and consequently all of the standards in relation to the areas in this section of the report are based on the documentation provided and the site visit. It is not possible to comment on the operation or efficacy of the overall commitment to student admission, processes and criteria, student progression, student recognition and student certification. Most of these components are well articulated in the documentation provided to the evaluation team. Each of the domains are comprehensively detailed and it is evident that the expertise and experience of staff in the university have contributed to the development of a high and nuanced level of attention to these aspects of student experience. There is one notable exception here to the overall attention to the detail of these domains and this relates to the consideration that that has been given to progression issues that can arise during school placement (experience). The main experience component occurs in the 4<sup>th</sup> year of the programme – our experience of teacher education programmes is that the school experience component can raise specific issues for students. At times these issues can relate to classroom competency/ performance but they can also arise from other sources.

### Findings for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD

In a similar way to the BA Primary, this is a new programme and consequently all of the standards in relation to the areas in this section of the report are based on the documentation provided and the site visit. It is not possible to comment on the operation or efficacy of the written commitments made by this Department in the document. However, there are other PhD programmes in the University (Business PhD) that are already in train so it is reasonable to assert that the different dimensions of these standards with respect to student admission, processes and criteria, student progression, student recognition and student certification will be managed very effectively. During the site visit there was very clear and explicit support evident among the team for this award and all of these components are exceptionally well articulated in the documentation provided to the evaluation team. Each of the domains are comprehensively detailed and, as is the case with the BA Primary, it is evident that the expertise and experience of staff in the university have contributed to the development of a high and nuanced level of attention to these aspects of student experience. Students themselves, currently on a PhD programme in the university spoke very highly of every aspect of this domain so it is clear that this aspect of the work is progressing very well.

One of the notable aspects of the PhD programme is the intensive first year that has been designed. This is a strong feature of the programme and should support the achievement of high-quality graduates. The requirement to pass an exam at the end of first year to progress to the second and subsequent years of the PhD is also an excellent feature of the programme in terms of ensuring progression and completion.

### Strengths

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

### Strengths for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA

1. The clarity in the documentation in relation to each of the standards in this section of the review i.e. student admission, processes and criteria, student progression, student recognition and student certification
2. The support for and commitment to a broad range of assessment methods. It was clear to the EEC that consideration and attention has been given to these areas by the team.
3. The student support structure already in place that will enable the department to deliver on its intentions with respect to each of these areas

### Strengths for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD

1. The intensive first year of the programme and the strong commitment to doctoral formation that underpins student experience in these taught components
2. The high level of commitment among the team to getting this new programme started.
3. The requirement to pass an exam at the end of first year to progress to the second and subsequent years of the PhD

### 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 Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA

1. Exploring and articulating an exit pathway for students at this late stage in a programme may be problematic (but may be necessary) so it may be useful to consider some placement/ school experience components earlier in the programme to help support the development of alternative exit options / pathways for students.
2. Ensuring that staff engaging in the school experience component have the required competencies to support the formative journey of initial teachers on placement/ school experience. A significant amount of damage can be done if this component is not at the top of the efficacy scale.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD

1. Addresses the capacity of staff to take on PhD students in the field of education
2. Exploring an alternative to the second module on management that could include different perspectives from the disciplines feeding into the education domain – i.e. Philosophy of Education, Sociology of Education. Educational Psychology, Curriculum and Assessment and Contemporary Perspectives on Research in Education

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant		
		Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA	Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD	[Title 3]
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
4.2	Student progression	Partially compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer



4.4	Student certification	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
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## 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.*

### **Findings for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

There are adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources to implement an undergraduate programme of study; this includes access to educational research databases, technologies. A good range of textbooks and journal articles are readily accessible to students and staff through the online library. It is evident that the institution lacks essential teaching and learning resources necessary for effective preparation of teachers for primary education in order to support students achieving objectives. There is not a well-structured teacher education curriculum with adequate instructional materials such as textbooks, lesson planning guides, and research-based teaching strategies for teacher preparation. There is a lack of instructional tools, including manipulatives, children's literature, and digital teaching resources. Additionally, there is not currently the critical technology infrastructure, such as smart classrooms, interactive boards, and educational software to support development. Without these fundamental resources, the university is not adequately equipped to prepare future primary school teachers for effective classroom practice.

There is a goal of 25-30 students being enrolled in the course. During discussion it was confirmed a minimum of 8 students would be needed to carry forward the programme. It is unclear how this has been taken into account for changing circumstances (e.g., changing student numbers), in particular given it was stated there is not currently a need for more primary teachers. The adequacy of resources for three cycles of school experience placement and supervision of students in the field are unclear.

The physical resources are adequate for delivery of an on-campus programme with sufficient premises, libraries, study facilities, and IT infrastructure to effectively support a new programme. Practical training facilities, including model classrooms, microteaching studios, and partnerships with primary schools for real-world teaching experience, are either insufficient or entirely missing.

Human support resources are in place and advisers, counsellors, and administration are all available. Careful attention to the specific needs of undergraduate student population is required. What is missing is any school experience coordinator/unit or clear articulation of how the university will support students while in schools. The school experience is a crucial component of the curriculum, requiring careful coordination. This includes organizing school placements, recruiting partner schools, facilitating connections between students and schools, and addressing any follow-up questions or concerns that arise during the placement process.

### **Findings for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD**

The resources available to PhD students in education are able to support the programme. There are adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources to implement a PhD in education building on an already established programme; this includes access to educational research databases, technologies, and established research partnerships, particularly in Europe. A good range of textbooks and journal articles are readily accessible to students and staff through the online library. The institution has a Research Centre which facilitates collaboration with European Research Institutes.

There is a goal of 4 students being enrolled in the course each year. It is unclear how changing circumstances (e.g., changing student numbers) has been considered. The physical resources are adequate for delivery of an on-campus programme with sufficient premises, libraries (on site and digital), study facilities, and IT infrastructure to effectively support a PhD programme in education. A limited physical inspection of the facilities occurred.

Human support resources are in place and advisers, counsellors, and administration are all available. One current PhD student in another programme articulated in discussion that services are available and accessible. Careful attention to the specific needs of doctoral students and the pressures they face is needed.

### **Strengths**

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

#### **Strengths for Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

1. Students and staff are provided with a good range of textbooks, journal articles, and access to educational research databases through its online library, ensuring academic support.
2. The university has sufficient physical premises, libraries, study facilities, and IT infrastructure to support the delivery of an undergraduate programme.

#### **Strengths for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD**

1. The PhD programme benefits from access to well-established educational research databases, a good range of textbooks and journal articles, and international research partnerships, particularly in Europe.
2. Students in the programme would have access to sufficient physical resources, including study facilities, libraries (both on-site and digital), and IT infrastructure, which effectively support doctoral-level research and study.

### **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 Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA**

1. For primary education, there is a lack of essential instructional materials such as lesson planning guides, research-based teaching strategies, manipulatives, children's literature, and digital teaching tools necessary for effective primary teacher training. Strengthening these resources is critical to aligning the programme with best practices in the field.
2. There is a need to establish model classrooms, microteaching studios, and strong partnerships with primary schools to provide students with hands-on teaching experience. These facilities are essential for preparing students for real-world classroom settings.
3. It would be useful for the new department to arrange site visits to multiple primary classrooms to identify and explore the teaching and learning resources required for the preparation of teacher in primary education.
4. There is no indication of a dedicated school experience coordinator or unit to oversee school placements, student supervision, or assessment in the field. A structured approach

to managing school placements, recruiting partner schools, and addressing student concerns during field experience should be implemented to ensure a smooth and effective practicum process.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD

1. There is a lack of clarity on how the university has planned for fluctuations in PhD student enrolment, particularly with the goal of four students per year and ensuring there is expertise of staff for supervision teams in the field of education. A clear strategy should be developed to ensure sustainability and alignment of focused research areas in education (e.g., adult education, higher education, comparative education, educational studies, teacher education, continued professional learning, etc.).
2. While human support resources, including advisers and counsellors, are available, more structured attention to address the specific pressures doctoral students face is needed. Additional mentorship, peer support networks, or targeted well-being initiatives could further improve the PhD student experience. This is important given the small enrolment cohorts expected each year.

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

Sub-area		<b>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</b>		
		<i>Bachelor of Arts Primary Education (4 Years / 240 ECTS/ BA</i>	<i>Doctorate (PhD) in Education (4- 8 Years / 240 ECTS/ PhD</i>	[Title 3]
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Non-compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
5.2	Physical resources	Partially compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer



5.4	Student support	Compliant	Partially compliant	Choose answer
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## 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 procedural aspects pertaining to admission and selection are described in detail. It is less clear how selection based on merits and qualification will be aligned with actual expertise and competence of academic staff/potential supervisors. At the site visit, it was explained that the PhD programme would resort to additional supervisors from other universities to complement existing expertise. There is detailed information on both the PhD proposal and the PhD thesis concerning structure, plagiarism etc. Information is provided regarding the maximum word count but not the minimum word limit and there are clear regulations concerning the composition and work of the supervisors and examination committee. There is support, including financial support, for the PhD candidate's preparation of publications and participation in conferences. Additionally, the university's Research Centre assists PhD candidates in obtaining essential research skills.

In terms of quantitative capacity, the ratio of supervising staff and PhD candidates is adequate. In terms of qualitative capacity – that is, supervisory experience and expertise in education available to potential PhD candidates – there is presently not sufficient academic staff to take on the responsibility of supervising 4 (in the first year) to 16 (in the fourth year) PhD candidates. It is currently not sufficiently clear how the doctoral programme in Education will be linked to professional communities and the wider society.

Given the lack of a clear research strategy for the Department (for example, in the form of research clusters), there is the risk that PhD candidates will not find research environments that are conducive for developing as educational researchers. Also, compared with international standards, the number of four students is very low for creating a meaningful environment for PhD candidates who can draw on, and profit from, a shared sense of belonging and peer relations. Given the limited capacity and expertise in the field of Educational sciences among current academic staff, there is a high risk that PhD candidates would only obtain a limited perspective on the field. Consequently, there is a high risk that the PhD dissertation will not be able to make a substantial contribution to research in the field.

### Strengths

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

1. There are clear procedures regarding admission and the different of stages of the PhD thesis as well as regarding the composition and work of the supervisors and examination committee.
2. There are clear support structures for PhD students, including financial funding.

### 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.*

1. It is our recommendation to map the Department's potential supervisors in terms of expertise and competence in order to assess if doctoral candidates can be admitted within the entire field of education. It is not sustainable to rely on supervising capacity at other institutions as the Department will have no control over this. It may therefore be necessary to define areas of research to which doctoral candidates need to relate to in their applications.
2. Since information is provided regarding the maximum word count, we recommend setting a minimum word limit as well.
3. The Department needs to map and expand supervisory experience and expertise in the field of Educational sciences. More academic staff with levels of experience and expertise necessary for PhD supervision needs to be recruited, ideally upon consultation with an experienced Scientific Advisory Board in Education.
4. Depending on how the programme will be specified (see our comments in the previous parts), it should be defined how learning objectives will be linked with what kind of professional communities and the wider society. This should also include considerations of PhD graduates' potential career paths both inside and outside academia.
5. We encourage the university to reconsider the scale of the planned PhD programme and explore possibilities to start with a higher number of candidates. A viable option could be to recruit not every year but every second year at least at the first start of the programme, in order to increase the number of PhD candidates to 8 and 16 in the first and third year of the programme.



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	Partially compliant
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Compliant
6.3	Supervision and committees	Partially 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.*

In terms of the two programmes that the EEC reviewed the overall view of the committee that the team are committed to developing quality programmes at BA Primary and PhD level. The documentation provided for both courses indicates a very strong commitment to student support, admission processes, the collection and monitoring of student progression and the provision and allocation of resources. There are some other strengths identified in different sections of the report. There are also areas that require significant review and development. In relation to the BA Primary Education, the EEC identified seven sub-areas that were viewed as non-compliant, four sub-areas deemed partially compliant, five sub-areas that were compliant and two sub-areas that were non applicable to this review. This profile clearly indicates that there is significant scope for development of this programme in order to effectively prepare primary teachers. The evaluation profile of PhD includes four sub-areas that are considered by the EEC to be compliant, seven sub-areas that are viewed as partially compliant, seven subareas that are compliant and two that were deemed to be non-applicable for the review at this stage in the programme development cycle. While this overall profile has less shortcomings than the BA the two very significant areas for development are crucial i.e. the need to significantly improve the research environment as it applies to educational research and the need to greatly enhance the capacity to supervise PhDs in education. Both are essential if this PhD programme is to achieve its intended outcomes.



**E. Signatures of the EEC**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Gerry Mac Ruairc	
Barbara Schulte	
Sarah Anderson	
Ms Agelina Aggelidou	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

**Date:** 01/03/25

