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Doc. 300.1.1/2

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report
(E-learning programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

  University of Limassol (UoL)

- **Town: Limassol**

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Social Sciences and Humanities School

- **Department/ Sector:** Department of Psychology

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

  In Greek:

  Μεταπτυχιακό στην Εργασιακή και Οργανωσιακή

  Ψυχολογία (Εξ' αποστάσεως)

  In English:

   Master of Science in Occupational and Organizational

  Psychology (Distance Learning)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Language(s)

- **Programme's status:** Expected to operate in the Spring semester of the academic year 2025

- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations
In English: Concentrations

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

This report outlines the results of the external evaluation for the proposed Master of Science in Occupational and Organizational Psychology (Distance Learning) program at the University of Limassol. The evaluation was informed by an onsite visit on April 7, 2025, a review of relevant documentation, discussions with stakeholders, and an assessment of compliance with the established guidelines. During the visit, we met with faculty, students, administrative personnel, and external partners to evaluate the program's structure, effectiveness, and long-term prospects. The visit was efficiently coordinated, and the organizers were highly responsive in providing supplementary information when requested.

The primary objective of this evaluation was to verify that the program aligns with international academic and professional standards while also addressing local educational and labor market demands. The assessment encompassed a thorough review of the curriculum, teaching approaches, faculty credentials, student achievements, and institutional support mechanisms. The insights and recommendations included in this report are intended to assist the University of Limassol in sustaining and enhancing the quality of the proposed program.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Sverker Sikström	Professor	Lund University
Diana Rus	Associate Professor; Chair of Academic Skills and Development Unit	University of Groningen
Jakob Pietschnig	Associate Professor	University of Vienna
Panagiotis Papapetrou	Professor	Stockholm University
Dr Fotini Demetriou	Psychologist	University
Ms. Aggelina Aggelidou	Student	University of Cyprus

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*

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o *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
o *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
o *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*
o *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
o *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*
o *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:*
  o *selection criteria*
  o *intended learning outcomes*
  o *qualification awarded*
  o *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
  o *pass rates*
  o *learning opportunities available to the students*
  o *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
  o *key performance indicators*
  o *profile of the student population*
  o *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
  o *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
  o *learning resources and student support available*
  o *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 MSc in Occupational and Organizational Psychology is a new program proposal, currently under evaluation, and intended to launch in September 2025 as a distance-learning program. The program is designed with the goal of addressing the lack of trained occupational psychologists in Cyprus, where currently only four are officially registered. The structure reflects a commitment to academic rigor and practical applicability, including a path that leads to a professional license from the Cyprus Board of Registration of Psychologists.

The curriculum broadly follows the European Higher Education Area (EHEA) standards, and aims to blend theoretical coursework with practical training and stakeholder engagement. However, several issues regarding the program's design and intended audience require further clarification and refinement.

First, the program's **target student population** remains underdefined. While it appears to focus on both psychology and non-psychology graduates, a substantial part of the curriculum overlaps with undergraduate psychology education. At the same time, for those without a psychology background, some courses may be too advanced. A clearer articulation of the prerequisites, learning trajectories, and bridging mechanisms for students from non-psychology backgrounds is needed.

Second, **external stakeholders**, including employers, professional bodies, and industry practitioners, have not been actively involved in the beginning stages of the program's design. While their support for the existence of such a program is noted, their engagement in defining course content and expected learning outcomes was limited or absent. Early and structured involvement of stakeholders would improve alignment with market needs and increase the program's employability impact.

Third, while the program includes practical training and a practicum component, it is unclear whether students will be encouraged or supported to collect **data during their placements**. Enabling data collection would greatly enhance the integration of practice with academic learning and research output, and should be explicitly built into the design.

The sequencing of certain courses also merits attention. Notably, the **basic quantitative methods course** and the **advanced psychometrics course** are offered concurrently, which may create challenges for students who are not already proficient in statistics. Reordering these courses to reflect a more gradual skill-building approach would improve pedagogical flow and student comprehension.

Finally, the program relies on asynchronous delivery through lecture decks. While this format provides flexibility, it **risks limiting interaction**. The current plan includes some synchronous teleconferences, but the time allocated appears insufficient to foster active participation. Mechanisms should be established to create **mandatory live engagement moments**, increase visibility of instructors (e.g. through personal interactions with students), and ensure that students

cannot progress through the program without interaction. The inclusion of collaborative learning opportunities, online group work, and structured discussion forums should be considered to promote a stronger learning community.

The **teaching workload** across faculty appears higher than what is specified in the contracts, with reports suggesting that staff are teaching well above typical levels. This raises sustainability concerns of a psychology program that might be growing too fast and underscores the need for workload monitoring and potential staff recruitment.

Strengths

- The program addresses a clear societal and professional need for organizational psychologist trainings in Cyprus.
- Commitment to offering reduced fees and scholarships in the first year to attract high-quality applicants.
- Alignment with local licensing requirements in Organizational Psychology.
- Integration of AI literacy as part of a forward-looking educational strategy.
- Intention to use ethical frameworks in the delivery of AI-enabled education.

Areas of Improvement and Recommendations

- Clearly define the **target student population** and adjust course prerequisites or bridging modules accordingly.
- Actively involve **external stakeholders**—including licensed professionals and employers—in the design and periodic review of course content.
- Consider **revising the sequencing of courses**, particularly to avoid overlapping basic and advanced methodological content.
- Allow and support **data collection during practicum placements** to strengthen research-practice integration.
- Design mechanisms for **interactive online engagement**, including mandatory synchronous sessions, video presence of instructors, and peer-to-peer activities.
- Reassess **teaching loads** and consider hiring additional staff to ensure sustainability.
- Plan for **cohort management** to avoid duplicated teaching effort due to courses being offered multiple times annually.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
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

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

> **Sub-areas**
>
> **2.2 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology**
> **2.3 Practical training**
> **2.4 Student assessment**
> **2.5 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities**

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

Standards

- *The e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*
- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
    - *among students*
    - *between students and teaching staff*
    - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of e-learning delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the e-learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*

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

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

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

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

Standards

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

- o *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
- o *Synopsis*

- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the nature of the programme compatible with e-learning delivery?*
- *How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- *How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- *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)?*

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Findings

The program proposal emphasizes flexibility and accessibility, with the intention to deliver courses via **distance education**, primarily through asynchronous methods such as pre-recorded sessions. This approach supports the inclusion of both local and international students, including professionals who require flexible scheduling.

However, the **student-centred aspects of the learning experience** require significant enhancement. Although online meetings are planned for Q&A sessions, their frequency and structure may not ensure meaningful engagement. In its current form, the program design allows for a scenario where a student could theoretically progress through most of the curriculum without significant interaction with peers or instructors. This lack of live interactive elements risks limiting the development of critical skills such as reflection, collaboration, and professional communication, which are particularly important in applied psychology programs.

There is also insufficient emphasis on **social learning**. Structured and **mandatory live interaction moments**, such as case discussions, group debates, or project presentations, should be embedded into the curriculum. Furthermore, instructors should be encouraged (or required) to appear more frequently on video to **humanize the learning experience**, build rapport with students, and support a sense of academic community.

Regarding **practical training**, the program includes a practicum option for up to 10 students per cohort. The practical component is not sufficiently structured in terms of supervision and evaluation, involving both academic and workplace supervisors. There is no clear plan for **how to acquire the desired competencies** or whether students are **encouraged to collect data during placements**. Enabling this would significantly strengthen the applied nature of the program and foster integration of theory with practice and research.

Assessment practices appear appropriate, including exams, essays, feedback-based exercises, and oral components. However, the design should further emphasize **formative assessments**, particularly in an online environment. The use of tools like Proctorio for online exam proctoring is acknowledged, but the challenges of academic integrity, particularly with tools like ChatGPT, should be addressed through thoughtful design rather than software-based proctoring alone. A stronger emphasis on **project-based assessments**, reflective assignments, and peer feedback is recommended to ensure deeper learning and reduce opportunities for academic misconduct.

Strengths

- Flexible delivery format suitable for working professionals and international students.
- Ethical framework that can be further strengthened by increasing institutional awareness regarding the integration of AI tools in education.
- The inclusion of the practicum component is a valuable addition to the program.
- Assessment methods include a mix of exams and applied exercises.

Areas of Improvement and Recommendations

- Introduce **mandatory synchronous activities** (e.g. live seminars, breakout discussions, project presentations) to ensure active engagement and cohort cohesion.
- Encourage instructors to appear in **video content** to build social presence and foster student-teacher rapport.
- Create opportunities for **collaborative work**, such as mandatory synchronous presentations or discussion-based assessments.
- Promote the **collection and analysis of data during practicums**, reinforcing the connection between theory, research, and practice.
- Diversify assessment strategies to emphasize **formative evaluations**, reducing dependence on traditional exams and assignments that are not AI-proof.
- Provide **clear ethical guidelines** and skill-building activities for the appropriate use of AI in coursework and assessments.

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

Sub-area		*Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant*
2	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Partially compliant
2.2	Practical training	Partially compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	Partially compliant

3. **Teaching staff** *(ESG 1.5)*

Sub-areas

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

3.1 **Teaching staff recruitment and development**

Standards

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

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

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

3.3 **Synergies of teaching and research**

Standards

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

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the teaching staff qualified to teach in the e-learning programme of study?*
- *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 institution is currently undergoing an accelerated recruitment phase in preparation for the launch of the MSc in Occupational and Organizational Psychology. While this responsiveness is commendable, there is **a risk that expansion is prioritized over long-term academic quality**. The current plan includes hiring new faculty members, including one in the domain of organizational and occupational psychology. However, the leadership structure remains unclear: **there is only one full professor associated with the program, and this individual is a visiting academic**. This raises the question of **why a permanent senior academic has not been appointed to lead the program**, especially given its strategic significance for the department.

Several newly hired or planned staff appear to have strong research potential. However, reports from the visit indicated teaching loads are larger than contractually mandated (30%), ranging from 35% to 50% for key staff, raising concerns about the **sustainability of these hires**. Without proper workload control, there is a significant risk that these individuals will be **deterred from maintaining**

or developing their research activities, potentially leading to staff turnover or a decline in research output. Implementing a **systematic workload monitoring policy** in terms of teaching seems necessary, particularly for research-active academics.

In terms of staff development, there is evidence of institutional awareness around the need for **AI literacy and ethical digital didactics**. However, there is no clear framework for supporting staff in balancing teaching and research. A flat-rate model for publication support may not be appropriate; instead, the institution could consider a **dynamic funding structure** that adjusts according to faculty output and project involvement.

Overall, the success of this program will depend heavily on the institution's ability to **attract and retain** strong academic staff, and to do so in a way that ensures their time and motivation to engage in both teaching and scholarly work.

Strengths

- Ongoing and rapid recruitment process, indicating institutional commitment to program delivery.
- Clear intention to strengthen research and teaching capacity through new hires.
- Recognition of the importance of AI literacy and digital teaching competencies.

Areas of Improvement and Recommendations

- Ensure that **recruitment strategy balances speed with academic depth and leadership stability**; appoint a permanent full professor to anchor the program.
- Monitor and **strictly control teaching loads** for research-active staff to prevent burnout and encourage retention.
- Avoid unnecessary course duplication by **cohort-synchronization planning**, or support this model with additional staffing.
- Replace the flat publication support policy with a performance-sensitive, flexible model that adjusts based on faculty activity and research engagement.
- Provide continuous support and development for **online didactic proficiency**, especially in the context of research-integrated teaching

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

Sub-area	*Non-compliant/* *Partially Compliant/Compliant*

3	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Partially compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

- 4.1 **Student admission, processes and criteria**
- 4.2 **Student progression**
- 4.3 **Student recognition**
- 4.4 **Student certification**

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

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

4.2 **Student progression**

Standards

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

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
  - o *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
  - o *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 program proposal includes clearly defined **admission criteria**, including any undergraduate degree (including psychology) and in certain cases an interview process. The transparency of admission procedures is well-established, although some **aspects remain to be clarified**, such as whether tools like GRE/GMAT are required and, if so, at what stage in the selection pipeline. Clarity on these aspects would help prospective students better prepare and plan.

The current definition of the **target audience** lacks specificity. Whereas a significant portion of its curriculum is aimed at an audience with an undergraduate degree in psychology, the program intends to welcome students from broader academic backgrounds. **Admission criteria and support structures must be adjusted accordingly**, including offering preparatory modules or bridging mechanisms to accommodate this diversity.

The **planned intake is 30 students**, of which a maximum of 10 will pursue the practicum route. The rationale behind these specific figures remains unclear, and the committee encourages the institution to provide a stronger data-driven justification, especially in relation to available placements and supervision capacity.

Student progression is expected to follow a structured path through the program. However, it is important to ensure that students on the **non-practicum (theoretical)** path are not disadvantaged

in terms of career opportunities or professional recognition. For example, the conditions under which students will or will not qualify for licensure need to be communicated transparently.

There is no mention yet of a systematic **tracking mechanism for student progression or graduate outcomes**, although such systems are essential to ensure quality assurance, curriculum relevance, and long-term program improvement. Similarly, recognition of prior learning and mobility pathways—such as Erasmus exchanges or credit transfers—appear underdeveloped and would benefit from clearer articulation.

Strengths

- Clear and selective admission process.
- Well-defined structure for students seeking licensure.
- Planned efforts to attract a strong cohort through reduced fees and scholarships during the first intake year.

Areas of Improvement and Recommendations

- Refine the **definition of the target student population** and adjust admission procedures and support accordingly.
- Clarify the **use and timing of standardized tests** (e.g. GRE/GMAT), if applicable.
- Justify the **30/10 cohort split** for theoretical and practicum pathways based on realistic capacity, stakeholder engagement, and supervision availability.
- Ensure **transparent communication of licensing pathways**, particularly distinguishing outcomes for students on theoretical vs practical routes.
- Establish a **graduate tracking system** to monitor career trajectories, licensure success, and employer feedback.
- Clarify and enhance the **recognition of prior learning** and participation in student mobility programs.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
4	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant

4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. **Learning resources and student support** *(ESG 1.6)*

Sub-areas

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

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The e-learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
  - o *Simulations in virtual environments*
  - o *Problem solving scenarios*
  - o *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
  - o *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
  - o *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
  - o *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for e-learning, which is responsible for the support of the e-learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of e-learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

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

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

As a distance-learning program, the MSc in Occupational and Organizational Psychology will rely heavily on the institution's existing **e-learning infrastructure**, which currently supports approximately 500 students. The platform appears functionally adequate, offering both asynchronous and synchronous delivery options. However, the **current instructional design relies predominantly on powerpoint decks**, with limited mandatory interaction, which may hinder the depth and personalization of the student experience.

Although there are plans for online discussions and Q&A sessions, the format does not ensure consistent student engagement. There is concern that students could potentially complete the program with minimal peer or instructor interaction. To mitigate this risk, **live, scheduled academic exchanges should be integrated as part of course requirements**, along with opportunities for structured peer discussion and collaborative assignments.

In terms of content delivery, instructors are encouraged to upload videos, but there is no policy requiring them to appear on screen. This contributes to a depersonalized learning environment. To foster engagement, the **instructor's presence should be made more visible** through video lectures, discussion contributions, and personalized feedback.

The institution appears to have sufficient **IT and academic support resources**, including access to platforms such as Moodle and tools like Proctorio for online exam monitoring. However, there is limited information regarding whether these resources are accompanied by sufficient **didactic support for instructors**, particularly in areas such as online course design, multimedia integration, and student engagement.

With a current total of 280 students in the department and plans for further growth, the sustainability of **administrative and academic support services** will depend on proactive resourcing. The **student-to-support staff ratio** should be regularly assessed to ensure that advising, tutoring, and technical support remain accessible and responsive.

International mobility is currently limited, although the institution maintains 16 Erasmus agreements. In practice, only 8–10 incoming students and 2 outgoing students participated last year across the entire university. This underutilization suggests a need to **better promote and support mobility**, even within the constraints of a distance education format.

Strengths

- Existing e-learning platform with support for asynchronous and synchronous delivery.
- Access to digital tools for assessment and content delivery (e.g., Moodle, Proctorio).
- Faculty and institutional awareness of the ethical use of AI in education.
- Student support services appear responsive and well-regarded in the conventional programs.

Areas of Improvement and Recommendations

- **Mandate live interaction** points (e.g. real-time lectures, discussions, peer presentations) across courses to promote active learning and cohort cohesion.
- Encourage instructors to use video presence to **personalize the learning experience** and establish social connection.
- Provide **training and support** for online didactics, including instructional design, interactive multimedia, and student engagement strategies.
- Monitor staffing levels and resource availability to **ensure adequate support** as the department grows.
- Promote greater use of international mobility programs, adapting formats for the online learner and making outbound **exchanges more accessible**.
- Periodically assess student satisfaction with support services, especially for the online format, and use the results to **drive continuous improvement**.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
5	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

D. Conclusions and final remarks

The proposed MSc in Occupational and Organizational Psychology addresses an important gap in the higher education and professional landscape of Cyprus. Given the very limited number of registered occupational psychologists in the country, the program has the potential to make a significant contribution to both public and private sector capacity-building, and to align local training pathways with international standards.

The program's **intent to combine academic content with applied experience** through the practicum and professional licensing pathway is commendable. Similarly, the inclusion of themes such as **AI literacy**, **ethical education technology**, and **connection to societal needs** reflects forward-thinking in curricular design.

However, in its current form, the program exhibits several critical areas that require attention:

- The **target audience** is not clearly defined. If the program is intended exclusively for psychology graduates, the curriculum must reflect a higher level of advancement. If it is meant to include broader disciplines, then appropriate bridging mechanisms must be put in place.
- The **curriculum design, particularly course sequencing**, needs careful refinement. Foundational and advanced methodological courses are currently placed concurrently, which could affect learning progression. Furthermore, course repetition for different cohorts could strain faculty resources and must be carefully managed.
- The **distance education model**, while offering flexibility, lacks the structured interactivity necessary for a robust learning experience. Students must not be allowed to progress through the program without engagement. **Mandatory synchronous sessions, instructor visibility through video, and peer interaction** should be embedded as design principles.
- The **teaching staff recruitment strategy**, while active, should not prioritize speed over sustainability. Overburdening promising researchers with excessive teaching loads risks both burnout and attrition. The appointment of a **permanent senior academic to lead the program** is essential for academic coherence and institutional continuity.
- **Stakeholder involvement** in the design of the program has been minimal thus far. This is a missed opportunity. Stronger engagement with employers, practitioners, and alumni will not only improve relevance but also enhance employability and public trust.
- While the institution demonstrates a good foundation in **student and technical support**, adjustments are needed to address the distinct demands of online, postgraduate education. Clear guidelines, staff training in online didactics, and mechanisms for continuous feedback will be crucial to maintain academic quality.

In conclusion, the program has a **strong foundational vision** and **a clear societal mandate**. With careful refinement of its delivery model, staffing strategy, and stakeholder integration, it can evolve into a sustainable program in the region. The External Evaluation Committee encourages the institution to treat this first iteration not as a final product, but as a **living academic framework** that will evolve through feedback, evidence, and reflection.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Sverker Sikström	
Diana Rus	
Jakob Pietschnig	
Panagiotis Papapetrou	
Dr Fotini Demetriou	
Ms. Aggelina Aggelidou	

Date: April 8, 2025