



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



The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education

Mission:

The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, is responsible to ensure the quality of Higher Education in Cyprus and to support, through the procedures provided by the relevant legislation, for the continuous improvement and upgrading of higher education institutions and their programs of study.



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Legislative Framework:

The Council of Ministers of the Republic of Cyprus with its Decision, dated 5 November 2015, appointed the members of the Council of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, on the basis of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Law, of 2015.”



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Legislative Framework:

Autonomy:

“The Agency shall be independent to the extent required to do its work autonomously and to exercise independently its functions so that its conclusions and recommendations contained in the evaluation reports shall not be influenced by third parties such as higher education institutions, ministries or others.”

Law 136 (I) of 2015
Article 26 (9)



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Legislative Framework:

The Agency has assumed the responsibilities of the Council of Educational Evaluation-Accreditation (CEEAA), the Advisory Committee on Higher Education (ACTE), and the Evaluation Committee for Private Universities (ECPU).



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Legislative Framework:

Evaluation Committee of Private Universities (ECPU):

The Evaluation Committee of Private Universities was the competent authority in the Republic of Cyprus, stipulated by the Laws for the Establishment, Operation and Control of Private Universities 109(1)/2005 and 197(1)/2007, for the examination of the applications submitted for the establishment and operation of a private university.



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Legislative Framework:

The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, has adopted the Decisions of ECPU relevant to the institutional and programmatic evaluation of all Private Universities operating in Cyprus at the moment.



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Legislative Framework

The new Legislation provides a quality assurance framework for higher education in Cyprus within which, higher education institutions will be driven to enhance quality and develop an internal quality culture.



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Legislative Framework:

Within the framework of the new Legislation the Agency has extended competencies:



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Competencies:

- ▶ Institutional, Departmental and Programmatic Evaluation and accreditation of higher education
- ▶ Quality Assurance in higher education on the basis of the European Standards
- ▶ The Evaluation and Accreditation of cross-border forms of education, offered by local institutions in member states or third countries
- ▶ Assessment of the conditions for the provision of cross-border education from foreign institutions in Cyprus
- ▶ Assessment of inter-institutional cooperation of higher education institutions
- ▶ The provision of information of Quality Assurance in higher education



European Agencies and Bodies for Quality Assurance in Higher Education:

The Agency operates in accordance to the standards and guidelines provided by the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA).

The Agency, at the moment, is taking the necessary measures to join the European Network of Quality Assurance (ENQA) as well as the European Network of Quality Assurance Register (EQAR) as a full member .



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European Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in Higher Education:

The Standards and guidelines for quality assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) were adopted by the Ministers responsible for higher education in 2005 following a proposal prepared by the European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education (ENQA) in co-operation with the European Students' Union (ESU), the European Association of Institutions in Higher Education (EURASHE) and the European University Association (EUA).



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Criteria for internal and external evaluation/accreditation:

The Agency sets the criteria for internal and external evaluation/accreditation in accordance to the standards and guidelines provided by the European Network for Quality Assurance (ENQA), for the following types of Evaluation/Accreditation:

- 1) Institutional
- 2) Departmental
- 3) Programmatic



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Criteria for internal and external evaluation/accreditation:

The use of criteria is aimed at finding possible areas of weaknesses and deviations in connection with the academic profile, goals and mission of the institution and the comparability of the results of the Evaluation in relation to the objectives of the current system of higher education in the Republic and the European Standards and Guidelines.



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Criteria for Institutional and Departmental Evaluation/Accreditation:

The criteria are set based on the following pillars of evaluation/accreditation:

- 1) Mission and strategy
- 2) Strategy and Systems for Quality Assurance
- 3) Administration
- 4) Design of Programs of Study
- 5) Research
- 6) Hiring, Advancement System and human resources development
- 7) Resources



Criteria for internal and external evaluation/accreditation:

The criteria are set based on the following pillars of evaluation/accreditation:

- ▶ Goals and learning Outcomes
- ▶ Design of Programs of study
- ▶ Quality of Research
- ▶ Human Resources



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Standards of Internal Quality Assurance:

Every institution of higher education shall aim to continuously improve the quality of its teaching and research work and other activities and to act for internal quality assurance and is expected to apply the following standards:

- Commitment to cultivate attitudes and behaviors that recognize the importance of quality assurance in the performance of its work
- implementation of a policy and associated procedures for quality assurance and standards in relation to the programs of study offered and the higher education qualifications awarded
- operation of formal mechanisms for the approval, monitoring and periodic review and where necessary revision of the programs of study offered and the higher education qualifications awarded
- taking care for the Evaluation of students on the basis of published criteria, regulations and procedures applied consistently



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Standards of Internal Quality Assurance:

- possession of the necessary qualifications and skills required by the teaching staff in relation to the teaching work it is called upon to perform, and the data documenting the degree of competency of its teaching staff
- adequacy and suitability of learning resources for each program of study offered for purposes of supporting the student's learning process
- collection, analysis and use of all data related to the effectiveness and efficiency in the management of the study programs offered and other educational activities
- disclosure, in a printed and electronic form, at regular intervals, of an updated, impartial and objective report regarding the programs of study offered and the other educational activities, as well as the qualifications it confers

The relevant legislation stipulates that an Internal Quality Committee, shall be appointed by every higher education institution.



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Standards and Procedures for External Evaluation of Quality Assurance:

The Agency implements External Evaluation by appointing for each type (of external evaluation), an External Evaluation Committee which drafts a relevant report on the basis of the criteria set by the Agency.

- The External Evaluation Report is made public on the Agency's website
- If there are recommendations for action or the subsequent preparation of an action plan is required, the relevant procedure for the monitoring and re-evaluation of the institution is stated in the External Evaluation Report and is consistently applied by the Agency and the institution under evaluation;
- The External Evaluation of institutions, departments and study programs shall be conducted on a regular and periodic basis

