

Decision of the Standing Commission of AQAS

on the bachelor degree programme:

“English Language Teaching” (B.A.)

offered by Eastern Mediterranean University, Northern Cyprus

Based on the report of the expert panel and the discussions of the Standing Commission in its 2nd meeting on 19./20. August 2019, the Standing Commission decides:

1. The study programme “**English Language Teaching**” (**Bachelor of Arts**) offered by **Eastern Mediterranean University (Northern Cyprus)** is accredited according to the AQAS criteria for Programme Accreditation.

The accreditation is **conditional**.

The study programme essentially complies with the requirements defined by the criteria and thus the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) and the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) in their current version. The required adjustments can be implemented within a time period of nine months.

2. The conditions have to be fulfilled. The fulfilment of the conditions has to be documented and reported to AQAS no later than **31 May 2020**.
3. The accreditation is given for the period of **six years** and is valid until **30-September 2025**.

Condition:

1. The description of the learning outcomes of all courses has to be consistently more outcome oriented and clearly differentiate between outcomes and content.

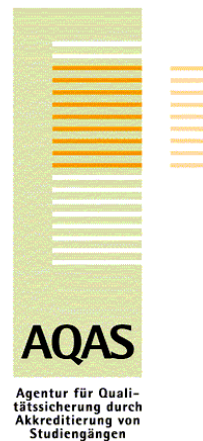
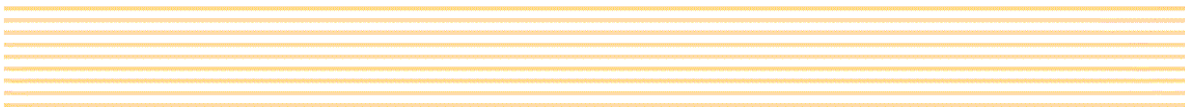
The condition is given as based on the experts report the Standing Commission concludes that Standard 2 is only partly fulfilled.

The conditions were fulfilled on time.
The Accreditation Commission confirms this with its decision of 25./26.11.2019.

The following **recommendations** are given for further improvement of the programme:

1. The department should clearly assign responsibilities for certain quality assurance activities to individuals within the team.
2. The workload within the semester should be better coordinated to avoid peaks toward the end of the semester, particularly in light of numerous parallel study projects.
3. The department should keep their website up to date.

With regard to the reasons for this decision the Standing Commission refers to the attached assessment report.



Experts' Report

on the bachelor degree programme:

B.A. English Language Teaching

offered by the **Eastern Mediterranean University (North Cyprus)**

Visit to the University: 29./30. May 2019

Panel of Experts:

Prof. Dr. Andreas Rohde	English Seminar, University of Cologne, Germany
Assist. Prof. Dr. Savas Yesilyurt	Tourism Guidance Department (ELT PhD), Atatürk University, Erzurum, (Turkey)
Zeki Subasi	English Language Teacher, Gokkusagi College, Istanbul, (Turkey) (representative from the labor market)
Sophie Hoffmann	student of Teaching studies German/English, University of Potsdam, Germany (student representative)
Coordinator: Ronny Heintze	AQAS e.V., Cologne, Germany

Preamble

AQAS – Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study Programmes – is an independent non-profit organisation supported by more than 90 member institutions, both higher education institutions (HEIs) and academic associations. Since 2002, the agency has been accredited by the German Accreditation Council (GAC). It is therefore a notified body for accreditation of higher education institutions and programmes in Germany.

AQAS is a full member of ENQA and also listed in the European Quality Assurance Register for Higher Education (EQAR) which confirms that our procedures comply with the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG), which all Bologna countries agreed upon as a basis for internal and external quality assurance.

AQAS is an institution founded by and working for higher education institutions and academic associations. The agency is devoted to quality assurance and quality development of both academic studies and teaching in higher education institutions. The activities of AQAS in accreditation are neither restrained to specific academic disciplines or degrees nor to a certain type of higher education institution

I. Accreditation procedure

This report results from the external review of the Bachelor programme in English Language Teaching” offered by the Faculty of Education by Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU), Northern Cyprus.

1. Criteria

The assessment of the programmes is in accordance with a set of criteria for programme accreditation developed by AQAS. The criteria are based on the Standards and Guidelines for Quality Assurance in the European Higher Education Area (ESG) 2015 and feature a set of indicators used to demonstrate the fulfilment of each criterion. However, criteria are met even if single indicators are not fulfilled. The indicators need to be discussed in the context of the programme as not all indicators are necessarily applicable to a programme.

2. Approach and methodology

Initialisation

Eastern Mediterranean University mandated AQAS to perform the accreditation procedure in November 2018.

The university prepared a Self Evaluation Report (SER). A draft of it was delivered to AQAS together with the relevant documentation of the study programmes and an appendix.

The appendix included e.g.:

- Overview over statistical data of the student body (e.g. number of applications, beginners, students, graduates, student drop outs).
- CVs of the teaching staff
- Information on student services
- Core information on the main library
- Undergraduate academic regulations

AQAS assessed the SER draft for completeness, comprehensiveness and transparency.

The accreditation procedure was officially initialised by a decision of the AQAS Accreditation Commission in December 2018. The final version of the SER was handed in in April 2019.

Nomination of the expert panel

Composing the expert panel follows the stakeholder principle. Involved are consequently representatives from the respective discipline/s, the labour market and students. Furthermore, AQAS follows the principles for the selection of experts by the European Consortium for Accreditation (ECA).

The Accreditation Commission nominated the expert panel in April 2019. AQAS informed the university thereafter about the members of the expert panel and EMU did not raise any concerns against the composition of the panel.

Preparation of the site visit

Prior to the site visit, the experts reviewed the SER and submitted a short preliminary statement including open questions and potential points in need of additional information. AQAS forwarded these preliminary statements to the university as well as the panel members to increase transparency in the process and upcoming discussions during the site visit.

Site visit

After review of the SER, the site visit to the university took place on 29./30. May 2019. On site, the experts interviewed in separate discussions different stakeholders, such as the management of the university, the programme management, teaching and other staff as well as students, and consulted additional documentation as well as examples of graded work from student's achievements. The visit concluded with presenting preliminary findings by the experts to the university's representatives.

Report writing

Following the site visit, the expert group drafted the following report assessing the fulfilment of the AQAS criteria for programme accreditation. The report included a recommendation to the Standing Commission. The report was sent to EMU for comments.

Decision

The experts' report together with the comments by EMU forms the basis for the AQAS Standing Commission to decide regarding the accreditation of the programme. Based on these documents, the Standing Commission decided on the accreditation on 19./20. August, 2019. AQAS forwarded the decision to EMU. The university had the right to appeal against the decision or any of the imposed conditions.

In September 2019 AQAS published the report and the accreditation result of the accreditation along with the names of the panel of experts.

II. Introduction

The Eastern Mediterranean University (EMU) is located in Famagusta, Northern Cyprus. The University traces its history back to a Higher Technological Institute established in 1979. Following the receipt of the Parliamentary Charter in 1986, EMU has evolved as a State-Trust endowed university. All degree programs at EMU have received accreditation by the Council of Higher Education of Turkey, YOK. Defining itself as an international university, EMU is a full member of the

International Association of Universities, the European University Association, Community of Mediterranean Universities and the Federation of the Universities of the Islamic World.

At present, EMU is an international tertiary institution with a population of around 20,000 undergraduate and postgraduate students from 106 different countries as well as with 1,100 academic staff from 35 countries. Over the past years the University has produced over 53,045 graduates. EMU comprises 11 Faculties and 5 Schools offering contemporary education through 100 undergraduate and school programmes and 81 postgraduate degree programmes.

The Eastern Mediterranean University possesses an infrastructure, providing accommodation opportunities for its students through in-campus dormitories and opportunities to rent houses/flats. Students at EMU can benefit from package fee application including tuition fee, on-campus dormitory accommodation, and 3 meals per day.

The BA in ELT Programme is one of the degree programmes of the FLE Department of the Education Faculty at Eastern Mediterranean University. The Education Faculty at EMU was established in 1999. Currently the Faculty is offering 15 undergraduate degree programmes to 1928 students, two programmes of these using English as a teaching language.

The SER describes that in the past years the department student body has become more international representing more than 25 different nationalities and countries such as UK, Australia, North Cyprus, Turkey, Iran, Iraq, Jordan, Oman, China, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Nigeria, USA, Azerbaijan, Russia, etc. The FLE Department is one of the oldest as well as the founding Department of the Education Faculty; in 2019 the Department will celebrate its 24th anniversary. Since its establishment in 1995 the Department has produced over 1.000 BA, MA and PhD graduates from 25 nationalities. Student intake is described to have undergone growth in the past years, for instance, more than 50 new students enrolled in fall 2018.

III. Assessment of the study programme

1. Policy and Procedures for Quality Assurance

The programme is subject to the Higher Education Institution's policy and associated procedures for quality assurance, including procedures for the design, approval, monitoring, and revision of the programmes.

A quality-oriented culture, focusing on continuous quality enhancement, is in place. This includes regular feedback mechanisms involving both internal and external stakeholders.

The strategy, policies, and procedures have a formal status and are made available in published form to all those concerned. They also include roles for students and other stakeholders.

FLE's Quality Philosophy describes quality assurance as an on-going process which aims at continuous assessment and improvement of teaching, learning, research and administration. As regards external evaluation, all degree programmes of the FLE Department have been accredited by YÖK (Higher Education Council of Turkey) and YÖDAK (Higher Education, Planning, Accreditation and Coordination Council of Cyprus). Initially, QA at EMU has been conducted by a central QA Team; recently, the Department formed its own Quality Assurance Team of volunteer academic staff. Regarding internal evaluation, the Department describes that it is continuously assessing various aspects of its work through its committees, and most importantly, at the Departmental Board, which is ultimately responsible for planning, control, assurance and improvement of quality.

With regard to the BA programme under review, which has been on offer since 2005 and comprises 58 courses, the Departmental Board has been discussing and sharing the staff's feedback and reflections on their teaching, their learners' favourable and unfavourable learning experiences, their performance and success for several years. The Department provided an Annex to the SER outlining adjustments and changes to the programme reflecting the functionality of the internal QA-procedure. As described, a FLE student representative has also been involved in the Departmental Board meetings on behalf of the BA students.

Further, in terms of internal assessment, a course and instructor Evaluation Survey (Appendix to the SER), is conducted on-line by the Rector's Office at the end of every semester. Every instructor has access to the evaluation results through an academic portal to reflect on the results and - if necessary - to take the results into account to enhance the quality of their teaching. The evaluation results of all academic staff are also available to the Head of the Department.

Experts' Evaluation

The expert panel positively recognizes that the idea of a profound and well-rounded quality assurance system in which the idea to develop a culture of quality is visible across different levels at EMU, starting from individual teachers, via the department level to the level of top leadership in the rectorate. In light of competition between different educational offers in North-Cyprus as well as Turkey the experts agree to the line of argumentation of EMU that the easiest way to attract talented students and produce qualified graduates is in assuring the delivery of a high-quality education.

The experts observed a well-established approach of open communication channels crossing the different levels within the university, including rectorate and deanship, which is a precondition for trustworthy communication facilitating continuous improvement. Indeed, the discussion with different stakeholders has shown a good level of exchange on matters that are relevant for the quality of teaching and learning. Even if certain incidents received critical reflection by students, the panel of experts believe that the fact that all relevant issues can be discussed within existing structures is a positive finding. At department level the priority seems to be on jointness regarding the responsibilities for procedures, which indeed can be helpful. It should be mentioned that, based on the positive impression the panel gained from the team spirit in the department, this approach is reasonable and is also supported by the involved individuals. On the other hand, the panel also found that for certain specific aspects that require attention (streamlining the competence orientation of learning outcomes, compare chapter 3), this shared responsibility might also lead to slowing down effectiveness as clear individual responsibilities would increase the output as it facilitates communication within the team. On that end the panel believes that the Department should look into ways to assign certain responsibilities to individuals within the team (**Finding 1**). This does not have to counteract the team spirit, but it allows individuals to coordinate action within the team as responsibilities are clearly defined.

Positive recognition should also be given to the fact that EMU, but also the Department clearly sees external programme reviews as a successful tool for continuous development. In light of different evaluation tools that are in place and cover the programme well, this external reflection creates an added value. It might, in the long run, be interesting how the increased internationalization of the student body also creates new demands for the quality assurance system. Diverse student backgrounds bring new challenges. The panel believes that there is good awareness and the open door and open communication approach in the department is helpful to react to this changing environment. The next years will show if procedural adjustments will be required to assure the sustainability and soundness of existing tools or if extension of scope or depth will be required.

To conclude, the experts confirm that a quality assurance system is in place and it is appropriate for the study programme. It is well documented and comprehensive. It involves instruments with different scopes and both students and the labour market are involved and interested in the quality assurance procedure for the study programme. Since the last accreditation, the department has worked well on the recommendations of the experts. This also underlines the high level of professionalism and commitment to quality assurance in the department.

Findings

1. The department should clearly assign responsibilities for certain quality assurance activities to individuals within the team.

Conclusion:

The criterion on the Quality assurance is fulfilled.

2. Quality of the Curriculum

The intended learning outcomes of the programme are defined and available in published form. They reflect both academic and labour-market requirements and are up-to-date with relation to the relevant field. The design of the programme supports achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

The academic level of graduates corresponds to the requirements of the appropriate level of the European Qualifications Framework.

The curriculum's design is readily available and transparently formulated.

The aim of the BA Programme is to train fully proficient modern language teachers of English. The central idea of the programme is to provide a rigorous and comprehensive training for BA students so that they can acquire an adequate competence in English language teaching. To achieve this goal, an emphasis on theory and application is supposed to be maintained throughout the BA study; commencing with the first year of language work and culminating with school experience and teaching practice at the close, students are supposed to have opportunities to relate theory to practice and to explore career options. Moreover, a range of Area Core elective courses shall provide students with opportunities to familiarize themselves with the most recent developments in the field.

The Learning Outcomes with respect to the BA in the FLE Programme are as follows: Upon successful completion of the course, BA students will have

- developed skills for effective oral and written communication in English;
- developed analytical, critical thinking and problem solving skills;
- acquired core FLE concepts, as well as theoretical and practical knowledge compatible with contemporary professional requirements;
- developed skills for effective planning, preparation and execution of language teaching;
- acquired applied knowledge and skills to practice through microteaching as well as in real English language teaching classrooms;
- become confident, creative and autonomous language teachers;
- gained an adequate competence in English language teaching or for MA studies;

- become aware of professional ethics;
- become receptive to the philosophy of lifelong learning as well as continuous professional development;
- become aware of the FLE impact in the globalizing world.

The length of the undergraduate studies is 4 academic years, each year comprises 2 academic semesters. According to the standard EMU academic calendar, every academic semester covers 16 weeks, including mid-term and final examination weeks.

The key elements of the programme are 34 Area Core courses, 6 Area Core elective courses, 14 Faculty Core courses, and 4 University Core courses. The first year of the BA studies predominantly comprises courses aimed at improving students' English language knowledge and skills. In the second- and third-year, students take vocational, educational and literature courses for their professional theoretical and practical background. In their fourth and last year, pre-service teachers, in addition to the remaining professional and vocational courses, gain school/teaching experience/practice.

Experts' Evaluation

Based on the extensive curricular documentation and the discussions during the site visit, the experts conclude that the programme is well balanced, including courses in linguistics, literary criticism, cultural studies and second language teaching as well as practically oriented courses. Judging from the titles of the courses and the content descriptions, the panel overall believes that the BA programme is very attractive, covering a wealth of current topics and challenges in the above-mentioned content areas. It should be positively highlighted that the programme caters to exploratory learning by including a course such as *Research Methods in English Language Teaching (ELTE 214)* which covers important competencies oriented towards the needs of future graduates.

The experts carefully discussed the different learning outcomes and reviewed material while also interviewing students and labour market representatives regarding the resulting qualifications. Consequently, the experts can confirm that on programme level the outcomes are achieved.

Due to the well-established curriculum and the sound delivery of the programme the expert panel managed to also look carefully into the details of the learning experience in the department. Consequently, the experts confirm that the study programme is feasible for the students, although the panel has learnt that a limited number of students do not manage to complete their studies in the allocated time. Not surprisingly, the discussion of the students' workload has revealed some typical problems of reasonably calculating the time it takes the students to complete their assignments. More specifically, however, the students reported that the workload may be unevenly balanced towards the end of a semester so that it is in fact skewed and up to six different projects have to be tackled simultaneously in relatively little time. While not ignoring the fact that it might be the case that students move tasks to a later time of the semester voluntarily, the concrete problem here appears to be that the majority of the projects can only be started after the midterm tests as the students have not acquired the necessary knowledge and skills to start the project. In light of the collegial spirit within the department it seems only reasonable to recommend the department to distribute course contents and project work more evenly across the semester. Coordination between courses could be helpful but also projects could be designed in a way that students may be able to start working on them at an earlier point in the semester in order to avoid an accumulation of the workload towards the end of the term (**Finding 2**).

Considering the required documentation of the curriculum it can be confirmed that the documentation allows to understand the content and structure of the programme. One point still should be mentioned regarding the description of some of the course contents and outcomes when comparing the students' handbook (Appendix 4) and the delivered course descriptions (Appendix 3). It quickly becomes obvious that many of the course aims/outcomes in the students' handbook are in fact content descriptions ("This course introduces [...]") and in some cases do not really differ from the course descriptions in Appendix 3. In ELTE 205 the course aims are given as a list, always starting with "in-depth knowledge". The panel believes that for this advanced state of programme development the department should clearly finetune and revise these parts of the documentation so that aims and outcomes are clearly reflected in the documentation allowing a full reflection of an outcome-oriented teaching approach (**Finding 3**). The experts understand that partially the mismatch can be explained with the need to cater to different stakeholders and implementing regulations prescribed by YÖK. However, all written documentation is official and the discrepancies between the descriptions in the appendices 3 and 4 should be eliminated. In this way the department does not have to give up its right to amend the programme to a certain degree, yet at the same time the official appendices match. As an example, the two courses (ELTE 301/302) *Teaching English to Young Learners I* and *II* appear to be very different with regard to their scope. This difference, however, is not sufficiently documented in the course description, which should be revised.

The panel very positively assesses the inclusion of the course *Special Education* (EDUC 413) as it is essentially important for the future of English language teaching. As discussed with the staff in Famagusta, the course contents of *Special Education*, however, are not yet reflected in the English courses. The panel encourages the department to take inclusive issues seriously in all the practically-oriented courses of the programme in the light of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (2006) and especially in the light of growing heterogeneity in classrooms.

As for "assessment methods", in Appendix 13 there are number of test formats listed. It appears that in virtually all of the individual cases, "final exam" refers to a written test. While this is only clear implicitly, the further finetuning of documentation should lead to a further elimination of sources of misunderstandings, e.g. the use of the terms "lecture" and "presentation", which appears to be used synonymously. Overall, the terminology should be more unambiguous in Appendix 13.

On a positive note, talks with both staff and students have revealed that one of the major aims of the study programmes, namely teaching the students to teach themselves (one of the cornerstones of constructivist thinking, which particularly underlies the practically oriented courses), is recognized and appreciated by the students as well as the experts.

Findings

2. The workload within the semester should be better coordinated to avoid peaks toward the end of the semester, particularly in light of numerous parallel projects.
3. The description of the learning outcomes of all courses should be outcome oriented and clearly differentiate between outcomes and content.

Conclusion:

The criterion on the Quality of the curriculum is fulfilled.

3. Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students

The delivery of material encourages students to take an active role in the learning process.

Students are assessed using accessible criteria, regulations, and procedures, which are made readily available to all participants and which are applied consistently.

Assessment procedures are designed to measure the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Upon being enrolled, the students admitted to the EMU ELT programme take part in a placement test (If they have not claimed a certificate showing their qualification in terms of English language proficiency to be exempted from the preparatory class). Students who do not succeed in the placement test have to take a one-year preparatory course at the Foreign Languages and English Preparatory School. The others directly start their education at the ELT Department. In both cases, the first year is mostly devoted to improving students' English.

At the beginning of each semester and, accordingly, each course, each student is provided with the course description and content of each course. In course descriptions, besides weekly course contents, information about the sources to be utilized, teacher/student roles, learning outcomes, assessment tools and techniques is also offered. Therefore, students know what to expect in terms of both instruction-learning and assessment.

According to the SER, most up-to-date approaches, methods, techniques, and materials are used in both the instruction and assessment processes. For instance, in assessment, formal/informal, process-based/product-based, oral/written types of assessment are utilized. In addition, learner-centered teaching activities and assessment techniques are described to be preferred. In this way, all the knowledge, skills and competence aspects of education should be assessed. Furthermore, open door and transparency policies are reported to be followed for both educational and assessment processes. All the steps are taken systematically and in accordance with the by-laws and regulations. All the stakeholders including students can have access to all the information about the instructional and assessment regulations and procedures through both paper-based and online means of information. Also, the advisors assigned for each student support them with the guidance they need throughout their educational life.

Course descriptions are given by the teachers at the beginning of the semester; and the content and methods used in instruction are described in the documentation as well. The university and the department describe to follow an inclusive education policy. Students are informed about different cultures and individual backgrounds.

Both the SER and also the interviews during the site visit provided comprehensive information about the assessment procedures at the ELT department. During the assessment, both process- and product-based measurement and evaluation techniques are used. This procedure involves multiple ways and tools of testing such as different projects, activities and types of tests. Tests are reported to be very professionally prepared and conducted.

Experts' Evaluation

The interviews with students, graduates, and teachers during the site visits support the teaching, learning and assessment practices reported in the SER. The experts clearly confirm that detailed information is given about the elements, times, methods, weights of assessment in the course descriptions (Course Information Packages). The percentages of points allocated to each part of

assessment are also explained in detail. Clearly there is good transparency regarding the assessment procedures and regulations are well implemented.

Students' voices are taken into account and their problems are solved with no need for formal procedures. Individual differences and differences through cultures are considered by the teaching staff also in light of assessment. However, this does not impact the fairness of assessments as discussions with students as well as teaching staff have shown.

The experts also confirm that the programme is inclusive in terms of teaching methodologies – from the most traditional to the most contemporary ones. Teaching practice and school experience courses are offered as a regular part of the programme. The expert panel learnt during the interview that particularly for these elements advisors and other staff are both very easy to reach and very helpful during all theoretical and practical courses.

Course instructors prepare the exams themselves; however, if there is more than one group for the same course, exams can be prepared and assessed by a team of instructors. Exam results are (usually) announced in less than one-week time. Detailed answer keys are prepared. There are also regulations for compensating for disadvantages, illness or other circumstances that may affect attendance at an exam. When students are not satisfied with the results, they can see their papers and discuss the results with instructors. In case of any disagreement, re-evaluation is possible. Committees can be formed for re-evaluating the papers of those who are unsatisfied with the results as well. Necessary corrections are documented transparently, objectively and immediately. The panel concludes that there is high transparency in all stages of assessment.

In conclusion, both the SER and the findings from the site visits reveal that teaching, learning, and assessment are implemented in an effective and fruitful way. In addition, objectives, the outcomes, and the way instruction and assessment are carried out match each other to a great extent. As a result, all stakeholders including administration, teaching staff, graduates, and students are generally satisfied with them.

Conclusion:

The criterion on Learning, Teaching and Assessment of Students is fulfilled.

4. Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification

Consistently applied, pre-defined, published regulations are in place which cover student admission, progression, recognition, and certification.

Regarding access and admission to the study programme, an applicant must satisfy the following requirements:

- The applicant must submit a certified copy of a Secondary School Diploma or the equivalent, demonstrating that s/he has satisfactorily graduated from secondary school; and must arrange for other relevant certified documents, such as transcripts or detailed mark sheets, to be released to EMU.
- An applicant who is not a citizen of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) or of the Republic of Turkey is in addition required: i) to have achieved an overall secondary school performance approved by the department to which admission is sought; ii) to supply two letters of recommendation; and iii) to supply financial guarantees that sufficient funds for tuition and living expenses are available.

- Applicants who are citizens of Turkey are placed through the Turkish National University Entrance Examination; citizens of TRNC are required to sit for the EMU entrance examination. Application for the entrance examination constitutes application for admission to EMU.

As EMU describes, the majority of newly admitted students who have just completed secondary school studies spend their first Academic Year in the English Preparatory Programme of the EMU School of Foreign Languages. The main objective of the programme is to develop proficiency in the use of English so that the student will be adequately prepared to undertake university-level studies conducted in the medium of English. A further objective is to help the student adjust to the EMU environment and develop the self-discipline and study skills that will be essential for success in the degree programmes of study. Any student admitted to EMU who can demonstrate proficiency in English deemed adequate for university-level studies may be permitted to register directly for freshman classes without enrolling in the English Preparatory Programme.

Regarding transcripts of records, at the completion of the programme, FLE students are awarded the Bachelor of Arts (BA) degree. At the end of each semester, the BA FLE student is provided with a copy of his/her academic record.

A student may be exempted from courses in the BA Programme on the basis of having completed equivalent coursework at the other institution; decisions concerning equivalence and comparability are made by the Department Head, and if deemed necessary, by a Committee to be formed by the Department Head. Transfer applications can only be made for entry to the second, third, fourth or fifth academic semesters, and thus the student is required to complete at least one-half of the total course load requirement at EMU.

The regulations and the necessary documents for the student admission for the local applicants, the applicants from the Republic of Turkey and the applicants who are not citizens of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus or of the Republic of Turkey are published to all applicants on the university website and in the student handbook. The progression of the students is followed, particularly by their academic advisors.

EMU also presented in its SER numbers of graduates, dropout rates and student statistics.

Experts' Evaluation

Regulations regarding admission and recognition are well defined and, based on the provided information these regulations are also implemented consistently. It is possible to transfer from or to the ELT department at EMU. All courses have credit points aligned to ECTS and course descriptions. These credit points, course descriptions, relevant by-laws and regulations are followed during the recognition or transfer procedures. When students graduate, they are granted a diploma supplement alongside their diploma which allows them to study or work internationally. In this sense, during the site visit, the graduates of the EMU ELT stated that they are proud of being a member of the EMU family for several reasons: it offers a good background; it is a well-known university; its diploma is recognized by other educational institutions; it is very professional; and it is recognized, certified and accredited by numerous international institutions; etc.

Both the SER and the data obtained from the observations and interviews with different stakeholders, especially the students and graduates show the well-organized, well-documented, and well-informed nature of the EMU ELT Department in terms of running the student admission, progression, recognition, and certification procedures. All the by-laws, regulations, requirements, procedures, and guidelines are clearly defined, announced and provided to the applicants and students through different printed, electronic, online, or face-to-face channels. As the experts confirm, they are all publicly available. This is also in line with the statements of the interviewees

during the site visit. Furthermore, students can easily find information about the mobility programmes on offer. The sole critical reflection that was given during the interviews regarding admission was a considerable increase in the amount of fees for Turkish students. This also led to some protest of students while it does not impact the assessment of the regulations as part of this procedure. In the long run, the fee structure might however impact the student diversity on the campus. In sum, the stakeholders as well as the expert panel are satisfied with the student admission, progression, recognition, and certification procedures of the ELT department at EMU.

Positive recognition should be given to the great level of cultural diversity in the department and the growing international atmosphere in the programme. Actually, one of the main aims of the department is to increase student intake diversity (The ELT program currently has students from over 30 countries - for some countries, the programme has reductions in fees and the students ranked highest in the entry exam receive monetary / material support from rector's funds, which also serve the aim of student intake diversity and internationalization). In addition, the programme seeks more international collaboration. This greatly contributes to its international recognition. Furthermore, English is the medium of instruction and communication everywhere on the campus; and multilingualism and multiculturalism are getting more and more widespread.

Conclusion:

The criterion on Student Admission, Progression, Recognition and Certification is fulfilled.

5. Teaching Staff

The composition (quantity, qualifications, professional and international experience, etc.) of the staff is appropriate for the achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

Staff involved with teaching is qualified and competent to do so.

Transparent procedures are in place for the recruitment and development of the staff.

The outline of the human resource structure and distribution in the FLE Department is as follows: 7 full-time Faculty members, 1 Executive Assistant, 2 Research Assistants (PhD Candidates), a Faculty Computer Technician and Assistant, a Faculty Administrative Officer, a Janitor, and 1 cleaning staff.

The FLE teaching staff represent 3 nationalities, they have obtained their first, second and third academic degrees from universities in Turkey, Russia, UK, USA, as well as EMU and have also taught in different instructional contexts such as Turkey, Russia, North Cyprus and USA. The academic staff include 2 Professors, 2 Associate Professors, 2 Assistant Professors, and 1 Senior Instructor. At present all academic staff members are teaching in the FLE Department only. The fact that they hold full-time status is supposed to ensure continuity of the educational services on offer. An appendix to the SER outlines the full academic profiles of the teaching staff.

Experts' Evaluation

There is a very good spirit in the department, staff members appear to be genuinely dedicated and there appears an enormous amount of mutual support. Staff follow an open house policy and do not stick to office hours but try to be available for the students, if need be via WhatsApp groups and e-mail contact. The staff, however, have unanimously stated that face-to-face communication

with the students cannot be replaced. The very positive impression of the staff's overall dedication was confirmed in our discussion with selected students of the ELT programme.

At the same time, the teaching staff are aware of opportunities and challenges inherent in the programme. One issue that was particularly highlighted was a mismatch in theory and practice: Recent teaching methods and approaches are dealt with in the programme while the teaching reality in schools is often not compatible with these advances. The teachers are aware of the challenges and are trying to bridge this mismatch. It has already been stated in the assessment of the study programme that one major goal of the study programme is "to teach the students to teach themselves" and make them independent and critical individuals. The students have confirmed that they are aware of this goal and believe that the university teachers are successful in reaching it.

The well-established team spirit in the department clearly is a strength and is also only possible due to a well-qualified staff portfolio covering all relevant fields and combining their strengths. This, however, should not counterfeit the impression that, within this team, responsibilities for certain tasks, e.g. management of the department's website should be more transparently distributed and individual staff members should be the reliable contacts for the distributed tasks and duties (see chapter 3).

Conclusion:

The criterion on Teaching Staff is fulfilled.

6. Learning Resources and Student Support

Appropriate facilities and resources are available for learning and teaching activities. Guidance and support is available for students to advise on achieving successful completion of their studies.

EMU Library was founded in 1993 and it has a seating capacity of 800. There is a multi-purpose auditorium with 240 seats, an audio-visual room with a 60-seat capacity, a special exhibition hall, all areas being centrally air-conditioned. EMU library offers computerized research facilities, over 140,000 books and hundreds of journal and periodical subscriptions. Additionally, there is a separate ELT library within the department for English Language Teaching.

EMU says that at the beginning of each semester the BA FLE students are informed through online students' portals as well as notification boards on the Department premises, regarding their advisor appointment. In accordance with the EMU By-Laws for advisorship, advisors guide their advisees in terms of all relevant academic and orientation matters; provide them with accurate information, timely support, and orientation, at the beginning of their studies. As explained in the SER, first year students are assisted by their advisors in terms of adjustment to the Department and campus through the provision of information and explanation in relation to various academic and non-academic procedures, routines, and potential personal issues. If need be, the ELT advisors refer the BA students to the qualified and trained personnel of the EMU Psychological Counselling and Guidance Centre to deal with their needs and problems.

Experts' Evaluation

During the visit to EMU the expert panel has seen a variety of necessary learning resources such as the department's library and two well equipped computer labs. After talking to the students,

who described the given resources as sufficient, the panel confirms the learning resources to be adequate to positively contribute to the students' education. This is supported by appropriate material resources and equipment, sufficient facilities available with regard to room and space required for the number of students in the programme as well as access to analogue and digital resources. We were also able to see for ourselves that the rooms were in good condition and were equipped with air condition in order to provide a suitable working environment during hot summer months. Indeed, the new building that will be used by the ELT department will not only facilitate cooperation and dialogue within the department, it also offers an up-to-date learning environment that will further increase the quality of the programme delivery.

Before beginning their studies at EMU, students are provided with a package of introductory services, and throughout their studies institutionalized student advisory services are available to all students. These services are offered during the entire semester and information on these services is also made available to students online, so each student can get information that is needed any time. The expert panel would like to put a special positive emphasis on EMU's policy to give each student a personal advisor. With this advisor students are able to discuss every problem they may face during their studies both personal and in private. All advisors the panel met assured, that even though the student/advisor ratio seems a little high, they can all provide a sufficient support for their students. In the long run, the expert panel believes that, particularly in light of the growing student diversity, a further increase in the ratio should be avoided and a lower ratio will help further increase quality.

Another important aspect supporting the learning progress is the concept of school practice in the form of practical phases and internships. Recognizing the structural limitations, the panel would like to see the ELT department to keep up the idea of practical parts in ELT education and maybe even develop new ideas on how to incorporate even more practice into their study programme.

In conclusion, the panel finds the given learning resources and student support as sufficient and the criteria as fulfilled.

Conclusion:

The criterion on Learning Resources and Student Support is fulfilled.

7. Information

Data is collected from relevant sources and stakeholders, analysed, and used for the effective management and continuous enhancement of the programme.

Impartial and objective, up-to-date information regarding the programme and its qualifications is published regularly. This published information is appropriate for and available to relevant stakeholders.

EMU states that they apply several methods in order to analyze the different pathways after the students have graduated. However, due to the existing exchange with schools, direct contact is explained to be a very important source of information to follow up on students and graduate's success.

An important tool to provide information about the programme is the website of EMU that holds general information regarding regulations that are applied to all undergraduate programmes as well as to admission and recognition. Programme specific information is provided on the department's website and in a student handbook that constitutes the main source of information.

Experts' Evaluation

All required information, such as information on the programme, intended learning outcomes, selection procedure, qualifications awarded, and learning, teaching and assessment procedures is provided to the public by EMU and the ELT department. The experts found that it is provided online as well as in analogue form. With regards to collecting and analysing information on the labour market requirements, on which sectors graduates are employed in and on how many graduates continue in further education programmes (Master-, PhD-programmes etc.); on the composition of the student body of the study programme and on the duration of studies, no issues or questions occurred. The programme benefits from a rather clearly defined employment field that is also regulated resulting in clearly defined requirements towards the programme. While this limits the freedom to design the programme more individually, in terms of the provision of information it fosters transparency.

The expert panel carefully consulted available documentation of how many students do not complete their studies and the reasons for non-completion are also documented. The panel found all explanations comprehensible and consistent with other indicators and responses of relevant stakeholders.

However, an issue that was identified already prior to the site visit and was then confirmed during the discussions on site is the 'up-to-dateness' of the ELT department's website. While the issue has already been discussed in chapter three, concluding that a clearer division of responsibilities might facilitate to increase necessary updates, in this section the department is encouraged to discover their intrinsic interest in an up-to-date website. Particularly in light of an increasingly international student body, the ELT department's website is a major source of information not only for current students, but also for potential future students, parents and also other faculties who send/receive exchange students or are interested in further cooperation. Consequently, the department should find ways to regularly update their website. Besides this opportunity for future improvement, the practice of information provision and management is well established.

Findings

4. The department should update their website regularly.

Conclusion:

The criterion on Information is fulfilled.

8. Summary of findings

4. The department should clearly assign responsibilities for certain quality assurance activities to individuals within the team.
5. The workload within the semester should be better coordinated to avoid peaks toward the end of the semester, particularly in light of numerous parallel study projects.
6. The description of the learning outcomes of all courses should be more outcome oriented and clearly differentiate between outcomes and content.
7. The department should keep their website up to date.

9. Recommendation of the expert panel

The panel of experts recommends to accredit the B.A. **English Language Teaching (English and Turkish)** offered by the **Eastern Mediterranean University (North Cyprus)**.