

Specialization (A and B)

Specialization is required only for the degree of primary school teachers. Students are required to complete 24 ECTS, 12 ECTS from specialization A and 12 ECTS from specialization B either from the third or the fourth year of studies. Students must select two specialization areas from the following:

Specialization A: Greek Language, Mathematics, Science Education

Language Arts Education (Greek Language)

The specialization promotes students' in-depth learning in regards to Greek language teaching, through the examination of different pistemological traditions in language arts and literacy education (e.g. linguistic, communicative-functional, sociocultural models), and an emphasis on contemporary approaches to literacy (e.g. new literacies, multimodality, critical literacy). Attention is concurrently paid to methodological issues pertaining to the teaching of language arts, including the teaching of literature, so that students become creative and reflective practitioners by engaging in lesson plan development, text analysis, and the design of instructional material and learning experiences. Students are expected to successfully complete two of the four offered courses (EDU 422 Greek Language Instruction II; EDU 424 Multiliteracies and Multimodalities).

These courses constitute the space for students' experiential learning, that focuses on the examination of multiple perspectives on language and literacy, and offers them opportunities to gain a broad understanding of current issues and challenges of language arts and literacy education in and beyond the (Greek) Cypriot context.

Mathematics Education

The aim of mathematics specialization is to study, deepen and reflect on contemporary trends in teaching and learning mathematics. Prospective teachers will have the opportunity to study teaching approaches, strategies and practices involved in the teaching of fundamental mathematical concepts. In particular, prospective teachers will study: (a) Cyprus mathematics curriculum, (b) research findings regarding students' difficulties and the development of mathematical thinking, (c) teaching practices and ways of utilizing teaching material, (d) analyzing students' answers and ways of thinking, and (e) effective ways of incorporating digital tools in mathematics teaching and developing educational material. The main objective is to develop a teacher profile that will be able to manage students' needs and difficulties in the learning of mathematical concepts, to adequately interconnect the mathematical concepts and to use appropriate teaching models and tools, based on students' needs and contributing to the further enhancement of understanding in mathematics. Prospective teachers will acquire important skills to continue their studies at postgraduate and doctoral level. Their employment prospects are also expanding due to the importance of mathematics in the curriculum of the school and their usefulness in society. The knowledge, skills and skills developed by prospective teachers can help them to a significant extent in any future professional examination.

The specialization of mathematics consists of two courses. In lesson EPA 473 (**Didactic of Numbers and Algebra in the primary school**), special emphasis is given on the study of teaching models, representations and practices used in numeracy and algebra teaching in elementary school. In course EPA 474 (**Critical, Creative Thinking and Assessment in Mathematics**), students explore ways to develop critical and creative thinking in mathematics as well as modern approaches to student' evaluation and assessment.

Science Education

The Science Education specialization aims at offering to students the knowledge and skills necessary for teaching science at the elementary school level. Specifically, the courses of the Science Education specialization provide information about the extant theoretical and practical practices and procedures followed, when teaching science at the elementary school level. The goal is to review the basic methods/approaches, principles and strategies for enacting effectively science teaching and learning. For completing the Science Education specialization, you need to attend and fulfil the requirements of the following two courses: EDU 488 Contemporary Dimensions of Biology Education, EDU 489 Computer Science Applications and Modern Trends in Science Teaching.

As shown in the course descriptions of the above courses, the Science Education specialization focuses on topics derived from the extant research of science education. All courses combined aim at providing support to student teachers, that wish to become capable in teaching science at the elementary school level in the future, as well as to follow further (postgraduate) studies in science education.

Specialization B: Inclusive Education, Art Education, Music Education, Physical Education

Inclusive Education

The Inclusive Education specialization route offers a range of attitudes and skills, that are useful for all teachers. The two units (EDU 466 Learning Disabilities and EDU 468 Special Needs in the Mainstream School) build on the introductory compulsory unit EDU 311 Introduction to Inclusive Education, which is a prerequisite for the specialization route. The specialization route units equip the students with the theory of inclusive education, encourage the development of basic research skills, and provide opportunities for hands on activities held in the Inclusive Education Lab. In particular, the students get acquainted with the literature about disability in Cyprus and abroad, they become critical thinkers, they learn how to employ strategies to improve teaching for all learners, they are taught how differentiated instruction can be intercoded in the planning and teaching (goals, means and materials, content, evaluation), they interact with people with disabilities and their families, and they are involved in developing or improving means and materials intended to facilitate learning for students with disabilities.

The specialization route of Inclusive Education is of interest to all students, primarily because it equips them with knowledge, attitudes and skills, that will make them

effective teachers. The added value of this specialization route is that, it opens a range of paths for future employment, while at the same time it prepares them for postgraduate studies, either at the University of Cyprus, or in other universities.

Art Education

The Art Education courses (specialization area) offer opportunities to student teachers to engage through creative processes in teaching and learning the Visual Arts. The interdisciplinary character of Art Education courses enable participants to interact with various learning environments and incorporate artistic practices involving play, social engagement, visual thinking strategies and research, and the use of multiple mediums, objects and tools (including new technologies) in creating art. The participants are introduced to pedagogical learning in relation to the visual arts, and are empowered to use art and imagination in conceptualizing a more creative and just society. The courses do not require special knowledge and abilities in the Visual Arts, but are opened to those who would like to incorporate art in their teaching practices (in several settings), or want to proceed to further studies in the field of Visual Art(s) Education.

Music Education

The overall aim of music specialization courses is to provide a foundation of understanding the principles and processes of teaching and learning music in primary school. The courses are mainly laboratory based, focusing on music education activities and developing creative practices. The students acquire basic knowledge of music and creative expression skills, through the development of their own musical listening skills, performance and improvisation/composition. Students are expected to develop appropriate skills to support and guide music activities, based on the six core activities: movement, singing, listening to music, performance, improvisation and composition, reading and writing musical notation. Also, to be able to develop appropriate musical activities for specific ages and cognitive levels of primary school children. But also, to implement teaching strategies that promote creativity in music education. And finally, to be able to appreciate and support creative expression and aesthetic education, for their students and themselves, through music. Each lesson focuses on different areas: 1) EDU 444 Theory and Practice of Music; Creative Approaches Basic Music Theory, Aural Training and Learning of a musical instrument (besides the recorder), i.e. Guitar. Knowledge of relevant digital technology (i.e. MuseScore, Audacity). 2) EDU 445 Contemporary Trends in Music Education and Creative Approaches to Music Pedagogy; Listening, Improvisation and Composition in the Classroom Procedures and strategies for teaching improvisation and composition in primary school. Study of appropriate musical compositions for the primary school and teaching approaches for developing music listening, as well as listening maps and relevant teaching materials.

Basic principles of teaching music, organization and planning of music in primary school, practical applications.

Physical Education

The specialization in Physical Education aims at providing students with the adequate knowledge and skills needed to teach quality physical education. The physical education courses focus on the current trends related to effective teaching of physical education. Specifically, the purpose of the specialization is to provide students the opportunities to learn and develop specific teaching skills related to quality teaching, by taking into account the most relevant theory developments in the field of physical education. Students are also provided with several opportunities to develop a personal philosophy of physical education.

This specialization includes two courses, which combine theory and practice. In particular, the purpose of the first course (EDU 456 Content of Physical Education), is to help students examine thoroughly the content of physical education in primary school. The second course (EDU 457 Methodology of Physical Education) reviews the effective pedagogical skills, that promote student learning and positive attitudes in physical education. The compulsory course (EDU 376 Physical Education in Primary School) is a prerequisite and aims at providing opportunities for students to gain a deeper understanding of the content and pedagogy of physical education in elementary school. In all three courses of the specialization, a major emphasis is given to the integration of content knowledge with pedagogical knowledge.

Specifically, students learn the goals and objectives, as well as the content of elementary physical education. They also study the developmental characteristics of the elementary school children, learn how to design and develop unit and lesson plans that maximize student learning, and develop effective teaching practices.

In all three courses of the specialization, a strong integration of content and teaching practice is provided. Furthermore, it helps students develop specific content and pedagogical knowledge, that will enable them to provide quality physical education programs in elementary schools. Lastly, the specialization provides specific skills and knowledge for those students, who plan to continue graduate studies in the field of physical education pedagogy at the University of Cyprus, or in any other higher institution.