“Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.”
(Nelson Mandela)

Department of Education
Faculty of Social Sciences and Education
Introduction

Studying the processes of learning and teaching can serve as a catalyst for effective education, intended to promote the cognitive and intellectual development of human beings and, by extent, the society. The Department of Education has been operating since the establishment of the University of Cyprus in 1989. Today, it is one of the four Departments of the Faculty of Social Sciences and Education. The Department of Education has been the most populous department of the University with approximately two thousand graduates, whose training extends beyond the field of Education and contributes to local and international scientific, political, cultural and social affairs.

Mission of the Department

Since its founding in 1989, the Department’s mission has been the production of scientific knowledge in the fields of Pedagogy, Educational Research and Educational Practice, following an interdisciplinary approach, hence blending Philosophy, History, Psychology, Sociology and Economics. The Department of Education aims at responding to the national, social, cultural and developmental needs of the country, based on the scientific knowledge produced by the students and academic staff. The main priorities of the Department include:

- The production and dissemination of scientific knowledge in the field of Sciences of Education across the local and international community.
- The discussion and promotion of educational quality and effectiveness.
- The identification, consideration and scientific development of educational phenomena/issues.
- The production of theory and research-based practices towards the development of educational and social policies.
- The initial education of primary and pre-primary school teachers.
- The pedagogical training of secondary school teachers.
- The contribution to in-service teachers’ professional development at all levels of education.
- The development of postgraduate programmes aiming at enhancing students’ academic and research skills, in various fields of the Sciences of Education.
- The impact on the field of Sciences of Education, based on the Department’s presence (including recruitment of its graduates) in innovative European and international research programmes, international advisory boards, academic institutions, and scientific journals.
- The involvement of young researchers in training programs in research institutions locally and internationally.
- The promotion of Gender studies and the development of policies for equality and inclusion.
- The promotion of Inclusive Education.
Students must complete a minimum of 240 semester hours of ECTS, in order to obtain a Bachelor’s Degree in either Primary School Education or Pre-primary School Education. The courses available are organized into the following categories:

a) Compulsory Courses for primary and pre-primary school student teachers.

b) Restricted Elective Courses for primary and pre-primary school student teachers.

c) Free Elective Courses for primary and pre-primary school student teachers.

d) Specialization Courses for primary school student teachers.

e) Compulsory School Experience Programme for primary and pre-primary school student teachers.

f) Foreign Language Courses for primary and pre-primary school student teachers (Levels 1 & 2 / First and second level).

g) Bachelor Thesis (in lieu of two Restricted Elective courses of any cycle).

The following postgraduate programmes of study are available at the Department of Education:

- Educational Administration and Evaluation (Master’s and Ph.D.)
- Curriculum Studies, Teaching and Comparative Education (Master’s and Ph.D.)
- Sciences of Education (Master’s and Ph.D.) with one of the following specializations:
  - Multiculturalism, Migration and Decolonial Education
  - Early Childhood Education
  - Sports Pedagogy
  - Educational Technology
- Sciences of Education (Ph.D.) with one of the following specializations:
  - Theory and Philosophy of Education
  - Sociology of Education
  - Religious Education
- Mathematics Education (Master’s and Ph.D.)
- Learning in Natural Sciences and the Environment (Master’s and Ph.D.) with one of the following specializations:
  - Learning in Natural Sciences
  - Environmental Education/ Education for Sustainability
- Special and Inclusive Education (Master’s and Ph.D.)
- Language, Literacy and Education (Master’s and Ph.D.)
- Gender Studies (Master’s and Ph.D.) (Interdepartmental and interdisciplinary)(self-funded)

The Department plans to offer an autonomous postgraduate programme – at both Master’s and Ph.D. levels, in Educational Technology.
A Pedagogical Pre-Service Training Programme for secondary school teacher candidates is offered by the Department of Education. The main purpose of the Programme is to prepare university graduates for teaching.

- The Programme seeks to enrich graduates’ knowledge with skills and experiences which will allow them to put pedagogical theory into practice, as well as to pedagogically transform the content of various subject matter areas, in order to successfully fulfil their teaching role in and outside of the school classroom.
- The Program has been designed with an emphasis on providing teacher candidates with the skills and qualifications necessary for the beginning and their future professional career.

The undergraduate and postgraduate degrees offered by the Department of Education allow our graduates to follow several lines of employment. The prevailing culture of following a school career as the only option of employment is gradually being abandoned, since graduates of the Department can be employed in:

- Primary and kindergarten schools in the public sector (either through the teacher candidates’ catalogue or after succeeding in the examinations organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth for public school positions). A number of the Department’s graduates have already been offered a position in public schools through succeeding in these examinations.
- Primary and kindergarten schools in the private sector.
- Schools in Europe (e.g. Brussels, Luxembourg, Strasbourg).
- Cypriot and Greek community schools in the UK and elsewhere.
- The Center for Educational Research and Evaluation of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth (relevant postgraduate degree required).
- International examination boards/centers (e.g. Cambridge Assessment).
- Research centers (Master’s degree required).
- Universities and other academic institutions in Cyprus and abroad.
- Local and international non-governmental organizations.
- Local and international organizations.
- Museums, theaters and other cultural organizations or institutions.
- Organizations providing consulting and other services regarding schools/Education.
- Learning support workshops and workshops designed to promote innovative teaching strategies/techniques.
- Organizations involved in the development of educational/teacher training programmes (a Master’s degree is considered an additional qualification).

The Department of Education is actively involved in research. Its scientific/research and teaching staff participate in a wide range of programmes, focusing on a variety of research topics towards different directions. Research carried out by the academic staff of the Department is directly linked to teaching, both at an academic as well as at a school level context. In this way, theory and research reinforce the teaching process (in undergraduate and postgraduate courses), while at the same time teaching reinforces the research activity carried out in the Department.

- The academic staff of the Department have established multi-level research collaborations with different educational organizations in Cyprus, as well as with academic institutions and research organizations abroad. This creates career opportunities for new staff members, and more specifically for the Department’s graduates as well as for postgraduate level students (e.g. Master’s and Ph.D. candidates).
- The Department’s activity within the local and the international community is continuous and multifaceted. The Department is included among the most successful departments of education globally, based on its academic achievements, given its ranking on widely known ranking scales. A few examples are:

The choice of a degree offered by the Department of Education is not exclusively linked to the employment opportunities a school or an academic institution has to offer, but it is also linked to the opportunities and experiences students can gain through their interactions with the academic staff on multiple levels. Students find themselves in an environment of great scientific and pedagogical input, that provides them with a wide range of options and possibilities during and after the completion of their studies.
Marios Stylianides

My doctoral studies at the Department of Education have defined my personal and professional development and have shaped my professional career path from primary schools to the Primary Education Directorate of the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth. The well-structured curriculum and continuous guidance which I received from acknowledged professors provided me with valuable knowledge and experience and allowed me to acquire skills of independent research in the field of Educational Administration. My research interests focus on designing the development of the future schools in Cyprus, based on the Delphi method, by investigating numerous alternative ideas for the strategic planning and development of education. In addition to these, I have conducted in-depth research on the effective organization, administration, development, and evaluation of the school unit, as well as on the effective leadership and the systematic monitoring of the teaching personnel and the teaching practice itself. These have resulted in several publications, books, and conference/workshop presentations, as well as in the opportunity to teach in university-based postgraduate programmes.

Anna Kouppanou

The Department of Education is linked to various phases of my academic life and professional career; I completed my Bachelor’s and Master’s degree here and then worked as a Special Teaching Personnel Member and as a Postdoctoral Researcher. My studies at the Department of Education enabled me to build a strong theoretical background, which played a key role in completing my Ph.D. in Philosophy of Education and Technology at the UCL Institute of Education. Later on, the professional experience, which I gained during my employment in the Department, led to my recruitment from the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute, as an Officer for Education. In my opinion, one of the greatest advantages of studying at the Department of Education of the University of Cyprus is the opportunity of enrolling in several scientific areas, which are acknowledged as distinct ‘forms’ of knowledge, through which a person attempts to understand the world. The emphasis on the interaction between an individual and their environment, on understanding as an interpretative process, on imagination as an insight tool for scientific discoveries, and on childhood characterizes my research, as well as my writing work as an author of children’s and adolescent literature and poetry.

Maria Kampoüri

My undergraduate studies at the Department of Education, as part of the Pre-primary School Teaching Programme, shaped my career path in Academia, initially as a postgraduate student and as a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Warwick, and now as an Assistant Professor at the University of Reading in the UK. The Pre-primary School Teaching Programme, which was designed to equip students with the basic principles of fundamental theories of child development in early childhood, helped me to build a solid foundation of knowledge and acquire some of the most important skills, such as critical thinking, self-discipline and autonomous learning. The modules taught as part of the programme, were challenging enough to prepare me for a successful professional journey in the United Kingdom’s competitive academic context and, later, for an academic career in one of the best universities in the UK. In addition to these, the Department of Education of the University of Cyprus enabled me to grow as a student, a young professional, and a scientist through opportunities to attend and participate in various conferences and research programmes, as well as programmes such as the Erasmus+.

George Georgiou

My undergraduate studies at the Department of Education played a key role in my academic career in Educational Psychology, as a professor in the Department of Educational Psychology at the University of Alberta in Canada and as a Researcher in the field of diagnosis and treatment of reading difficulties. Recalling Dr. Papanastasiou’s research approach, Dr. Persianis’s stoicism, and Dr. Photiou’s humor, I feel blessed to have met and to have been taught by people who have left their mark on the Department’s presence throughout the years. Most importantly, at the Department of Education, I was taught excellence. In 2019, I had the opportunity to visit the Department in the context of the ‘University of the Diaspora’ initiative and to reciprocate for what it had given me twenty years earlier. I was pleased to realize all the progress the Department has made in the fields of teaching and scientific research, efficiently serving the country’s needs. Since then, I have been collaborating with the Department’s internationally acknowledged research/instructional staff on a more regular basis.
SPYROS KOUTIS

University of Cyprus, Department of Education. Four whole years of studying – was it worth it? Has it been a wise choice? I close my eyes and recall... Studying at the Department of Education has been the very first step of my academic and professional journey. The road was paved with adventures and knowledge. My companions to this journey were acknowledged academics, who inspired me to pursue an academic career, earning a Master’s degree from the University of Leeds and a Doctoral degree from Saint Louis University. My professional career began simultaneously with my postgraduate studies: while studying for my postgraduate degrees, I was working as a teacher in private and community kindergarten schools. Later on, I had the opportunity to return to the Department as a member of the Special Teaching Personnel. The knowledge and experience, which I have gained during my studies and work in the Department of Education, enabled me to obtain a position at The G C School of Careers-Kindergarten as the School’s Principal.

EVI LOIZOU

My undergraduate studies in the Department’s Pre-Primary School Teaching Programme defined my journey in the field of Education. The content of various courses, the School Practicum Programme, as well as the guidance offered by the teaching/academic personnel led to the development of the necessary skills of a kindergarten school teacher. My undergraduate and doctoral studies at the Department provided the bedrock for my success in the recruitment exams for public school teachers, organized by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth. As a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Education, I had the opportunity to take part in scientific research, the results of which have been presented at various conferences, locally and internationally, and have been published in international scientific journals. I also had the opportunity to teach some of the undergraduate level courses offered by the Department; I therefore believe that the Department’s curriculum offers students the knowledge and skills required for a successful academic and professional career.

PARASKEVI NEOFYTOU

My undergraduate studies in the Department’s Pre-Primary School Teaching Programme have defined my professional and academic development. Studying at the Department of Education, I was lucky enough to have been taught by acknowledged academics who inspired me to pursue an academic career, earning a Master’s degree from the University of Leeds and a Doctoral degree from Saint Louis University. My professional career began simultaneously with my postgraduate studies: while studying for my postgraduate degrees, I was working as a teacher in private and community kindergarten schools. Later on, I had the opportunity to return to the Department as a member of the Special Teaching Personnel. The knowledge and experience, which I have gained during my studies and work in the Department of Education, enabled me to obtain a position at The G C School of Careers-Kindergarten as the School’s Principal.

EVRYDIKI KASAPI

My decision to continue my postgraduate studies at the Department of Education was determined by the total fulfillment of my expectations during my undergraduate studies here. Since the beginning of my studies, I have been introduced to a wide range of knowledge, skills, and experiences; therefore, I am now able to apply critical and analytical thinking skills on numerous educational issues. Due to the various learning opportunities offered by the Department, I have realized the broad range of areas of interest one could focus on. As an Assistant Coordinator of a European research programme of the Department, I had the opportunity to build self-confidence as well as valuable expertise in the field of educational research. The training which I received as a student and a researcher in the Department of Education, along with further postgraduate studies at the University of Manchester, led to several career opportunities. Today, I work as a Teacher for the Deaf in public primary schools, while being a Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Education.