

Doc. 300.3.1/1

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report

(Programmatic within the framework of Departmental Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Cyprus University of Technology
- **Town:** Limassol
- **School/Faculty:** Engineering and Technology
 - **Department:** Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering
- **Programme(s) of study - Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
Programme 1 – [Title 1]
In Greek:
Πτυχίο Μηχανολόγων Μηχανικών (4 έτη, 240 ECTS)
In English:
BEng in Mechanical Engineering (4 years, 240 ECTS)
Language(s) of instruction: Greek
- **Programme 2** – [Title 2]
In Greek:
MSc Ενεργειακά Συστήματα (3 εξάμηνα, 90 ECTS)
In English:
MSc Energy Systems (3 semesters, 90 ECTS)
Language(s) of instruction: Greek
- **Programme 3** – [Title 3]
In Greek:
Διδακτορικό Μηχανολογία (3 έτη, 240 ECTS)
In English:
PhD Mechanical Engineering (3 years, 240 ECTS)
Language(s) of instruction: Greek



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

Department's programmes (to be filled by the CYQAA officer and verified by the EEC):

DEPARTMENT	PROGRAMMES OF STUDY
Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science and Engineering	Πτυχίο Μηχανολόγων Μηχανικών (4 έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)
	Ενεργειακά Συστήματα (3 εξάμηνα, 90 ECTS, Msc)
	Μηχανολογία (3 έτη, 240 ECTS, Διδακτορικό)

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The committee members visited the Cyprus University of Technology virtually during the period of December 17th and December 20th due to Covid-19 related travelling restrictions. Nonetheless, they were provided with a significant number of resources that helped with the evaluation.

During December 17th 2021, the virtual site meeting featured a short briefing of the members of the EEC with the CYQAA officer, which was followed by (a) an introduction of the members of the external evaluation committee; (b) meeting with the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs; (c) meeting with the member of the Internal Evaluation Committee; (c) meeting with the Dean of the School of Mechanical and Engineering and the Head of the Department and (d) meeting with the Head of the Department and the Coordinator of the Undergraduate's Programme.

Then followed separate meetings (a) with academic and teaching staff members; (b) administrative staff members and (c) students' representatives, during which the EEC members had the opportunity to have a thorough review of the Undergraduate's Programme as well as of the operation of the Department as such. Finally, a wrap-up discussion was held with the Head of the Department and the Undergraduate's Programme Coordinator, to clarify questions that came up during the day.

During December 20th, 2021 a virtual guided tour took place, visiting the Department's laboratories and teaching and research facilities.

Three meetings followed, namely: (a) with the Head of Department, the Coordinator of the Mechanical Engineering MSc programme and a Professor of the Department, (b) with the Head of Department and the Coordinator of the Doctorate (PhD) programme and (c) with the Head of Department, the Coordinator of the Energy Systems MSc programme and a Professor of the



Department. In these meetings the 2 MSc programmes and the PhD programme were presented and discussed thoroughly.

A further meeting followed, with academic and teaching staff members, in which the discussion focused on the teaching, research and administrative aspects of all courses and on the overall operation of the Department. The members of the Department gave extensive and detailed presentations and were very willing to answer questions asked by the committee and offer additional data and complimentary information.

A meeting with 10 students, both under- and postgraduate ones, followed, discussing very openly their perspective and experience of the studies and of their life as CUT students.

An exit meeting was held with the Head of the Department, the Coordinator of the graduate programmes and a Professor of the Department.

Overall, the committee believes that the following report has not been affected by the virtual nature of the visit, thanks to the efforts of all the parties involved.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Agis Papadopoulos	Professor	Aristotle University Thessaloniki
Maria Charalambides	Professor	Imperial College London
Dimitris Chrysostomou	Associate Professor	Aalborg University
Maria Papamichael	Student	University of Cyprus
Polycarpus Nicolaou	Professional Mechanical Engineer	Scientific and Technical Chamber of Cyprus Representative - ETEK
Name	Position	University

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:*
 - sub-areas*
 - standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - 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 each programme of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*

3: *Partially compliant*

4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
1. Department's academic profile and orientation		
1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)		1 - 5
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	5
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	5
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	4
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	5
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Department's development strategies.	5
1.1.6	Stakeholders such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Department's development strategy.	4
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Department's academic development is adequate and effective.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		

The department features a clearly stated mission statement, with well formulated goals and the aims to achieve them. It presented a considerable preparation and planning to fulfil its mission. The vision and the strategy are clear, but it would be helpful to elaborate short and medium-term goals and objectives, given that these were presented in the discussions with the faculty members.

There is good interaction with stakeholders, but a more structured way (regular meetings with stakeholders, an alumni association etc. could be some options)

Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.
2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

The programmes within the department, adhere to a sound logic and are coherent. In the Bachelor cycle is offered a number of courses to prepare the students for the graduate programmes. In addition, the streams in the Bachelor's two final years are well aligned with the MSc programmes. This is also confirmed by the students who did their BSc at the Department and who continued with an MSc course. These are well designed to allow graduate students to deepen their understanding in the respective areas of Mechanical Engineering and Materials Science. Finally, the PhD program offers interesting opportunities linked with the strong research activities and the good laboratory facilities.

The 3 Departments of the School of Engineering and Technology cover a good part of Engineering, given also the size of the University, without overlaps.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

[Click to enter text.](#)

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.2 Connecting with society

1 - 5

1.2.1	The Department has effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities.	4
1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	4
1.2.3	The Department ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	5
1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

During presentations and the subsequent discussion, it was clear that the Department is quite well linked to its graduates, is well connected with society and stakeholders and is also quite effective in communicating its activities.

This is being done on the one hand on the base of its academic staff's personal activities and initiatives and also on the level of the University. It would be a good idea to have a more structured way of maintaining links with alumni, interaction with stakeholders and dissemination of activities on a departmental (or perhaps school) level, although admittedly this is not easy given the rather small size of the Department.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.3 Development processes

1 - 5

1.3.1	Effective procedures and measures are in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure that they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach, carry out research and effectively carry out their work.	5
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	5
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	4
1.3.4	The funding processes for the operation of the Department and the continuous improvement of the quality of its programmes of study are adequate and transparent.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Attracting and selecting teaching staff is in accordance with the legal framework, that provides little flexibility to the Department. Still, the framework is quite effective, as proven by the quality of the academic staff and the diversity of their background.

There is currently no option to enroll undergraduate students except over the national Cypriot examinations. Given the fact that courses are by law held in Greek, it is not feasible to attract students outside Cyprus and Greece. However, on an MSc and PhD level effort is made to attract high-level students.

The Department is working together with 7 other European universities to establish the European University of Technology, which is a very ambitious approach that would enable enrolling international students.

The 4 new staff positions are in line with the Department's strategy.

The funding processes are transparent but depend to a great extent on the University's budget as determined by the Ministry for Education, hence continuity is beyond the Department's (and as a matter of fact the University's) managing options.

[Click to enter text.](#)

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The Department has developed coherent programmes both in the bachelor and graduate school, which effectively prepare students for their professional development, as shown by the high employment levels of the alumni. Furthermore, a number of students are accepted at highly competitive graduate programs broad (mainly in the UK), a fact that indicates the level of the Bachelor program.

With regard to effective communication to the community and former graduates, the Department has a good presence, which can be further enhanced. Furthermore, the Department has a clear plan on maintaining its current programmes and expanding its research work in new areas.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

1. The Department presented several examples of very interesting projects, mainly in applied research, linked to the educational process, which is crucial for the professional development of its graduates.
2. Students, have opportunities to get involved in interesting, interdisciplinary projects, on an MSc level and, especially, on PhD level.
3. Issues of sustainability, of novel technologies and of practice-oriented work are integrated, especially in the MSc level.
4. There is a smooth transition from teaching the fundamentals in the first 2 years of the Bachelor programme to the streams in the last 2 years.
5. There is a smooth transition from the BSc to the MSc level.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

The Department features some highly esteemed senior academic staff member, who will retire in a few years. Consideration should be given to their replacement, also perhaps with the expansion in topics like robotics, additive manufacturing etc.

The Department covers, as expressed by its name, a quite broad scientific field, which is also mirrored in its Bachelor and Master's curricula. Depending on how the European University of Technology project will proceed, it would be worth re-assessing this structure.

Considering the option of Distance Learning and/or hybrid courses, this would also be an option worth examining. During the Covid pandemic experiences it was proven that is, at least considering the practical aspects, perfectly feasible.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	Compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	Compliant



1.3 Development processes	Compliant
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2. Quality Assurance		
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study		1 - 5
2.2.1	The responsibility for decision-making and monitoring the implementation of the programmes of study offered by the Department lies with the teaching staff.	5
2.2.2	The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Department are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	5
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective, which have been presented and discussed.	4
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	4
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	5
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	5
2.2.7	The Department publishes information related to the programmes of study, credit units, learning outcomes, methodology, student admission criteria, completion of studies, facilities, number of teaching staff and the expertise of teaching staff.	5
2.2.8	Names and position of the teaching staff of each programme are published and easily accessible.	5
2.2.9	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	5
2.2.10	The Department flexibly uses a variety of teaching methods.	5
2.2.11	The Department systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.	5
2.2.12	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	4
2.2.13	The Department ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and/or international practices, particularly:	
2.2.12.1	Building facilities	4
2.2.12.2	Library	5

	2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	5
	2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	5
	2.2.12.5	Academic support	5
2.2.14	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.		5
2.2.15	The Department's mechanisms, processes and infrastructure consider the needs of a diverse student population such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities.		4
2.2.16	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.		5
2.2.17	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.		5
2.2.18	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff, enables continuous and effective feedback to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.		5
2.2.19	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.		5
2.2.20	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.		5
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>The Department has presented a clear and effective procedure for quality control and assurance, hence the resulting score is high.</p>			

Considering the fields marked as 4 out of 5:

(a) considering the quality control system and the use of students' assessment, issues with the GDPR have to be addressed, so that the outcomes of these assessments can be better utilized on a Departmental level.

(b) information on the employment of alumni could be monitored and presented in a more systematic way (perhaps in co-operation with ETEK)

(c) regarding student diversity, as already mentioned, given that the programmes offered are in Greek, it is difficult for non-Greek speaking students to attend, which limits the diversity of the students. Furthermore, these are full time programmes, hence there are no part-time students.

(d) considering the building facilities, they may be sufficient and well equipped, but the dispersion in many buildings over the city does pose a problem for the smooth operation of academic life.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The applied procedures presented are fully satisfactory. The faculty members are active in research and education and are interested in new and emerging trends in the fields of mechanical engineering and materials' science; this is mirrored in the Department's curricula.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

There are many communication channels of the faculty members with the industry, with professional bodies and associations, with other universities and research centres and with the public sector. This is very positive, since it leads to the effective transfer of knowledge and of soft skills to the students.

Many faculty members are well esteemed and recognized in their fields, a fact which gives prestige to this new and rather small Department.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

It is recommended to establish a way in which, whilst respecting the GDPR, it will be possible for the Department to utilize the assessments to improve weaknesses in the teaching process.

Considering the contact with alumni, so as to be able to monitor their professional development, it would be useful to work together with ETEK or other professional associations.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	Compliant
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study	Compliant

3. Administration (ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
3. Administration		1 - 5
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	5
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of specified procedures, in the management of the Department.	5
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	4
3.4	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Department's council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	5
3.5	The Department applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	5
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	5
3.7	The Department's council operates systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the law and / or the constitution of the Department without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	5
3.8	The manner in which the Department's council operates and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	5
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	5
3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	4
3.11	Internalization of the Department and external collaborations.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Regarding 3.3: The Department employs one person for administrative staff. In order to maintain the proper operation of the Department, it is strongly recommended to add more people to the administrative staff.

Regarding 3.10: The Department has the appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints. However, during the discussions with students' representatives, it was not clear if the students were aware of the range of the offered procedures. Therefore, it is recommended that the Department disseminates these procedures better to the students.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The Department has a clear mission and a detailed list of appropriate administrative processes for its operation. There are multiple committees and councils that have frequent meetings to ensure the proper execution of the Department's mission and its administrative tasks.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

The Department supports the students fully in the technical and non-technical terms of their education. They offer state-of-the-art research laboratories and teaching facilities equipped for remote teaching and services such as plagiarism checks from the University Library and support for students with learning disabilities from the Student Development Centre.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

As mentioned before, the Department needs to add more administrative staff as currently there is only a sole person responsible for all administrative tasks. The Department has listed multiple committees and councils to ensure its proper operation. However, no administrative personnel is listed taking part in any committee/council. Therefore, the academic staff is burdened with keeping the minutes of these meetings and performing the necessary administrative tasks, which could be considered a waste of valuable research and teaching time.

It is strongly recommended to assign more people in the administration of the Department and unburden the academic staff from performing excessive administrative tasks to ensure a proper balance of workload.

During the evaluation, some students mentioned that they were unaware of the Department's proper mechanisms for complaint management. It is highly recommended that the Department will disseminate these mechanisms more. It is also recommended to offer newsletters and create a more active, online presence to inform the students of the appropriate communication channels for their complaints and which organizations they can reach to express their objections and general remarks.



Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
3. Administration	Compliant

4. Learning and Teaching
 (ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 5.1. Planning the programmes of study
- 5.2. Organisation of teaching

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
- 3: *Partially compliant*
- 4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.1 Planning the programmes of study		1 - 5
4.1.1	The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study.	5
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	4
4.1.3	Intended learning outcomes, the content of the programmes of study, the assignments and the final exams correspond to the appropriate level as indicated by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	5
4.1.4	The programmes of study are in compliance with the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	5
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies. There is a connection with industrial stakeholders but they are weakly involved on the programme's review and development		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.2 Organisation of teaching		1 - 5

4.2.1	The Department establishes student admission criteria for each programme, which are adhered to consistently.	5
4.2.2	Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	5
4.2.3	The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	5
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Department has regular and effective communication with their students, promoting mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship.	5
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	5
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	5
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	5
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	5
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>Click to enter text.</p>		

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The Department offers a great variety of relevant courses to the students and follows all expected procedures to ensure the proper learning structures. During the virtual visit and tour, we witnessed that the facilities and policies of the Department are compliant with all the categories examined above.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

The courses are of high level, and the Department provides systems for reviewing the study programmes from students and other stakeholders. Students participate through representatives in committees that take decisions about the teaching programmes. Study curricula are constantly reviewed based on a concrete list of requirements, such as the needs of the labour market, international trends, and the students' interests. Alignment of study programmes also takes place based on requirements from CYQAA. There are established student support services to support them in their career development, welfare, and mental health.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

The only weakness identified in this section reflects on point 4.1.2 because the industrial stakeholders are weakly involved in the review and development of the study programmes. It is, however, optimistic that there is a newly established industrial training programme that could enrich the collaboration with public and private companies in the future.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	Compliant

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
 3: *Partially compliant*
 4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
5. Teaching Staff		1 - 5
5.1	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	5
5.2	The teaching staff of the Department has the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	5
5.3	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Department's programmes of study.	N/A
5.4	The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study.	5
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	5
5.6	The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught by teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	5
5.7	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the programme of study.	5
5.8	Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

5.3 There were no Visiting Professors in the Department for the past years due to change of national legislation.

Also, write the following:

- Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work: 25
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work: 13
- Number of visiting Professors: 0
- Number of special scientists on lease services: 0

Click to enter text.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The Department currently employs a competent group of faculty members with the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience, and the expected expertise to teach the great variety of offered courses.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

The department facilities, laboratory space, and equipment are up to par with EU standards and of high quality. Several laboratories are supported by EU-funded projects and contribute to hands-on research and teaching. There is a good balance of faculty from different age groups with complementary expertise to support competitive teaching and research in the Department. The publication record of the faculty members is satisfactory, and the majority of them have an active presence in international networks, topic groups, and editorial groups.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

There are no female faculty members currently fully employed in the Department. In order to support equal opportunities in teaching, research, and outreach, the Department needs to use a strategy to recruit more women. A recommendation could be to create awareness events in the university and high schools where female researchers will present their perspectives in this academic sector.

Based on the discussions with the faculty members and the examination of their teaching load, there is a minor issue in their teaching workload. Therefore, the EEC fully supports the Department's decision to hire four new faculty members that will support the teaching activities and will strengthen the Department's profile.

The Department has already identified the need to offer a selection of English courses. The EEC also supports this direction as it will greatly help the Department to recruit reputed scientists and academic personnel who do not speak Greek, potentially attracting Visiting Professors from abroad and improving its international profile.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
Teaching staff number, adequacy and suitability	Compliant
Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
Synergies of teaching and research	Complaint

6. Research

(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
6. Research		1 - 5
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	5
6.2	The Department consistently applies internal regulations and procedures of research activity, which promote the set out research policy and ensure compliance with the regulations of research projects financing programmes.	5
6.3	The Department provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	4
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development of students' research skills.	5
6.5	The results of the teaching staff research activity are published to a satisfactory extent in international journals which work with critics, international conferences, conference proceedings, publications, etc. The Department also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	5
6.6	The Department ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	4
6.7	The Department provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	5
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	5
6.9	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the teaching staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

6.3 comments during interviews that there was no technical staff to manage laboratories
6.6 students commented on lack of practical work in their taught programmes

Findings

The Department has submitted a very thorough documentation regarding their research, detailing their research policy, regulations and procedures, their compliance with international research ethics and routes and support for internal and external research funding. The Research Committee of the University is in charge of the research strategy; they also make recommendations regarding the allocation of funds to newly recruited academic staff. There is an Innovations Committee managing arising patent applications and an Innovation and Technology Transfer Office to protect Intellectual Property Rights. The policies regarding participation of staff in research projects, consulting services and entrepreneurial activities are clear, including the split of the overheads budget.

During the virtual tour and as listed in the documentation, it was apparent that the Department boasts a very good research infrastructure with well-equipped laboratories. The majority of the latter laboratories seem to be led by the Principal Investigators with some predominantly teaching laboratories also available for students (basic engineering measuring equipment, machine workshop).

The documentation lists the track record of several staff providing evidence of research active academics working at the top of their respective fields.

There is a reasonable amount of internal research funding (<0.5M) and the corresponding external research funding is of the order of approximately 2M. During the online presentations it was reported that the Department received approximately 13.6M in funding for the last fourteen years with evidence of research funding decreasing in recent years; this is a common occurrence in academia due to the high unpredictability and fierce competition in research funding.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Strong signs of research active staff, with a very good publication track record.

Modern, well equipped research laboratories studying contemporary research themes to benefit society.

Funding available for new starters as well as for submitting a number of proposals for external funding which recognizes the high workload required to prepare these proposals and funding applications.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Department acknowledges difficulty in attracting high caliber research students; this is a common problem in academia as less and less home students are willing to spend several years undertaking research with an unclear career progression following completion of the PhD. Instead, majority opt to start careers in industry. The Department can think of ways for supporting PhD graduates in securing employment either in academia or industry as motivation, maybe through building a network or board of industrial advisors who can steer research in directions that meet demands and needs in current job markets and acting as mentors to current researchers.

It is not clear how the Department takes full advantage of their research facilities as several taught (not PhD) students commented that there was limited practical work in their studies. It is recommended to think of more ways on how to leverage research into attaining research-led teaching in all its programmes.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
Research mechanisms and regulations	Compliant
External and internal funding	Compliant
Motives for research	Compliant
Publications	Compliant

7. Resources (ESG 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
7. Resources		1 - 5
7.1	The Department has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Institutional and Departmental bodies.	5
7.2	The Department follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	5
7.3	The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	N/A
7.4	The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	4
7.5	The Department carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.	5
7.6	The Department's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	5
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	N/A

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

7.3 no donations were listed in the documentation nor mentioned in the online interviews.

7.4 Some staff during interviews mentioned lack of administrative support in preparing grant funding applications. Also the single administrator of the Department was responsible for procuring and purchasing technical equipment in research laboratories.

7.7 no information in documentation was found on periodic reviews of facilities.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The Department’s budget was 250K – 500K per year in the last three years. The majority of the budget comes from governmental funding approved by Parliament which is complemented by tuition fees of MSc and PhD students. Most of the available budget is spent on research infrastructure and employment of contract researchers.

Strengths

There are details of a “feasibility study” in the documentation which lists inviting ETEK and industry to give feedback on the curricula to satisfy industry though it is not clear whether this for undergraduate or research teaching. The Department is thinking strategically on what the engineering employment market requirements will be locally (tourism industry and oil and gas).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

Some funding for technical support staff to ran and maintain the equipment in the research laboratories would be a good idea and is the norm in several universities. Also more administrative support for academic staff in preparing grant applications and managing larger research programmes. Perhaps consider proof reading research grant applications by experienced academic staff for clarity and presentation, as well as offering mock interviews to applicants could improve future research funding success rates.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
7. Resources	Compliant

D. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks, which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the Department under review may be achieved.

The Members of the EEC performed a remote assessment of the Department during which it was determined that the Department's policies are compliant for all the above categories. Furthermore, the members of the EEC were satisfied with most of the practices followed by the Department.

The Department has a clear mission and strategy is implementing it with policies that have received high marks in the corresponding sections, with some margins for improvement mentioned in the report.

The policies applied for the attraction and selection of teaching staff and students are those that apply to all public universities in Cyprus.

The Department has a good connection to stakeholders and a positive impact on society. Some suggestions have been made on how to structure the communication in a more systematic way, also with respect to connection with the alumni.

The Department features good infrastructure facilities, despite being scattered in several buildings in the city of Limassol: it has well equipped educational facilities and laboratories, a very good library (of the University) with excellent working hours and good IT infrastructure.

There is a quality assurance policy, which is implemented in a systematic way; there are margins for improvement in the utilization of the quality assessment's results.

The EEC members believe that there should be greater support considering the administrative staff: the existing do a very good job but there should be more people, in order to reduce administrative workload of the academic staff. This applies to some extent also to the need to have better administrative support for the preparation of research proposals.

With respect to the educational operation, there is a well-designed, coherent Bachelor programme that leads smoothly to MSc programmes and eventually to PhD programme. In terms of teaching the Department is scoring highly: Student-centred teaching is the focus of the Department which uses very good practices to achieve that. There are some margins for improvement, as mentioned in the report, in particular in the support of students, in their information on policies and regulations and in the organization of structured communication channels, both in the university's areas and on a social level, between students and faculty. Also, there is some margin for improvement in having a more visible and formalized pattern in dealing with students' complaints and problems.

The committee has noted the initiative of the Department and the University to participate in the establishment of a European University of Technology. This is a very interesting initiative, that would provide a strong boost to the internationalization of studies and help attracting good international, non-Greek speaking, students and also international visiting faculty members.

In the meantime, and especially for the MSc courses the EEC members would like to recommend considering an adaptation of the number of courses offered to the number of students enrolled and, in that sense, also a more even distribution of teaching load. The teaching staff have a strong



background that allows them to teach the related courses, with several options that can be utilized, to ensure that none of the faculty members are overloaded with teaching.

In terms of research the Department members are doing well. This is mirrored in the track record with publications in international journals of high quality and in the participation in conferences and editorial boards of committees and journals. The appointment of four new staff members, which is in line with the Department's strategy, is a chance that should be utilized to further strengthen the Department's profile. One recommendation by the EEC members, is to consider how the retirement of some senior staff members will be dealt with, in terms of scientific areas covered.

In terms of funding the members have attracted significant resources, keeping in mind the size and the age of the Department. One suggestion on research is to try to attract more European funding, compared to national funding, as that would allow some additional resources for maintaining and expanding the labs.

Finally, in terms of resources it certainly appears that the Department has managed to operate well within the administrative framework applying to public universities and has supported its main pillars of research and teaching activities. As mentioned earlier, it would be positive, if more research funds could be made available to support laboratories, technicians and administrative staff.

E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Agis Papadopoulos	
Maria Charalambides	
Dimitrios Chrysostomou	
Maria Papamichael	
Polycarpus Nicolaou	

Date: 12.01.22

