

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 19/05/2026

## Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:** University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Pure and Applied Sciences
- **Department:** Department of Computer Science
- **Programme(s) of study - Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

### Programme 3 – Bachelor

**In Greek:**

Πληροφορική (4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο(BSc))

**In English:**

Computer Science (4 academic years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor(BSc))

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek/English
- **Programme's Status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

**In Greek:** Concentrations

**In English:** Concentrations



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].

## A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2<sup>nd</sup> column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
  - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in \*.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

## 1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Actions Taken by the Institution                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | For Official Use ONLY       |
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| During one of the meetings, teaching staff noted a decline in the critical thinking skills of incoming bachelor students. As a possible response, the introduction of an on-boarding course on critical thinking for first-year students is suggested. | <p>The concern regarding a decline in critical thinking skills among incoming bachelor students is important and requires careful consideration. Rather than introducing a standalone onboarding course, we plan to implement a more integrated and sustainable approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Embed critical thinking and soft skills throughout the curriculum</b>, ensuring they are continuously developed across multiple courses.</li> <li>• <b>Enhance existing courses, especially in the introductory courses, by integrating problem-based assignments</b> that promote analysis, evaluation, and problem-solving. Aligned with course objectives, problem-based assignments help students question assumptions, build arguments, and apply concepts in practice, making critical thinking a continuous part of learning.</li> <li>• <b>Promote active learning approaches</b>, such as project-based learning that actively engage students and encourage collaboration.</li> </ul> <p>The Department will periodically monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of these actions, particularly at the beginning of each academic year, in order to identify possible gaps and introduce improvements where necessary. This holistic approach ensures that critical thinking is reinforced consistently, becoming an integral part of students' academic development rather than an isolated course.</p> | Choose level of compliance: |

## 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                             | Actions Taken by the Institution                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                   | For Official Use ONLY       |
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| Opening the programme in English may result in a larger, more diverse, and thus less homogeneous, student population. The EEC therefore suggests that the Department proactively considers introducing additional measures to guard against student complaints of unfair or biased grading. One example which does not incur additional labour cost would be to adopt <i>blind grading</i> of final exams and other forms of assessment, whenever possible. | <p>The Department follows a continuous assessment approach, where evaluation is distributed across multiple components (<a href="https://applications.ucy.ac.cy/icons/ects/docs/General_rules_of_study.pdf">https://applications.ucy.ac.cy/icons/ects/docs/General_rules_of_study.pdf</a>). In particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Final exams cannot be more than 60% of the overall grade (see rule #II.1.2.4 in <a href="https://www.ucy.ac.cy/legislation/wp-content/uploads/TOMOS-%CE%92-5.4-C-1.pdf">https://www.ucy.ac.cy/legislation/wp-content/uploads/TOMOS-%CE%92-5.4-C-1.pdf</a>).</li> <li>The remaining percentage includes mid-terms, coursework, projects, assignments, and other forms of assessment.</li> </ul> <p>To further strengthen fairness and minimize potential bias, the Department will explore the use of student IDs instead of names during grading (where it is feasible).</p> | Choose level of compliance: |
| Students commented on how they were able to approach staff if they were unhappy with their grades. The process of resolving grade disagreements directly with the                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <p>The Department values open communication between students and teaching staff. Students are encouraged to approach instructors to clarify feedback and better understand their performance. However, it is important to clearly distinguish between feedback discussions and grade negotiation. While informal discussions can support learning, they do not constitute a basis for changing grades.</p> <p>To ensure transparency and consistency:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Department fully adheres to formal grade appeal procedures established by the institution</li> </ul>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Choose level of compliance: |

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| <p>instructor may give the appearance of subjective grading, or the ability of students to negotiate a grade. The EEC therefore urges adherence to existing formal mechanisms for grade appeal. While such discussions may assist the student, they are not a basis for grade negotiation.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any request for grade revision must follow these official mechanisms, ensuring fairness and avoiding any perception of subjectivity (see <a href="https://applications.ucy.ac.cy/icons/ects/docs/General_rules_of_study.pdf">https://applications.ucy.ac.cy/icons/ects/docs/General_rules_of_study.pdf</a>).</li> </ul> |  |
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### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Actions Taken by the Institution                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       | For Official Use ONLY       |
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| It is <b>imperative</b> that the University opens four faculty positions to replace retiring faculty members. This will enable the Department to continue to deliver the BSc and MSc programmes in Computer Science in Greek. Best practice and knowledge-transfer requires these positions be opened so that there will be no temporal gap between retiring and incoming faculty members.          | <p>The Department fully agrees with the findings regarding staffing needs. Maintaining continuity is essential, and timely recruitment is critical to facilitate effective knowledge transfer and avoid any temporal gaps between outgoing and incoming faculty.</p> <p>The Department has repeatedly communicated to University authorities, in writing, the urgent need for a specific timeline to replace retiring faculty (one in 2026 and three in 2027) and to establish new academic positions. A recent positive development is the updated outcome of the FTE algorithm, which has increased the Department's operational quota from 22 to 25 academic staff members. Supported by this and the EEC's recommendations, the Department, in collaboration with the Dean of the School of Pure and Applied Sciences, recently submitted a detailed memo (May 2026) justifying the need for additional staff. This memo includes a proposed four-year timeline to replace retiring faculty and reach the new quota by 2029. Furthermore, following a University call in late February, the Department submitted a proposal for two strategic positions, one in Large Language Models and one in Cybersecurity, with detailed justifications outlining their alignment with the Department's and University's strategic goals.</p> | Choose level of compliance: |
| It is <b>imperative</b> that the University opens a significant number of additional faculty positions before offering the BSc and MSc programmes in English. The precise number of positions required to be negotiated between the Department and the University to ensure that the teaching requirements are met and the teaching burden placed on existing staff is not significantly increased. | The Department fully agrees with the findings regarding staffing needs. The Department concurs that a significant number of additional faculty positions will be required prior to offering the BSc programmes in English. The exact number of required positions should be determined through close coordination between the Department and the University, based on projected needs, and taking into consideration the recent legislation set by the parliament for offering undergraduate program of studies in English, by public universities. The Department has already initiated discussions and formally inquired about the timeline for opening these positions and will continue to follow up to ensure timely progress.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                    | Choose level of compliance: |



#### 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b> | Actions Taken by the Institution | For Official Use ONLY       |
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| None                                                   | Click or tap here to enter text. | Choose level of compliance: |



## 5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | Actions Taken by the Institution                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | For Official Use ONLY              |
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| <p>A replacement cycle of 7 years for PCs is, in this day and age, incredibly long in general — and, is unacceptably long for PCs in the computer labs that are used by computer science students for their projects, research, and courses. It is recommended that the university consider the specificities of the computer science students, and adapt a ~3 year replacement cycle.</p> | <p>The Department adheres with the University policies, so it will convey this recommendation to the relevant University decision bodies with the request to revise the replacement policy, taking into account budgetary considerations and prioritizing resources where they are most critically needed.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b> | Actions Taken by the Institution | For Official Use ONLY       |
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| N/A                                                    | Click or tap here to enter text. | Choose level of compliance: |

## 7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b> | Actions Taken by the Institution | For Official Use ONLY       |
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| N/A                                                    | Click or tap here to enter text. | Choose level of compliance: |

## B. Conclusions and final remarks

| Conclusions and final remarks by EEC                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                          | Actions Taken by the Institution                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | For Official Use ONLY              |
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| <p>All three programmes are excellent: they are carefully designed to a high standard, and the BSc programme was recently reviewed and revised against appropriate international standards. Teaching is delivered in a student-centred manner and student feedback was very positive. There is a wonderful synergy between the research activities of the academic staff and the course content of all three programmes. Student admission criteria are clearly described, and a wide variety of assessment methods employed which best fit the needs of the particular course at hand. Tracking of student performance is good, and student outcomes are excellent in both the BSc, MSc and PhD programmes. Our main area of concern is the sustainability of the current programmes, given that nearly 20% of academic staff are due to retire by August 2027.</p> <p>It is <b>imperative</b> that the University opens four faculty positions to replace retiring faculty members. This will enable the Department to continue to deliver the BSc and MSc programmes in Computer Science in Greek. Best practice and knowledge-transfer requires these positions be opened so that there will be an overlap between retiring and incoming faculty members.</p> <p>Furthermore, it is <b>imperative</b> that the University opens a significant number of additional faculty positions before offering the BSc and MSc programmes in English. The precise number of positions required should be negotiated between the Department and the University to ensure that the teaching requirements are met and the teaching burden placed on existing staff is not significantly increased.</p> | <p>The Department would like to sincerely thank the EEC for their thorough evaluation and for their very positive assessment of our programmes. We are particularly pleased that the EEC recognizes that all three programmes are carefully designed to a high standard, aligned with international benchmarks, and delivered in a student-centred manner. We also appreciate the acknowledgment of the strong synergy between research and teaching, the clarity of our admission criteria, the diversity of assessment methods, and the excellent student outcomes across the BSc, MSc, and PhD programmes.</p> <p>We fully agree with the Committee's concerns regarding the sustainability of the programmes, especially in light of the anticipated retirement of a significant portion of our academic staff by August 2027. Ensuring continuity and maintaining the high quality of our programmes is a top priority.</p> <p>In this context, we strongly support the recommendation to open four faculty positions to replace retiring members. We also agree on the importance of timely recruitment to allow for overlap between outgoing and incoming faculty, ensuring effective knowledge transfer and a smooth transition.</p> <p>Furthermore, we fully agree that any plans to offer the BSc and MSc programmes in English must be accompanied by the opening of additional faculty positions. The number of such positions should be carefully determined through discussions between the Department and the University, so as to meet teaching needs without increasing the burden on existing staff.</p> <p>Overall, we appreciate the Committee's constructive feedback and share their commitment to maintaining the excellence and sustainability of our programmes.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

### C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| <i>Name</i>              | <i>Position</i>                                                  | <i>Signature</i>                                                                     |
|--------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Chryssis Georgiou</b> | Professor and Chairperson                                        |   |
| <b>George Pallis</b>     | Professor and Coordinator of the Undergraduate Studies Committee |   |
| <b>Yiannos Sazeides</b>  | Professor and Coordinator of the Postgraduate Studies Committee  |  |

**Date:** 19/05/2026

