Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 25 January 2023

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  University of Cyprus

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **Programme of study
  Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

  In Greek:

  Διδακτορικό στην Ψηφιακή Πολιτιστική Κληρονομιά
  και Αρχαιολογία Τοπίου (3-8 έτη, 240 ECTS,
  Διδακτορικό).

  In English:

  Ph.D. in Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology
  (3-8 years, 240 ECTS, Ph.D.).

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English

- **Programme's status:** New

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: n/a
  In English: n/a

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 2nd 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
In general, the committee concludes that the quality of the proposed programme is high. The application for the programme is timely and relevant for the job market in the Humanities, which is shifting to an increasing focus on technology. The programme was designed by a committee of academics from the university, who were highly supportive of the effort. The department has indicated that all aspects of the curricula will be publicly available for prospective applicants to see, although because the programme is not yet active, the website is not 'live'. However, we were informed that there are already two prospective students with MA/MSc degrees aligned to apply for the PhD programme, should it be approved, so it is clear that there is a measure of anticipation and demand for such a programme.	The WEB site of the programme is ready to be launched by the time the CYQAA will give the green line of the certification of the programme. All the pages of the WEB site have been prepared with detailed information regarding the programme, the assessment method, the admission requirements, the infrastructure, the information regarding the facilities of the University and all other related information. The Web site of the Ph.D. programme will be at the same URL (https://ucyweb.ucy.ac.cy/mscgidh/) of the M.Sc. programme on Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology, since it is closely connected to it.	Choose an item.

The proposed programme is highly reliant on the efforts of a single person, Professor Apostolos Sarris. While he is exceptionally well qualified to lead the proposed programme, the risk is that the programme will be too reliant on him, singularly. For a full PhD programme, particularly as also he is the programme leader of the MSc Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology. There should be complementariness among several faculty members in order to maintain a fair workload.	The very nature of the program is based on a group effort from the whole participating faculty. Almost all the academic personnel of the Archaeological Research Unit participate in the supervising of the Ph.D. students. As the programme tries to fuse topics related to landscape archaeology and Digital Heritage, its implementation is based on the interaction between all the faculty members and the students. Thus, supervision of the students will be based on a group committee, members of which will have different expertise) that will offer the right directions and guidance to the students. With respect to the technical aspects, supervision and support of students will be in tandem with the postdoctoral researchers (one of them continuously secured by funding from the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation) who are available through research projects of the faculty and have the necessary experience. This interaction between the Ph.D. students and the post-doctoral researchers (a model which is well-established in most European Universities) will be most fruitful, as it will allow a cross-fertilization of research ideas.	Choose an item.
The Committee had concerns about the long-term provision of digital data for which there are services provided by the university, however a permanent solution in the form of two servers with timed backups is seen as necessary but is not yet	A server that will provide high capacity storage, archiving, backups, and retrieval of data has been purchased already (in December 2022) and is expected to become functional by the end of the spring semester 2023. The server was purchased from an Interreg research project (Metalon Topoi). The server will operate with a NAS architecture and it will be the core for the storage of information and data collected and processed by the various PhD students.	Choose an item.

fully planned. The proposed student projects will generate enormous amounts of data and it is essential that prior to the collecting and processing of data that there is a competent archiving plan in place.	A further solution has been also suggested by the IT group of the University of Cyprus for Cloud storage, which indicatively can support safe storage of large volume (10TB), for ten separate users/computers, with a cost of 100 Euros/year. All of this will be under consideration when large volume of data will be required. At the moment and for the next 3-4 years, we do not expect such kind of production of large datasets.	
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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
The campus Teaching and Learning Centre seems to be a valuable educational support resource for students to assist them with writing and finishing their degrees.	The Centre for Teaching and Learning (CTL) of the University of Cyprus supports instructors and students so they correspond to modern needs and internationally compatible and competitive quality criteria. The CTL is responsible for running the Instructors and course evaluation by students at the end of each semester, analysing data and provide relevant information to Departments. Additionally, is organises seminars, training and lectures.	Choose an item.
However, their mission is general across the entire campus, and their expertise is not within the subject area of Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology. Students are expected to enter the programme with high technical competence and field experience, therefore there is not a high emphasis on training, per se, within the PhD process.	The Centre has a more general purpose for students and instructors across the different departments of the university. PhD students of the specific programme are not expected to come with specific technical competences and field experience. This is why they are also allowed to attend different courses from the existing M.Sc. program to advance their skills. Contrary to the conclusions of the evaluation committee, training, hands-on experience, and technical expertise will be gained through the participation of the Ph.D. students in different projects of the Lab of Digital Humanities and Geoinformatics. It is through them that the PhD students	

	will acquire the particular experience, get the international connections and be involved in a more extended/practical research environment. Note that in the last 3 years, the Lab has carried out more than 20 geophysical fieldwork projects in Cyprus, Greece, Israel and Kosovo with the collaboration of Cypriot, Greek, German, American and Israel Academic and research institutions (see the related WEB page: https://ucyweb.ucy.ac.cy/geoinfolab/research-projects).	
The Committee finds that the student progression through the programme to degree is well thought out, but there is a potential risk of not having enough faculty members with competence in digital heritage and landscape archaeology to adequately supervise the students. As the programme is highly reliant on the efforts of a single faculty member, Apostolos Sarris, should he take a period of leave from the university, there is a risk that students will not receive adequate supervision. We strongly recommend that the university commit extra staffing resources to the programme to ensure its perpetuity.	Probably due to the short visit time, the committee members did not address this topic. Actually, most of the involved academic stuff is involved in research related to the digital technologies. Below we indicate a few actions and references related to digital technologies from the different academic members who participate in the Ph.D programme to stress the digital dimension of their research: MARIA PARANI (digital archives, GIS, 3D imaging, Geovisualization, Photogrammetry, etc): M. Parani, B. Pitarakis και J.-M. Spieser, «Artefacts and Raw Materials in Byzantine Archival Documents (ByzAD): A New Electronic Resource for the Study of Byzantine Material Culture», στο *Lire les Archives de l'Athos*, επιμ. Ο. Delouis και K. Smyrlis = Travaux et mémoires 23/2 (Παρίσι, 2019), 419-445. Also co-organized the Digital Humanities Introductory Workshop: An introduction to technologies for text editing, geographical visualisation and 3D imaging. (2022), University of Cyprus, University of London, University of Bologna, the ENCODE Project and the Alan Turing Institute	Choose an item.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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	MARIA IACOVOU (heavy involvement of GIS):	
	2002-2003: «The Digital Archaeological Atlas of Palaepaphos»: a cultural resources management project of the Archaeological Research Unit, University of Cyprus.2002-2004 (Phase I), 2007- (Phase II): "Aphrodite's Cultural Route" project. Member of scientific team. Project management: Cyprus Tourism Organisation	
	2013-1017: Supervisor of the Marie Curie Awards Career Integration Grants (CIG), ARIEL: Archaeological Investigations of the Extra-Urban and Urban Landscape in Eastern Mediterranean centres: A case-study at Palaepaphos (Cyprus)	
	2023-2025: HORIZON 2020 - TRIQUETRA Toolbox for assessing and mitigating Climate Change risks and natural hazards threatening cultural heritage HORIZON-CL2-2022-HERITAGE-01-08 — Effects of climate change and natural hazards on cultural heritage and remediation	
	THANASIS VIONIS (GIS, Digital technologies, Machine Learning, Digital Reconstructions): Papantoniou, G., Sarris, A., Morris, C. E., & Vionis, A. K. 2020. Digital Humanities and Ritual Space: A Reappraisal, Open Archaeology, 5(1), 598-614. doi: https://doi.org/10.1515/opar-2020-0103	
	Reconstructing the Pelaeoenvironment of the Xeros River Valley in Cyprus (GeoArchX)	

| | Ερευνητικά Προγράμματα "ΟΝΗΣΙΛΟΣ", Επιτροπή Έρευνας, ΠΚ, Μεταδιδακτορική Ερευνήτρια: Δρ Π. Μυλωνά (01/06/2020-31/08/2022)

Rural Life in Cyprus: Digitising and Reconstructing Material Culture Through Monastic Property Lists (18th-19th Centuries) (RURAL CY)
Εσωτερικό Ερευνητικό Πρόγραμμα, Επιτροπή Έρευνας, ΠΚ

Αποτύπωση, τρισδιάστατη απεικόνιση και μελέτη αρχαιολογικών χώρων και μνημείων των Βυζαντινών και Μεταβυζαντινών χρόνων στη Βοιωτία (Ελλάδα), σε συνεργασία με το Πρόγραμμα Ancient Cities of Boeotia (2010-2012)

Agapiou, A., Vionis, A.K. και Papantoniou, G. 2021. Detection of archaeological surface ceramic using deep learning image-based methods and very high-resolution UAV imageries. Land, [open access], 10.12, 1365

STELLA DEMESTICHA (Digital Technics, Immersive technologies, 3D mapping):
Poullis, C. Kersten-Oertel, M. Benjamin, J.P. Philbin-Briscoe, O. Simon, B. Perissiou, D. Demesticha, S. Markou, E. Frentzos, E. Kyriakidis, P. Skarlatos, D. Rizvic, S. (2019). Evaluation of "The Seafarers": A serious game on seaborne trade in the Mediterranean sea during the Classical period. Digital Applications in Archaeology and Cultural Heritage, 12(), e00090. | |

Skarlatos, D. and Agrafiotis, P. and Balogh, T. and Bruno, F. and Castro, F. and Petriaggi, B.D. and Demesticha, S. and Doulamis, A. and Drap, P. and Georgopoulos, A. and Kikillos, F. and Kyriakidis, P. and Liarokapis, F. and Poullis, C. and Rizvic, S. (2016). Project iMARECULTURE: Advanced VR, immersive serious games and augmented reality as tools to raise awareness and access to European underwater cultural heritage. Lecture Notes in Computer Science (including subseries Lecture Notes in Artificial Intelligence and Lecture Notes in Bioinformatics), 10058 LNCS(), 805-813.

Demesticha, S. and Skarlatos, D. and Neophytou, A. (2014). The 4th-century B.C. Shipwreck at Mazotos, Cyprus: New techniques and methodologies in the 3D mapping of shipwreck excavations. Journal of Field Archaeology, 39(2), 134-150.

VASSILIKI KASSIANIDOU (Digital techniques, simulation modelling):
SAROCY: DELINEATING PROBABLE SEA ROUTES BETWEEN CYPRUS AND ITS SURROUNDING COASTAL AREAS AT THE START OF THE HOLOCENE: A SIMULATION APPROACH. Call: RESTART 2016–2020- EXCELLENCE HUBS. Project Number: EXCELLENCE/0918/0143 (2019-2021)

PLEICY: WATER ROUTES IN HUMAN ISLAND DISPERSALS: MODELING THE PLEISTOCENE EXPLOITATION OF CYPRUS Call: RESTART 2016–2020 – DIDAKTOR. Project Number: POST–DOC/0916/0185 (2018-2020)

	MedSTACH: EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY CENTRE OF EXCELLENCE FOR ARCHAEOLOGY AND CULTURAL HERITAGE. Call: H2020-WIDESPREAD-04-2017-TeamingPhase1. Grant Agreement Number: 763635. The above are indicative. The rest of the faculty has also a lot of research involvement in digital technologies. In addition to the above, currently there are 4 Postdoc students that back up the particular program with expertise in digital technologies, photogrammetry, 3D modelling, Virtual reconstructions, Geoinformatics, etc. They are expected to continue for the next years as well.	
Whilst it is good that students are engaged in independent research, the Committee fears that given the relatively high emphasis on supervision from a single faculty member, some of the more silent students may become 'too independent'. It is easy for a supervisor to become overwhelmed when there are too many responsibilities heaped upon him/her, and, as it pertains to the students, it is the ones who are not as assertive who will likely become lost. It is not explicitly stated in the application materials, but students should be afforded monthly meetings with	Ph.D. students are assigned of a supervisor according to their main topic of research, but at the same time a three-member committee is assigned to them (compulsory) so that they can support them along the different dimensions of their research (archaeology, landscape, digital techniques). In such a way, the supervision is shared among different members of the faculty. This will secure a more shared type of supervision due to the diverse research topics of the programme and thus not a single faculty member will get the whole weight of supervision. Similarly, despite the fact that it was not mentioned in the application material, the usual strategy that is followed in the Department of History and Archaeology, in tandem with the small numbers of Ph.D. students, is that there are frequent meetings among the 3 faculty members and the Ph.D. students. These are scheduled within once or twice among each semester. At the same time, due to the close	Choose an item.

their primary supervisor and bimonthly meetings with their secondary supervisor (if applicable) to ensure that they receive adequate supervision. It is not clear why a full time PhD should take up to eight years to complete if the milestones are adhered to that are within Table 2 (page 54) of the application.	contact of the students with the faculty, sometimes there are also unofficial meetings going on according to the needs of the students. The maximum period of the 8 years for completing the Ph.D. requirements is placed due to the ruling of the Cypriot educational system. This is not unique for Cyprus but it is also applied in other countries (again by law). On the other hand, Ph.D. students are encouraged and supported to finish within 3-4 years. It is only in exceptional cases (financial obstacles, family reasons, medical cases, etc.) where the provision of the 8 years can be acceptable from the side of the students. In all cases, the message given to them is to finish the earlier possible to start moving to their next stage of their career.	
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3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
The proposed PhD programme follows Cypriot regulations for matriculation spanning six semesters (three years), however the regulations afford students up to eight years to complete their degrees. In the event of a worst-case scenario in which three students are accepted to the programme per year, after the eighth year, there may be as many as 24 PhD students in the programme, which would leave the department short staffed for supervisory resources relative to the numbers of students present. It is noted that, in the University's regulations, a maximum of 10 PhD students are allowed for an academic supervisor.	University of Cyprus regulations are homogeneous for all departments and thus the policy of a maximum period of completing a Ph.D. research cannot change specifically for the programme. In all cases, students are strongly encouraged to finish within 3 years, which is also the duration of a number of Ph.D. scholarships they apply for. The worst case scenario that the committee has considered has never been faced in the past and it is mostly unlikely to happen. However, even in the case that all Ph.D. students target for the 8 years' period, it does not mean that the academic stuff is insufficient to supervise them. There are 8 professors participating in the programme and each one of them has the allowance to supervise up to 10 students. It has also to be mentioned, that the registered Ph.D. students will be supervised by different members of the faculty according to the prioritization of their research topic. It has to be stressed that this is a new Ph.D. programme and its admission numbers can be modified according to the progress of the registered students.	Choose an item.
As indicated above, under existing Cypriot regulations, there could be difficulties in covering the supervising needs of students if too many students take their	As we mentioned above, the supervising of the Ph.D. students can be shared among the existing faculty members (total 8). There are no courses required to be taught during the Ph.D. programme.	Choose an item.

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ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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full, allotted time to degree. Without the granularity of a full workload analysis, it is difficult to understand the full implications of a successful programme on the staff. We recommend that the university commit more teaching resources to this programme in the form of permanent, tenured faculty, perhaps with an international focus, to attract, supervise and matriculate students successfully through the programme. There would be evident synergies with teaching on the MSc programme if an additional lecturer were available to support digital heritage themes. In particular, there are some elements of digital heritage, such as object scanning or virtual museums that are highly relevant but do not appear to be currently within the scope, as defined, of either programme. Therefore, the programme title is too broadly defined for the interests of potentially incoming students who might expect a full digital heritage environment, but receive guidance limited primarily	The need for more permanent, tenured faculty in the particular domain of digital technologies will be discussed in the later stages of the programme, as depending on the number of Ph.D. students we can make clear our request to the university for the need of additional teaching positions. At this moment, when the programme has not started yet, we cannot submit a convincing proposal to the university for such a request.

In terms of the digital technologies topics, each department worldwide focuses on particular themes. No department that deals with Digital Heritage can cover all the topics of digital technologies (see for example the Cyprus Institute and Stanford University programmes which are missing completely the geotechnological component. Similarly, Bradford University that is missing ontologies, virtual museums, etc.). From the description we provide and the details to be given to the Web site of the programme, it will be made clear to the candidates what to expect, what is the existing infrastructure and the research projects that the department is involved in this topic. In this way the Ph.D. students will know exactly what to expect in terms of the facilities and the expertise of the faculty and the knowledge they shall acquire for the programme. | |

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ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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to geophysical/remote prospection.		
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
(ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
The Committee was not provided information on the timing of application process or the timeframes of student admission. It is not clear whether there is one application time per year, several with specific admission periods or if entry to the programme was possible at any time.	The number of places available for the different Ph.D. programmes is announced at specific time windows by the Graduate School of the University of Cyprus. As Ph.D. students need to enroll to specific Research Stage courses to the Department of History and Archaeology, admission of them can be at the beginning of each semester. Thus, two rounds (maximum) of calls will be announced. If all 3 places are taken for students starting in the Winter semester, no further calls will be announced for the spring semester.	Choose an item.
In reviewing the CVs of the extant faculty, none of the other faculty members apart from Prof. Sarris have an exceptional track record in digital heritage or landscape archaeology. Thus, it appears to the Committee that there will be a high burden placed on Prof. Sarris to provide primary supervision to the PhD candidates. Additionally, the Committee understands that there is no requirement to provide the student with an associate supervisor - this may be seen as problematic should the	As it was also explained in section [2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment] (see above this report), all the participating faculty have some involvement in Digital Heritage projects and Landscape Archaeology, especially covering different archaeological periods. Furthermore, despite the fact that there is no requirement to assign explicitly an associate supervisor, students are assigned a 3-member supervising committee, each one of different expertise, which is able to provide supervising and guidance at the different topics of the students' research. This model is already running in all graduate programmes and students are benefited from it. In special cases, there are also external members from other universities or research foundations that can be part	Choose an item.

supervisor have extended periods of absence due to illness or if a dispute arises between student and supervisor. As indicated above, we recommend contracting at least one more permanent faculty member to ensure the robustness of the programme. The Rector stated clearly that archaeology is central to the university's mission to internationalise and is a core department within the overall framework of the institution. As such, resources need to be allocated to enact this vision and we therefore recommend that the proposed Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology PhD programme (as well as extant MSc degree in Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology) be prioritised according to these stated goals.	of the 3-member committee and provide their guidance and support. Finally, there is also the provision to hire special scientists and researchers (post graduate level) to support teaching and undertake lecturing in case of emergency (absence due to illness).

The three-member committee acts also as a mitigation measure in case a dispute arises between the student and the main supervisor.

Finally, the Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology Ph.D. programmes constitutes indeed one of the basic investments of the university and the department of History and Archaeology, supported strongly by the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation and is targeted towards upgrading the international profile of the university, in the way that has been described in the report of the evaluation committee. | |
| With the planned acceptance of up to three PhD students per year and each student potentially taking up to eight years to complete their degrees, the Committee is worried that an excessive burden of supervision | This point, which was raised before at Section [3. Teaching Stuff] (see above this report), it was replied there.

The participating faculty members can provide assistance, supervision and guidance in different topics of the Ph.D. students which do not solely deal with digital | Choose an item. |

will develop in the programme, in particular with the emphasis, singularly, on Prof. Sarris. There is effectively the potential for him to be charged with supervising up to 24 students, which even if only a fraction of this number turns out to be the case, this will compromise both his effectiveness and inhibit the students' mentorship needed to complete their degrees. Clearly this would be highly inadvisable, and in opposition to the institution's regulation that indicate that each supervisor is allowed to supervise only up to 10 PhD students simultaneously. We understand that these issues are systemic, baked into Cypriot law, but provisions should be made to limit the time of student progression of degree or, more realistically, a junior faculty position should be created so that there is redundancy in potential supervisors. Otherwise, it is possible that good quality students / PhD proposals may have to be rejected due to capacity constraints.	tools/analyses but also with Landscape Archaeology, different archaeological questions, etc. Furthermore, there is continuously a Sylvia Ioannou Chair Post Doc, specialized in Digital Technologies and who can provide further practical assistance to the students. More PostDocs, again specializing in Digital Technologies, are hired based on long term national and European projects. Indicatively, at this moment, there are 4 PostDocs that have experience in Digital Archaeology, Geomorphology, Photogrammetry, GIS, Space Syntax, 3D reconstructions, etc. and they can support teaching in the graduate program and guidance and support to the Ph.D. guidance according to the European University models. Finally, external members from other universities can participate in the supervising committees of Ph.D. students offering their expertise. This is important as students may want to carry out their research in archaeological sites/regions where the existing faculty does not have the necessary background.	

If there is a significant increase in PhD students as a result of this programme, then there will be an associated increase in administrative duties. It is not clear if the present administrative infrastructure can cope with this.	The need of additional administrative support will rise according to the numbers of the Ph.D. students to be enrolled in the programme. At this particular moment, when the programme has not started yet, it is difficult to project about the needs to appear. At least for the period of the next 2-3 years, if we consider the maximum number of enrollment to reach 9 students, the existing administration can cope with the needs of the students.	Choose an item.
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5. Learning resources and student support
(ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
On balance, the Committee was impressed with the campus environment as a good location for learning and student development. The Department of History and Archaeology itself is dispersed among several different buildings, which is an admitted shortcoming for cross-disciplinary integration and education. There is a significant amount of equipment for field-based geophysical prospection and data recording housed in the ARU of the department. The university hosts an array of geophysical prospection devices, including a ground penetrating radar (GPR), a survey drone, soil resistivity meter, two Fluxgate gradiometers, a magnetic susceptibility device and two GPS units. It would be valuable to consider an equipment and software pipeline to ensure that high calibre students are not persuaded to apply to another university with more up to date instrumentation. There is also a Geoinformatics Laboratory	The dispersal of the different buildings of the Department of History and Archaeology is common in different European Universities (e.g. Cambridge University, Sapienza University of Rome, etc.). In the case of the Department of History and Archaeology, it is much more concentrated. At the moment, the Archaeological Research Unit (ARU) where most of the archaeology faculty is located and its Annex where all of the equipment related to the digital technologies of the programme exist, are within a distance of 50 meters. Unfortunately, due to the limited period of visit of the evaluation committee, it was not possible for them to visit the Annex and see the physical infrastructure.

The instrumentation is and will be at the disposal of the students at any time.

The provision of moving the Annex to a new much larger building in the coming months will further enhance the above situation. The move is expected within the next couple of months and the new facilities are again at walking distance from the main building of the ARU. | Choose an item. |

(https://ucyweb.ucy.ac.cy/geoinfolab/) specifically built for the MSc programme in Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology; while software provision is listed in the application and on the University's webpage, the Committee cannot find any details of the physical infrastructure associated with this laboratory.		
The Committee determined that the available research equipment / software may not fully cover the resource needs for the proposed programme in Digital Heritage and Landscape Archaeology. Currently, the lack of student bench fees and/or clear commitment of equipment designed for digital heritage management beyond geophysical prospection will serve as a limiting factor to the development of the programme. For example, structured light scanners, laser scanning and SLAM devices are relatively common for landscape archaeology / monument recording applications. It is also unclear how students gain expertise or pilot licenses needed to operate drone equipment for landscape-scale survey. A consideration by the university	Having in mind that this is the starting point of the Ph.D. programme, new instrumentation is planned to be purchased according to the needs of the students that will register to the Ph.D. programme in the coming years. The Lab of Digital Humanities GeoInformatics participates in a number of European projects and provides services in terms of geophysical prospection, which have raised a budget of more than 40,000 Euros in the last 3 years which will be devoted for the scholarships of students and purchase of new equipment. The Sylvia Ioannou Foundation has made clear that can further support the purchase of new equipment according to the needs of the Ph.D. students. The move of the Annex to the new facilities (new building space) which is planned to be materialized within the next couple of months will provide to students with more space, desks and computers to be able to interact with the professors and among them.	Choose an item.

should be made to purchase devices such as these. Prof. Sarris has knowledge and expertise necessary to utilise such equipment and therefore these could easily be incorporated as part of the programme.	Drone pilot licenses for Ph.D. students will be gained according to their needs. Most of the Postdocs have drone pilot licenses and they can teach Ph.D. students to drive them smoothly though their drone pilot exams.	
The Committee also finds the split campus model in which the ARU are physically separated from teaching locations is not a conducive environment for both students and faculty, who must spend much of their time moving between facilities. Given the potential lack of physical, committed laboratory space for PhD students either at the ARU or on campus, the Committee is worried that there may be infrastructural challenges for PhD candidates to matriculate should they not have consistent access to computers with the needed software and access to databases needed to conduct research.	It has to be mentioned that the Ph.D. program does not require students to attend normal teaching classes. The computer resource rooms at the library of the main campus is used for this purpose. However, Ph.D. students do not need to commute to the Library computer rooms, as in the new facilities where the ARU Annex will move in the next couple of months, there is already the provision for space, working desks and PCs for the Ph.D. candidates and the PostDocs that will provide support to the Ph.D. students. The new building, which is at walking distance from the ARU, has the provision of offices for about 40 people, plus lecture and meeting rooms. At least 3 offices with a total space for 12 people will be provided to the Digital Humanities GeoInformatics Lab, where both Ph.D. students of the programme and PostDocs will be hosted. All the instruments will be stored at the same building and students will be able to use them at any time. All the appropriate software, e.g. Surfer, ArcGIS, Agisoft, and other open source software will be made available to all the computers that the Ph.D. students will use.	Choose an item.

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6. Additional for doctoral programmes
(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
In discussions with the faculty, it came up that the European standard of three to four peer-reviewed publications has become a new normal, but there is no provision in the guidelines for this kind of thesis. The Committee was encouraged that the faculty recognise the standards and will encourage their PhD candidates to broadly follow the new standards, even though they recognise that they cannot strictly enforce it. In particular, Prof. Sarris was very optimistic that students he has identified as prospects for the new PhD programme will be motivated to concentrate on peer-reviewed paper submission. The Committee sees this as a real potential strength of the proposed PhD programme and strongly encourages development in this direction.	The particular topic has been discussed with the committee members, who also accepted that such a provision does not exist in all European universities (not even in their universities) and especially in departments of Humanities.

The topic will be discussed with the faculty members of the department, but in all cases Ph.D. students will be encouraged to publish the results of their research in peer-reviewed journals and conference proceedings. As the committee members point out, this is a measure that cannot be strictly enforced, but still it is for the advantage of the students and thus it will be highly advisable to them to proceed in this way. | Choose an item. |

The Committee is uncertain about the provision of plagiarism checking in the programme. We strongly recommend that PhD candidates are required to attend courses in plagiarism avoidance. Furthermore, they should be required to scan their theses using plagiarism-detection software such as Turnitin prior to submission of the thesis to the doctoral examination committee.

The time to degree for a PhD in Cyprus is afforded up to eight years. Within the European context, such a time-to-degree is generally unacceptable and the Committee feels that this regulation does not serve the programme, individual staff members or students well. We recommend that the university seriously lobby for academic reforms in Cypriot law to shorten the time-to-degree. | Plagiarism mitigation measures are already taken by the university of Cyprus. The use of Turnitin (there is also a free Turnitin checker API available for students) is suggested to all students independent of their level of study. Any kind of plagiarism is unacceptable and this is made clear to students of all levels.
It is suggested to all students to use plagiarism-detection software to avoid any consequences.

The maximum time allowance to finish their Ph.D. degree (namely in 8 years) has been discussed in other sections of this report and everybody accepts that this is due to the directions of the University of Cyprus, but it has to be avoided as a norm.
The particular topic will also be discussed at the School of Graduate Studies. | Choose an item. |
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme)
(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
(1) The programme is highly dependent on a single (albeit well-qualified) professor: Apostolos Sarris. The lack of redundancy in the faculty with competencies that pertain to technical aspects of either digital heritage or landscape archaeology present a potential pitfall for students should there be a dispute between a student and his or her supervisor or should Prof. Sarris take extended leave of the university for some reason. We strongly recommend that the next hire for the department should be an individual with overlapping competencies to Prof. Sarris, which will be necessary to provide some element of resilience within the programme staff. It would be helpful for any additional staff to come with strong international networks, preferably extending beyond	The very nature of the program does not depend on a single professor, but instead it is based on the group effort from the whole participating faculty. Almost all the academic personnel of the Archaeological Research Unit participate in the supervising of the Ph.D. students. As the programme tries to fuse topics related to landscape archaeology and Digital Heritage, its implementation is based on the interaction between all the faculty members and the students. Thus, supervision of the students will be based on a group committee, members of which will have different expertise) that will offer the right directions and guidance to the students. The competence of the involved faculty with the Digital heritage and Landscape archaeology has been thoroughly indicated in section 2. of this report, providing indicatively examples from their publications and research projects related to the topic. With respect to the technical aspects, supervision and support of students will be in tandem with the postdoctoral researchers (one of them continuously secured by funding from the Sylvia Ioannou Foundation) who are available through research projects of the faculty and have the necessary experience. At this moment (with prospect to continue until the end of 2024) there are 4 Postdocs attached to the Digital Humanities GeoInformatics Lab with experience in GeoInformatics, GIS, Digital Archaeology, Deep mapping, Geomorphology,	Choose an item.

those already evidenced by the programme team.	etc. This interaction between the Ph.D. students and the post-doctoral researchers (a model which is well-established in most European Universities) will be most fruitful, as it will allow a cross-fertilization of research ideas.	
(2) PhD students should have supervision from at least two supervisors as a compulsory (not optional) aspect of their progression through their degrees. The second supervisor does not necessarily have to be UCY faculty, and in many ways given the rather centralised focus of the proposed programme, it would be both necessary and preferable that the second supervisor come from an outside institution.	Ph.D. students are assigned of a supervisor according to their main topic of research, but at the same time a three-member committee is assigned to them (compulsory) so that they can support them along the different dimensions of their research (archaeology, landscape, digital techniques). In such a way, the supervision is shared among different members of the faculty. This will secure a more shared type of supervision due to the diverse research topics of the programme and thus not a single faculty member will get the whole weight of supervision. Frequent meetings are also planned between the committee members and the Ph.D. students.

Depending on the research topic of the students, an external supervisor can be assigned to both graduate and Ph.D. students. This is important as students may want to carry out their research in archaeological sites/regions where the existing faculty does not have the necessary background. Similar is the case for the examination committee of Ph.D. dissertations. This is a norm that is already in practice. | Choose an item. |
| (3) There needs to be a system of recompense for students to contest the quality and quantity of their supervision. This system | The three-member committee assigned to the Ph.D. students acts as a mitigation measure in case a dispute arises between the student and the main supervisor. In addition, there is a Department's Postgraduate Studies | Choose an item. |

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should serve to protect both students and supervisor(s) as it is common in academic settings for disputes to arise. The lack of a clear system of redress outside the formal university channels could potentially compromise the entire programme if a particularly contentious dispute arises.	Committee (see the link at: https://www.ucy.ac.cy/hisarch/people/internal-committees/?lang=en), where students can express their opinions about supervisors, make amends and propose improvements. Similar is the case for the Graduate School, which can be the recipient of students' problems. The University of Cyprus has a clear Student Complaints Management Policy to resolve disputes or problems such as I. Disputes on attendance and study matters II. Inappropriate conduct by an academic or administrative staff member III. Inadequate guidance of students from an academic staff member IV. Inadequate guidance of students from an administrative staff member (for more see: https://www.ucy.ac.cy/cph/wp-content/uploads/sites/16/2022/06/Student-Complaints-Management-Policy_English-Translation_25-02-2022-2.docx).	
4) The lack of physical infrastructure in the form of desktop computers loaded with needed software in a laboratory accessible to PhD candidates outside of the library is requisite for the programme. PhD students often work at off hours and they require space to keep their research materials (e.g., student office, laboratory space) that they	As it was mentioned in Section 5 of this Report, the annex of the Archaeological Research Unit is scheduled to move to a new building in a couple of months. The new building, which is at walking distance from the ARU, has the provision of offices for about 40 people, plus lecture and meeting rooms. At least 3 offices with a total space for 12 people will be provided to the Digital Humanities GeoInformatics Lab, where both Ph.D. students and PostDocs will be hosted. All the instruments will be stored at the same building and students will be able to use them at any time.	Choose an item.

can access when they are able to conduct research. The practical solution is that the ARU and/or Annex should be equipped with desktop computers sufficient to accommodate all the PhD students accepted to the programme. Admission and enrolment should be restricted to the facilities available to accommodate the students.	The new facilities will provide space for the Ph.D. students and Lab space to carry out measurements. Desktop or portable computers will be provided to students. There are already two computers freely available and two more will be purchased the next 5 months from the TRIQUETRA HORIZON project. More PCs will be purchased along the course of the Ph.D. programme. All the appropriate software, e.g. Surfer, ArcGIS, Agisoft, and other open source software will be made available to all the computers that the Ph.D. students will use. A server that will provide high capacity storage, archiving, backups, and retrieval of data has been purchased already (in December 2022) and is expected to become functional by the end of the spring semester 2023. Cloud Storage has been also taken into consideration.	
(5) On a university-wide and/or Cypriot legal level, there needs to be a higher focus on matriculation of PhD students within a 3-4 year timeframe as opposed to a 7-8 year timeframe. The risk of continuing the programme structure as it stands is that a backlog of non-graduated PhD students will accumulate beyond the resources the programme has to support them, both in terms of infrastructure and supervision.	The maximum period of the 8 years for completing the Ph.D. requirements is placed due to the ruling of the Cypriot educational system. This is not unique for Cyprus but it is also applied in other countries (again by law). On the other hand, Ph.D. students are encouraged and supported to finish within 3-4 years. It is only in exceptional cases (financial obstacles, family reasons, medical cases, etc) where the provision of the 8 years can be acceptable from the side of the students. In all cases, the message given to them is to finish the earlier possible to start moving to their next stage of their career.	Choose an item.

C.

D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Apostolos Sarris	Professor	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
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