



Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: February, 2021

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Cyprus University of Technology
- **Town:** Limassol
- **Programme of study
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
In Greek:
ΔΙΔΑΚΤΟΡΙΚΟ, 240 ΕΠΜ
In English:
Doctorate - PhD, 240 ECTS
- **Language(s) of instruction:** GREEK
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating



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 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].

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) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.1.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

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

Committee Comments	Department Response
As in the case other Department's programmes the LOs of the offered courses are the weakest point of the programme.	We acknowledge the importance of an integrated and comprehensive LO system that links the programme level to the course level whilst considering the assessment processes. In order to ensure the cohesiveness of the LO system of the PhD programme, a meeting will be arranged between the course instructors wherein the LOs of each course will be revisited and adjusted accordingly to maximise consistency between them and ensure that course content and assessment responds to specific LOs.
Establish criteria for maximum number of PhD mentorship per teaching and research staff	The Department has set criteria. Senior faculty (Assistant Professors and above) can mentor up-to 4 students, whereas junior faculty (Lecturers) can mentor up-to 1 student.
Introduction of course on Qualitative research methodology and Research ethics for doctoral students only	It is in our plans to introduce (as of the Fall 2021 semester) a qualitative research methodology course for doctoral students. We will investigate the possibility to collaborate with other departments to develop a research ethics course for all doctoral students at the university.
Training/workshops for supervision of doctoral candidates	The Department's intention is to introduce workshops periodically with the objective to share experiences.

2. Teaching, learning and student assessment (ESG 1.3)

Committee Comments	Department Response
To create opportunities for formal and informal research gatherings and networks	<p>We have in place workshops where doctoral students present their work. We plan to formalize these workshops and provide explicit structure and feedback.</p> <p>In addition, periodically we invite researchers from other reputable Universities to present their work at CUT. We will increase this effort and secure the appropriate funding with the aim to organize 6 presentations per year.</p>

3. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Committee Comments	Department Response
Additional visiting staff should be brought from the industry in order to strength the links between academic knowledge and industry reality	More practitioners from the industry will be invited as guest speakers to contribute to the programme in order to strengthen the practical knowledge of the students and provide more practical / applied perspectives.
More exchange programmes should be implemented to increase the international exposure of both teachers and students	The department will pursue an aggressive strategy in further expanding collaborations and mobility agreements (e.g. Erasmus) for both faculty and students (incoming and outgoing) with reputable international institutions. Moreover, the Department will explore ways to provide funded mobility opportunities, thus enhancing our internalization efforts.
Teaching staff should strive to establish a closer link between what they teach and the reality of the situation of tourism in Cyprus	Teaching staff will be advised through an ad-hoc meeting to ensure the link between course content and the Cyprus tourism reality. The practical weaknesses and obstacles facing the island's tourism industry need also to be reflected in the research of doctoral students.

4. Students

(ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

Committee Comments	Department Response
<p>Formalisation of the process by which students are able to determine what taught aspects of the programme will be selected</p>	<p>We have a process where the student's advisory committee establishes which courses should be taken by the student (considering their educational background and the topic of their PhD). Their proposal is assessed by the Post Graduate Committee and approved by the Council of the Department.</p>
<p>Consider the introduction of milestones to be reached throughout the duration of study to facilitate timely progression and completion</p>	<p>Currently, we have 3 milestones: the comprehensive exam, the research proposal, and the completion of the thesis. In addition, every year the student prepares a progress report.</p> <p>We will consider establishing milestones specific to the process for completing the thesis i.e. timescales for writing the theoretical part, completing data collection and writing the results and discussion.</p>

5. Resources (ESG 1.6)

Committee Comments	Department Response
More areas for studying	There is room in the building of the school that will be transformed and offered to students for studying and networking purposes.
More areas for the students' networking	There is room in the building of the school that will be transformed and offered to students for studying and networking purposes.
The building should offer a cafeteria area	Unfortunately, the building of the school is not equipped to offer a cafeteria. Yet, the students have access to the university cafeteria as well as other cafeterias around the campus which offer students discounted prices.
The library can be improved with databases specifically from the tourism and hospitality field	We will consider subscribing to the STR database. In addition, we will consider getting access to tourism data from the Cyprus Statistical Service.



6. Additional for distance learning programmes
(ALL ESG)

Non-Applicable

7. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Committee Comments	Department Response
<p>The doctoral programme of study offers a taught component, containing compulsory courses and those that are optional. It is entirely appropriate that this taught element continues. However, courses that are offered on programmes for lower levels of study (Bachelors and Masters), with the same learning outcomes, and as part of the same student cohort, do not seem to be appropriate. Perhaps an alternative would be to offer fewer courses, at PhD level, that can capitalise on the tourism and hospitality expertise of the Faculty. Alternative pathways for credit accumulation could also be considered, in the form of workshops or seminars.</p>	<p>Given that we don't have critical mass in this programme we cannot offer too many PhD courses. We also note that existing regulations allow us to offer lower level courses to PhD students. However, in recognition of this weakness, we will be more selective on what Master level courses students can take. In addition, we will consider adding more PhD level courses (e.g. a course in Qualitative Research Methodology).</p>
<p>Consider a separate course on research ethics.</p>	<p>The Department will investigate the possibility to collaborate with other departments in order to develop a research ethics course for all CUT's Doctoral students.</p>
<p>Consider the balance between quantitative and qualitative courses as only the first mandatory.</p>	<p>We are in the process to develop a qualitative research course which will be mandatory for all doctoral students.</p>
<p>To facilitate a sense of a doctoral research community, to organise at the departmental/faculty level seminars and opportunities for study to present and discuss their work. Encouragement for students to take part in university wide networks and virtual doctoral communities could also be considered.</p>	<p>We have in place workshops where doctoral students present their work. We plan to formalize these workshops and provide explicit structure. In addition, we provide financial assistance to students to present their work in academic conferences.</p> <p>In addition, we plan to open-up the ground floor of our building for students to socialize.</p> <p>Moreover, we will make a suggestion to the University's Senate to consider developing a university-wide community for PhD students.</p>



8. Additional for joint programmes
(ALL ESG)

Non-Applicable

B. Conclusions and final remarks

The Department would like to sincerely thank the committee members for their invaluable feedback, constructive comments and suggestions. Reflecting on the above, the Department will proceed with changes/ improvements in numerous areas of its operations (curriculum, administrative, teaching, infrastructure, etc.) with the aim of enhancing the educational experience offered to our students.

Specifically, we plan to implement the following improvements:

- Improve the learning objectives of the courses
- Introduce a qualitative research methodology course for doctoral students and investigate the possibility to collaborate with other departments to develop a research ethics course
- Aim to have 6 presentations from external researchers per year
- We will consider subscribing to the STR database. In addition, we will consider getting access to tourism data from the Cyprus Statistical Service
- We will open-up the ground floor of our building for students to socialize
- We will suggest to the University's Senate to consider developing a university-wide community for PhD students

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Anastasios Zopiatis	Associate Professor	
Andreas Petrou	Associate Professor	
Anna Farmaki	Assistant Professor	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

Date: 5/2/2021

