

07.14.318.015

Doc. 300.1.2

### Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: 01/06/2021

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
Frederick University
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School:** Engineering
- **Department:** Architecture
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**  
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

#### Programme

##### **In Greek:**

Αρχιτεκτονική (3 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό (PhD))

##### **In English:**

Architecture (3 academic years, 180 ECTS, Doctorate (PhD))

**Language(s) of instruction:** English and Greek

**Programme's Status:** New

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.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the department 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. 300.3.1).*
- *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, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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| <p>1.1 A more explicit procedure for ensuring that matters of research ethics would be advisable</p> <p>1.2 A policy on authorship and intellectual property is required</p> |
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### Department's Response:

- 1.1 We agree with the Committee's comment that research ethics matters could be more systematically introduced into the University. At present, the University has a Research Ethics & Integrity Committee (REIC), which however is mainly concerned with research activities that include health, educational and personal data/privacy matters and there is minimal policy for broader research ethics concerns. Article 13 of the Internal Rules for Research & Innovation Activities (Annex 01) provides the framework of operation of the REIC, which is currently running and composed of three faculty members (Law – Dr Konstantinos Kouroupis, Social Work – Dr Stavros Parlalis, Education – Dr. Olga Lyra). The University has identified that there is a need for a systematic communication and training on staff in a wide variety of matters. To this end, the University Council has established the Professional Development Center (Professional and Personal Development at Frederick - PDF) at the University that is explicitly responsible for developing a policy ([Link](#)) and schedule for training and professional development for staff in an organized manner. The issue of research ethics has been communicated to the Center and appropriate training on the matter will take place in the coming academic year.
- 1.2 The University has a published ([Link](#)) policy for intellectual property rights that has been formed after external consultation in order to both protect the University but also promote and foster innovation and fairness. The existing policy is at University level and the Department has started review of the policy with the aim of further specializing it to the operations of Architecture. Additionally, we believe that to a great extent the issue is more of lack of awareness rather than lack of policy and to this end as a department we

will ensure that students, and staff, are aware of the policy elements through announcements once the new academic year commences

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

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

- 2.1 The Department might like to consider exit points from the PhD programme on the rare occasion that a student is unable to complete their research studies.
- 2.2 For the final evaluation, an external assessor should be included in the review committee.

### Department's Response:

- 2.1 The Department notes the suggestion. Although there is no provision in the University's PhD regulations and no official policy by the CYQAA regarding exit point provisions in PhD programmes, the University will consort with the CYQAA and adopt or postpone the suggestion until further regulations are implemented.
- 2.2 The Department adopts the comment. PhD Thesis regulation is already modified accordingly to clarify better this issue (Annex 07).

## 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

- 3.1 Although the Department has a very dedicated existing body of staff, it will need to carefully consider its future recruitment of staff in relation to EDI criteria and internationalisation.

### Department's Response:

- 3.1 We fully agree that the future of the Department relies in internationalization, something that was discussed in depth during the visit. The Department already forms a strategy in order to internationalise its staff profile and its students through the increase of

mobility via the Erasmus program, further involvement in EU-Conexus networks (Frederick University is an associate member of EU-Conexus European University for Smart Urban Coastal and Sustainability; [Link](#)). Furthermore, international experience is a prerequisite for hiring new staff. The Department has already included internationalisation criteria at the call for visiting professors for the academic year 2021-22 ([Link](#)). Furthermore, as per the University's commitment to EDI, all programmes of the Department have been submitted for accreditation in the English language as well, which gives the opportunity of increasing our research networks and collaborations. These actions are fully inline with the University's strategic goal for Internationalization, Learning and Teaching

#### 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

##### Areas of improvement and recommendations

No comments were made by the Committee

#### 5. Learning resources and student support

##### Areas of improvement and recommendations

5.1 The programme should support international and external periods of research in order to broaden the scope and context of the students' research studies.

##### Department's Response:

5.1 Although the Doctorate in Architecture is a new program of study that hasn't been operational yet, we firmly believe that the PhD students have the chance to participate and collaborate with international partners in research (a) through the increase of mobility via the Erasmus program, (b) their involvement and collaboration with the University networks (example: EU-Conexus networks (Frederick University is an associate member of EU-Conexus European University for Smart Urban Coastal and Sustainability; [Link](#)), COST, ICOMOS) and (c) through the bilateral agreements that the Department has with other international Universities.

## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

- 6.1 The programme should support international and external periods of research in order to broaden the scope and context of the students' research studies.
- 6.2 Although staff are keen to involve PhD students in staff's own research projects, care must be taken to ensure that students are given enough space, time and academic independence to pursue their own projects, teaching activity and areas of research interest.
- 6.3 The Department might like to consider exit points from the PhD programme on the rare occasion that a student is unable to complete their research studies.
- 6.4 For the final evaluation, an external assessor should be included in the review committee.

### Department's Response:

- 6.1 Please refer to answer 5.1
- 6.2 As indicated in Annex 7 – PhD Regulations for the PhD in Architecture, published work in reputable journals or judges' conferences as well as participation in projects related to the PhD candidate's interests is promoted to all students. This is well aligned with the University's policy for Doctorate studies.
- 6.3 Please refer to answer 2.1
- 6.4 Please refer to answer 2.2

## B. Conclusions and final remarks

No further comments were made by the Committee

Concluding, we would like to sincerely thank the EEC for their dedicated work and invaluable comments provided both within their evaluation report and during the frank discussions held throughout the visit. We wish to note that we are particularly pleased with the very positive assessment in general of both the Department itself and the academic programs it operates.



**C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives**

| <i>Name</i>               | <i>Position</i> | <i>Signature</i>  |
|---------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Prof. George Demosthenous | Rector          |  |

Date: 01/06/2021

