

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 12/12/2025

Higher Education Institution's Response

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

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

In Greek:

Γραφιστική και Ψηφιακός Σχεδιασμός, 4 έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο

In English:

Graphic and Digital Design (4 Years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):** None

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 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.*

Introduction

We refer to the report of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) on the evaluation and accreditation of the BA in Graphic and Digital Design, which was prepared following the EEC members' on-site visit on 6 October 2025. We would like to thank the EEC for their professional and thorough work during the evaluation and for conducting it in such a collegial and constructive manner. The programme was found to meet all criteria in all areas. The EEC did not identify any shortcomings in the quality indicators, assigning "Compliant" to all sub-areas. We have carefully considered the report and set out our response to each point raised by the EEC below. We address the programme's strengths, as identified by the EEC, briefly in the introductions. Our responses to the areas for improvement and recommendations made by the EEC, along with the actions we have taken, are set out in column 2 of the table in each section.

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

We are pleased to note that the evaluation report is highly positive, confirming that our programme *“meets all the standards”* and demonstrates *“robust internal and external quality assurance.”* Furthermore, the report highlights that our *“internal policies and mechanisms support”* these outcomes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
we consider this section to be extremely thoroughly covered and have no recommendations. However, the panel observes that these QA processes, and this external one in particular are extremely time-demanding on staff to the degree that they may detract from the core missions of teaching and research. We would like to represent this view which was also expressed by faculty in this report and recommend that a lighter touch process is considered.	The EEC's acknowledgment that this section is <i>“extremely thoroughly covered”</i> and requires <i>“no recommendations”</i> is greatly appreciated. We also take note of their observation regarding the time-demanding nature of the quality assurance processes, particularly the external ones, and we appreciate their understanding of the challenges this entails for academic staff.	Choose level of compliance:

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

We appreciate the recognition of the excellent relationship between faculty and students, as was confirmed during the EEC's meeting with our students. We are also pleased that the alignment of feedback with assessment criteria, balanced integration of practical and theoretical components, and diverse range of assessment methods were acknowledged as areas of good practice.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Although there are existing mechanisms for individual student feedback or complaint we were not made aware that there is a formal body for students to give feedback at a curriculum level. Students we spoke to were also unaware of such a body.	Students provide feedback through a variety of established channels. At the end of each semester, for example, they complete online evaluations for every course and lecturer. Student feedback is also incorporated into the internal evaluation process, where student representatives participate in the Programme's Quality Assurance Committee. Students can also express their views and suggestions through their representatives in Departmental and School Council meetings, as well as through their active involvement and participation in the Departmental Student Art, Design, and Multimedia Club. The University of Nicosia has formal mechanisms ensuring active student involvement in quality assurance and programme development which can be found in its Internal Regulations, primarily in Chapter 5: Standards and Quality Assurance. Furthermore, Students participate as full members in the University Internal Quality Assurance Committee (UNIQAC) and formally contribute to the monitoring, evaluation, and ongoing improvement of programmes.	Choose level of compliance:
The consistent use of 6 ECTS courses means that students have a lot of choice. However, it severely limits the time available to study some topics in depth and may restrict their opportunity to study more independently. In particular, we	We appreciate the EEC's recommendation regarding the credit structure and opportunities for independent study. The current framework of 6 ECTS credits per course offers students a wide range of choices and flexibility, enabling	Choose level of compliance:

recommend that there are more opportunities to undertake independent projects in advance of their final year in order to better prepare them for this. The panel recommends expanding the credit weighting of some courses in later stages of the programme and for the final project and dissertation in particular.	them to design their studies according to their individual interests and career aspirations. Furthermore, students are encouraged to undertake independent and self-directed work, particularly through open-ended project briefs introduced in years three and four of the programme. These effectively prepare students for the demands of professional practice and postgraduate study. In recognition of the importance of sustained independent research, we have doubled the number of the ECTS allocated to the final project, which is now divided into two distinct 6 ECTS courses: 1) <i>Final Year Project I: Research</i> and 2) <i>Final Year Project II: Dissertation</i>. This structure provides students more time and support to develop their work in depth. While the equal ECTS allocation across courses is a university-wide logistical and regulatory requirement that ensures consistency across programmes, we acknowledge the value of the EEC's recommendation and will continue to consider ways to enhance opportunities for in-depth and independent learning within this framework.	
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

We welcome the EEC's recognition of the programme's strengths, particularly the favourable student-to-staff ratios and the accessibility and approachability of faculty members, both of which contribute to a supportive learning environment. We are also pleased that the EEC commended our research-led teaching, the high calibre of visiting lecturers and the integration with Fine Art. These factors ensure that students are exposed to a rich interdisciplinary experience encompassing both artistic and design perspectives.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
We were not made aware of Ongoing Professional Development opportunities for staff. The submission mentions training opportunities through Erasmus+ but otherwise little detail is provided and we recommend that this is reviewed, not least because ongoing training is an expected area for new hires to demonstrate.	The University of Nicosia maintains a strong institutional commitment to continuous professional development through its Faculty Training and Development Unit (FTDU), which offers structured training opportunities for all academic staff. Both newly appointed and existing faculty members are required to participate in workshops, seminars, and related professional development activities that support pedagogical excellence, research advancement, and administrative effectiveness. Annual engagement in training is expected and formally recorded through the staff self-appraisal process, ensuring that professional development is both monitored and aligned with departmental and institutional quality assurance mechanisms. This framework fosters a sustained culture of lifelong learning and continuous improvement across the academic community.	Choose level of compliance:
Staff noted that research time is pressured by administrative duties and this common academic problem should nonetheless be investigated	Under the University's Internal Regulations (Chapter 6.5), faculty members may apply for Research Time Release (RTR) to support their research activities. Applications are administered by the Vice-Rector for Faculty and Research and are	Choose level of compliance:

	subject to approval by the Research Committee. The Department recognises that administrative responsibilities are influenced by external evaluation and accreditation obligations, as well as by internal quality assurance processes. Within this framework, the Department actively supports staff in balancing their teaching, research and administrative duties. It also regularly provides feedback to central university bodies to ensure that workload distribution remains sustainable and conducive to scholarly productivity.	
We noted in our Department report that the otherwise detailed hiring process references no Equality Diversity and Inclusion principles and this should also be addressed.	The Department acknowledges the EEC's observation regarding the explicit reference to Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) principles in the hiring policy. We would like to note that these principles are actively embedded within the University's broader institutional framework through the Centre of Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (CEDI). https://www.unic.ac.cy/unic-now-has-an-equality-diversity-and-inclusion-strategy/ CEDI is a multidisciplinary research and policy centre comprising academic and administrative staff with expertise in issues of gender equity, diversity, and inclusion. Its mission is to promote a culture of inclusion, equity, and pluralism, to advance gender mainstreaming, and to foster a respectful and supportive working and learning environment where the rights and dignity of all individuals are upheld. The Department aligns fully with the University's EDI policies and practices, and these principles underpin all aspects of our recruitment, teaching, and research culture.	Choose level of compliance:

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

We welcome the EEC's positive observations regarding the processes supporting student mobility and the recognition of minor specialisms. We are pleased that the mechanisms facilitating student exchanges and programme transfers were acknowledged as effective in broadening access and attracting a diverse student body. We also value the EEC's acknowledgement that the inclusion of minor specialisms on graduates' certificates enhances the visibility of students' skills and achievements to employers and postgraduate institutions.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The panel learned that applicants to the programme are often referred to individual faculty members for a consultation interview. This has some positives (students get a personalized introduction to the programme) but puts a heavy responsibility on to faculty who are already pressed for time. Other mechanisms could and perhaps should be explored such as open days, group introductions or prospectus materials.	We appreciate the EEC's thoughtful recommendation and their concern regarding faculty workload and time management in the admissions process. We would like to note that the majority of admissions-related work is undertaken by the university's central Admissions Department, which includes a dedicated Admissions Officer assigned specifically to our Department. This officer is well-acquainted with the nature and requirements of our programme and collaborates closely with the Head of Department and the Programme Coordinators throughout the admissions cycle. The final stage of the process –the individual interview– is indeed conducted by academic staff. We consider this step essential, as it provides an opportunity to meet each applicant personally, assess their portfolio directly, and offer tailored academic advice regarding their strengths and areas for development. This also allows applicants to engage more deeply with the ethos and expectations of the programme. While we acknowledge the EEC's suggestion to explore additional mechanisms such as open days or group orientations, we believe that maintaining a direct academic connection at the interview stage ensures both the quality of student selection and the personalised approach that applicants value.	Choose level of compliance:

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

We are pleased to note the EEC's positive feedback on the quality of our facilities and infrastructure. We particularly welcome the students' expressed satisfaction with their access to equipment and resources. This reflects our ongoing commitment to maintaining a well-equipped and supportive learning environment that meets the demands of contemporary art and design education.

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Student support is handled by academic advisors drawn from the administration team. Although this is often appropriate there may be instances where subject specific knowledge is helpful or necessary, for instance in identifying appropriate pathways or course of study. These gaps are currently addressed through informal mechanisms of consultation but it may be helpful to think about how this can be made more robust and accountable.	We acknowledge the EEC's recommendation and would like to clarify that the role of the Programme Coordinator serves as a formal mechanism for providing subject-specific academic guidance. The Programme Coordinator meets with students at the beginning of each semester, prior to course registration and consultation with Academic Advisors, to advise on suitable study pathways and to monitor academic progress. While Academic Advisors offer general administrative and procedural support, the Programme Coordinator ensures discipline-specific, personalised guidance is provided to support each student's academic development. This structure enhances the clarity, accountability, and academic robustness of the student support process, ensuring that both administrative and subject-based needs are both effectively addressed.	Choose level of compliance:

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

The EEC concluded positively that the programme complies with all the specified criteria, consistent with their departmental report. The Committee also recognised and commended the many areas of good practice identified.

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
As in our report for the Department, the committee agrees that the programmes comply under the headings above. We recognize and commend the many areas of good practice already identified in the above. We hope that our comments will prove useful in the ongoing development of the department.	We welcome the EEC's positive conclusion and appreciate the recognition of the programme's compliance and good practices. We value the constructive nature of the Committee's observations and recommendations, which will serve as a valuable contribution to the programme's ongoing enhancement and strategic development.	Choose level of compliance:



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Prof. Klimis Mastoridis	Dean	
Prof. Paschalis Paschalis	Head of Department	
Assistant Prof. Maria Stavride	Program Coordinator	

Date: 12/12/2025

