

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 21 Sept 2022

Higher Education Institution's Response

- Higher Education Institution:
Public School of Higher Vocational Education and Training – MIEEK

- Town: Limassol

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

In Greek:

Σχεδιασμός και Τεχνολογία CNC - Ξυλουργική Βιομηχανία
(2 έτη, 120 ECTS, Diploma, Conventional)

In English:

CNC Design & Technology – Woodworking Industry
(2 years, 120 ECTS, Diploma)

- Language(s) of instruction: Greek
- Programme's status: New (Currently operating in Larnaca)
- Concentrations (if any): n/a

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
1.1 Policy for quality assurance	No actions required	Choose an item.
<p>1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review</p> <p>«Overall, Programme of Studies is logically structured and corresponds to the learning objectives, in terms of content, articulation, workload and methods. The procedures for shaping, assessment and review of the PS are implemented according to the provisions of the Quality Assurance Manual. At the level of the MIEEK, the main instrument for monitoring the PS is the Programme Board, chaired by the Programme's Academic Coordinator and comprising the Local Coordinator of the PS, members of the teaching staff and also an elected representative of the current student cohort. Particular aspects of the day-to-day implementation of the PS are discussed in meetings of teaching staff, called on regular or ad-hoc basis. These interactions, together with the experience and expertise of the Academic Coordinator, the Local Coordinator, and the teachers, guarantee the consistency and continuity of the work of the Programme Board. In the course of the on-site meetings, teachers displayed a clear and detailed understanding of the content and operation of the PS, and were able to discuss the PS's different aspects. »</p>	<p>Updates and enhancements help the programme follow and synchronize with the rapid developments in CNC technology and equipment.</p> <p>According to the guidelines and final observations of the EEC report, the curriculum is being gradually adapted to achieve maximum competitiveness. The courses have been revised and modernized according to the guidelines and directions of the EEC.</p> <p>The New Timetable and Curriculum Course Outlines were revised, upgraded, and approved by the External Evaluation Committee and CYQAA (July 25, 2022: 07.14.399.001.001_final_report CNC Technology - Woodworking Industry).</p>	Choose an item.
1.3 Public information	No actions required	Choose an item.
1.4 Information management	No actions required	Choose an item.

<p>Findings Overall, the Programme of Study is coherent and corresponds to the overall learning objectives and vocational goals relating to the state of CNC technologies and the woodworking industry in Cyprus. The Quality Assurance system is adequate and comprehensive. Its application is consistent.</p> <p>Strengths Very efficient flow of information between stakeholders, supported by continuous and strong interaction between administrators, teachers, students, graduates, and industry professionals. The same practices applied in the running of the PS of Larnaca MIEEK.</p> <p><u>Areas of improvement and recommendations</u> <i><u>Informed by rich interaction with relevant stakeholders, the present Programme of Study aligns well with the present situation in the machining and woodworking industry in Cyprus, on one hand, and with real-life employment aspirations and perspectives of secondary education graduates, on the other. However, the sector continues to undergo changes, chiefly driven by the need to respond to competitive challenges. Such challenges appear at several levels: technology, organization, distribution, business paradigm, marketing methods and more. In anticipation of these changes, it is advisable for the Programme of Study to gradually adapt towards achieving maximum competitiveness, along the directions mentioned in the concluding remarks of the EEC report."</u></i></p>	<p>The answer and all the information were given in the answer to 1.2 "Design, Approval, on-going monitoring and review".</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
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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
<p>2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology</p> <p>«PS includes project-based learning, evening classes for workers, live contact with students from other courses of life, contact with professionally active teachers. Provides opportunities for career development. Specifically, PS involves courses with theoretical (lectures) and practical (laboratory) approach. Students firstly receive the theoretical approach to the objects of each lesson and later acquire the practical knowledge in the laboratories with project assignments.</p> <p>Teaching is conducted every working day during afternoon hours with live contact with students. This timetable facilitates students to work in morning time. Courses take place in new, modern, and sufficient areas in the public educational building in the city of Limassol (Absolute Institute of Technical education - AITE), which is in a central part of Cyprus (about 60-70Km away from the capital Nicosia and the cities of Larnaca and Pafos). PS attracts considerable part-time teachers with special capabilities from the Cypriot job market.</p> <p><u>Similar to how the PS is run in Larnaca, adequate different modes of delivery: lectures, laboratory practice, individual and group coursework, will be implemented in Limassol. Projects will be shaped together</u></p>	<p>Partially compliant</p> <p>Courses respond to challenges and satisfy students' interests and experiences with additional activities Course content is updated where necessary, by introducing modules to reflect the latest achievements/developments in technology. Teachers, students, and industry stakeholders are involved in this process. These changes are minor and do not affect the competitiveness of the programme.</p> <p>Additional information follows in the response to "Areas of Improvement and Recommendations by EEC."</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

with individual students. It is reported that in several cases, the topics of individual projects (coursework) will be shaped jointly by the student and the teacher, with a view to bring the project closer to the interests and experiences of the student. This is a commendable practice and should be expanded.

Excursions and visits to industrial establishments, on-going projects, and exposure of students to real-life work activities are an important part of the training. They can contribute greatly in shaping the student's appreciation of professional and entrepreneurial outlets offered by the programme. Where appropriate, it is recommended to dedicate one such session in the schedule of the course. In a similar vein, participation of students in the sector (through relevant presentations, seminars, exhibitions etc., events for professionals and practitioners) should be encouraged.

Basic teaching equipment is at a good level, such as digital (CNC) equipment. The relatively modern laboratory equipment corresponds to the current industry practice as do the software and workflow approaches. Specifically, PS provides adequate laboratory settings, capable to support the practical objectives-needs. Labs are now equipped with modern machines. For example, 3-axis router, CNC lathe, and laser cutting equipment are the basic machines that introduce students to modern technologies. Also, the installation of new conventional (classic) woodworking machines has been scheduled. The combination of conventional and modern equipment will provide complete knowledge in a practical level to the students. Also, computer rooms with special

The lack of conventional woodworking machines in the labs at the initial running semesters (especially 1st and 2nd), does not create problems in the normal provision of the courses. This happens because a) most of the courses (i.e., mathematics, technical and Free-hand Drawing, CAD I, etc.) do not require such equipment, and b) the courses that require such equipment (i.e. Materials Science and Processing Technology, Wood processing Machines, etc.) can be accomplished in the nearby laboratory of the Technical School of Limassol. For example, for the 1st semester students should move to the technical School. In this way all courses will be run continuously. When the labs will be equipped with the proper conventional machines all students can pursue their education in the new campus.

Conventional woodworking equipment could be installed inside the 'New tech workshop' or nearby venues. Details of the proposed types of appropriate conventional equipment and the prospective layout of them in the venues, is presented in the Annex.

Teacher-learner relations appear balanced, considering the small number of students and frequent interaction, particularly during laboratory practice. Students are encouraged by the teachers to take an active role in creating the learning process during laboratory practice. Students in the laboratory projects have the opportunity to see the final result of their work, and under teacher's guidance, can suggest revisions – upgrades. Generally, the educational 'environment' is amiable making students more creative. Student complaints are handled by the PS Coordinator,

MIEEK Director.»		
2.2 Practical training	No actions required	Choose an item.
2.3 Student assessment	No actions required	Choose an item.
<p>Findings All the facilities, lectures, laboratories, equipment, teaching process, and assessment methods are at a good level and are appropriate.</p> <p>Strengths Small number of students, high teacher to student ratio. Evening classes. Space and facilities with potential to expand installations, and accommodate new equipment. Access to professionally active teachers to bring in industry-relevant practices. Student assessment is appropriate and transparent. Strong, continuous offer of trainee positions by SMEs woodworking and machine shops.</p> <p>Areas of improvement and recommendations <u>More industry visits / excursions. Include presentations and seminars from industry and technical experts. Extend and organise practice training. Create open showroom displaying students projects, create incentives e.g. selected projects to be presented at industry events, participate in design contests. Introduce career days.</u> <u>The existing laboratory equipment is modern and satisfies the objectives of the PS, but there is a lack of conventional woodworking equipment. The existence of this equipment in the nearby laboratory facilities in Technical School of Larnaca, will solve the problem at the beginning. In the immediate future, conventional wood working equipment must be installed in AITE.</u></p>	<p>With the help of software tools used in some courses by the students, there is significant progress in terms of the organization of assignments and projects as well as the provisions in the revised outlines with more individual projects/projects by the students.</p> <p>The equipment with machines and small tools is renewed in accordance with technological developments. An important parameter for the programme is the interconnection of the laboratory courses with the labour market, through visits to suitable factories.</p> <p>Collaboration with other higher education programmes and universities abroad, as well as inviting speakers from other higher education institutions and industry, are promoted and planned.</p> <p>In September and October of the academic year 2022-2023, visits to foreign industries were planned and are taking place. In these industries, students are given the opportunity to carry out practical training in their field of study, expanding and organizing practical training in a better quality. An effort is being made to organize presentations and seminars by industry experts and technicians, as well as the transfer of the small exhibition that operates in the laboratory area to a continuously operating and more visited open exhibition area (a room for the display of student projects). Participating in events, with their selected projects, and participating in design competitions is a motivation for the students. At the urging of the EEC, consultations are held to present / promote the programme at an event in the form of a "career day" event.</p> <p>Also, in the last 5 years, trainers or students have had the opportunity to participate in seminars organized through Erasmus+.</p>	Choose an item.



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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
<p>3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development</p> <p>«Generally, the PS Coordinator has a key role for staffing courses with appropriate specializations. National call of expression of interest for applicants are publicized in the press and posted on the Internet by the Ministry of Education. Every candidate can easily be informed about this. This is a transparent procedure. Each position concerns a particular course. In this way the most experienced applicants from Cyprus can be attracted. Applicants submit academic qualifications, teaching experience, professional experience, research and development work, relevant consulting services, professional achievements. Submissions are sent to the Ministry of Education. Detailed guidelines for recruitment of teachers are easily accessible to the applicants. The evaluation of applications uses a grading system with clearly stated and applied criteria. Teaching staff is contracted for a three-year period. New teachers participate in an adult education seminar.</p> <p><u>Positions for Laboratory Technical Staff (e.g., carpenters, cabinet-makers, wood-working practitioners) are usually not filled. This impacts the delivery of the practice-based courses. In these types of courses, the presence of technical staff is necessary for the successful completion of the projects and the connection of the theoretical part</u></p>	<p>Partially compliant</p> <p>The Lab Technician position is filled, following arrangements by an instructor serving in the programme until the Technician position is filled through the staffing competition. In its evaluation, the EEC states that, according to Cypriot regulations, visiting teaching staff are not included in the teaching staff.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p><u>of the lesson with the practical (laboratory).</u></p> <p>Students participate in the evaluation of teacher's performance in every course. Evaluation is based on an official questionnaire and accomplished anonymously by the students. Besides teaching staff, students evaluate the courses and the management of PS.»</p>		
<p>3.2 Teaching staff number and status</p>	<p>No actions required</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>3.3 Synergies of teaching and research</p>	<p>No actions required</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><u>Findings</u> <u>Transparent and appropriate system for selection of educators. Adequate staff in number and qualifications. Professionally engaged teachers and evening hours creates difficulties in the coordination between teachers. Selection criteria for technical laboratory staff can lead to vacant positions (no eligible applicants). Some members of visiting staff spend additional time to commute between Larnaca and their home. This may create a disincentive and may discourage experienced qualified professionals active in the woodworking industry for applying for available positions.</u></p> <p>Strengths Appropriate teachers as they combine academic qualifications with professional experience and practice.</p> <p>Areas of improvement and recommendations Investigate and develop ways to avoid vacant positions of technical laboratory staff (e.g., relax selection criteria, use a cascade evaluation system). Research ways to introduce subsidies to cover the transportation costs for out-of-city teaching staff. Generally, a higher salary- reward for part-time teachers, could attract more and</p>	<p>The coordination is achieved with the good cooperation of the service purchase trainers in non-teaching hours.</p> <p>Due to the expansion of the programme, a supplementary tender has been requested to attract additional technical laboratory staff. The Competition is in the evaluation phase of the interested parties.</p> <p>Facilities are provided to staff members who participate in the programme and spend extra time commuting between Larnaca and their place of residence.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>



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highly experienced staff.		
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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
4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria	No actions required	Choose an item.
4.2 Student progression	No actions required	Choose an item.
4.3 Student recognition	No actions required	Choose an item.
4.4 Student certification	No actions required	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
<p>5.1 Teaching and Learning Resources</p> <p>«The present teaching and learning resources are adequate, easily accessible, and all fit for the purpose of current courses and programmes. The PS can also accommodate a slight increase in the number of students.</p> <p><u>Where appropriate, flexible approaches to learning are to be implemented, e.g. to carry out many individual (technical) projects for the students. This can be very beneficial.</u></p> <p>The current programme, definitely, corresponds to the requirements of the Cypriot wood-working enterprises. <u>It may be extended to other types of enterprises as well; for instance, in aluminium-working small enterprises, or even construction companies which utilize HPL or WPC products, which mostly use CNC machinery in their production.</u> This will further increase the potential of the graduates to find employment.</p> <p>In addition, the programme has the advantage that a similar one has run for the last six years in MIEEK in Larnaca, so the staff (teachers, coordinators, etc.) possess high level of experience. It seems that the teaching materials are readily available to the students from the teaching staff or through the library, for example.</p> <p><u>Other flexible modes of learning should be taken into consideration, for instance: i) “project” type homework for the</u></p>	<p>Partially compliant</p> <p>The programme has already been extended to other types of products and manufacturing companies that use mainly CNC machines and aluminium materials, HPL or WPC products. Graduates of the study programme are successfully employed in this type of business.</p> <p>Updates and enhancements help the programme follow and synchronize with the rapid developments in CNC technology and equipment. An important role in the synchronization of the PS, for the next 3 - 4 years, is the planned equipment with additional machines and other equipment.</p> <p>After the last adjustment and upgrade of the SP and based on the New Timetable and the Course Outlines (approved by the External Evaluation Committee and CYQAA (July 25, 2022: 07.14.399.001.001_final_report CNC Technology - Woodworking Industry) type tasks are determined "project" and students are assigned more projects with different materials, which are beneficial for their better quality development.</p> <p>At the same time, provision was made for more visits (educational trips) to industrial facilities in Cyprus. Students combine their practical training in similar industries and collaborate or are employed by them. Due to the response of students to the needs of the labour market, there is great demand for their employment.</p> <p>In addition, students participate in ERASMUS+ Learning - VET traineeships programmes.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p><i>students to do at home, and, ii) higher number of daily excursions to the production sites of industrial wood enterprises. This will help students learn more about their future working environments in Cyprus.»</i></p>		
<p>5.2 Physical resources</p> <p>«The physical resources, as noted, are adequate in the school, and can be easily accessible. This fits the purpose of courses. Obviously, there are benefits from the installations of the AITE of Limassol. This includes easy-to-find parking, office spaces for the administration and the teaching staff, as well as canteen, library, and noticeably, plenty of lecture rooms, drawing (CAD) room, IT rooms and facilities, and storage rooms.</p> <p>The EEC was also informed about the upcoming installation of some new equipment -very soon- which is expected to enrich further the overall physical resources. The EEC is satisfied with the level of the new CNC-working laboratory ('new tech workshop'). <u>Conventional equipment could be established in nearby rooms. A possible approach is outlined in the Annex. »</u></p>	<p>The Guidelines for equipping the laboratories with conventional equipment described in the Annex were indicated and discussed on site, during the evaluation.</p> <p>The guidelines were agreed and promoted to be implemented based on the Annex attached to the External Evaluation Report</p> <p>The additional purchase of equipment proposed by the EEC has been decided and provided for.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>5.3 Human support resources</p>	<p>No actions required</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>5.4 Student support</p>	<p>No actions required</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Findings</p> <p>In general, the teaching, physical, human, and student-related resources are adequate. The field of CNC, and the woodworking industry itself, is characterised by rapid technological advancement relating specifically to new materials and digital technologies. At the same time, the sector is</p>	<p>As mentioned in point 5.1 "Teaching and Learning Resources", adaptations and enrichment help the programme follow and synchronize with the rapid developments in technology and CNC equipment.</p> <p>The enrichment and modernization of the PS is carried out through purchasing additional equipment and machinery. Recently (September 2022) additional equipment was delivered to the AITE facilities, to</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>expected to experience a larger growth, also indicated by the high demand for the CNC equipment. Graduates of the present PS will be employed very quickly, we would expect, given the strong demand in the woodworking industry.</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>The current resources, combined with the synergy with the Technical School of Limassol (especially the first academic year), in sharing installations are satisfactory. Also these are within the same urban area, in an accessible location. The EEC thinks that there is a potential to accommodate a moderate expansion of the programme.</p> <p><u>Areas of improvement and recommendations</u></p> <p><u><i>In view of the dynamic features of the CNC-relating industry in Cyprus, the EEC considers this PS as an important one, having also a main challenge of ensuring that resources will continue supporting the competitiveness edge of the PS. The latter means continuous adaptation to the societal and market needs.</i></u></p> <p><u><i>The upcoming installation of some conventional equipment is expected to enrich further the overall physical resources.</i></u></p>	<p>MIEEK Larnaca and to A Technical and Vocational School of Education and Training of Limassol, to which all students and instructors will have access). In addition, orders for new equipment were completed and are expected to be delivered in 2023.</p>	
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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
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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
<p>«The PS is new, but a similar one has been carried out, since 2016, in a proper way in Larnaca. Lots of potential exist for it, since presently the Cypriot market is growing and the related wood-working enterprises are expanding, also due to the tourist market (see wooden articles and furniture, and other timber-relating structures). Overall, we can summarize in the following important points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The PS offers a high quality vocational training in an industrial sector, which has significant market pull. ▪ The PS complies with the EQF level 5. ▪ Although the PS is new, the staff is experienced in running that in a proper way. ▪ The PS has gathered hands-on experiences and quite significant learnings. ▪ These learnings, in conjunction with trends in the wood-working industry, are reflected in and drive the adaptation of the curriculum. ▪ Directions for how to equip the workshops with conventional equipment is outlined in the Annex.» 	<p>The Guidelines for equipping the laboratories with conventional equipment described in the Annex were discussed on site, during the evaluation.</p> <p>It was agreed to be implemented, based on the Annex attached to the External Evaluation Report.</p>	Choose an item.
<p>«The EEC further suggests to DIPAE to strengthen even more the content of the programme, in the near future, as follows: «Design & CNC Technology – Woodworking Industry» (<i>«Σχεδιασμός & Τεχνολογία CNC – Ξυλουργική Βιομηχανία»</i>). This will make it even more attractive to students resulting in more enrolment to the better serve industry demand»</p>	<p>We agree with the proposal of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) to CYQAA to rename the programme from: "CNC Technology – Woodworking Industry" to "CNC Design & Technology – Woodworking Industry". The change can be implemented immediately.</p> <p>The same recommendation was made in the recent evaluation of the programme in Larnaca by the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) and will be implemented as of the academic year 2022-2023.</p>	Choose an item.

	<p>The curriculum has been updated and the courses have been combined according to the latest trends in industry and the labour market.</p> <p>A New Timetable and Curriculum Course Outlines were prepared in accordance with the "Recommendations of the External Evaluation Committee", for a further upgraded curriculum and were approved by the External Evaluation Committee and CYQAA. (25 July 2022: 07.14.399.001.001_final_report).</p> <p>With the acceptance of the proposal, the PS will become even more attractive and even more students will attend it.</p>	
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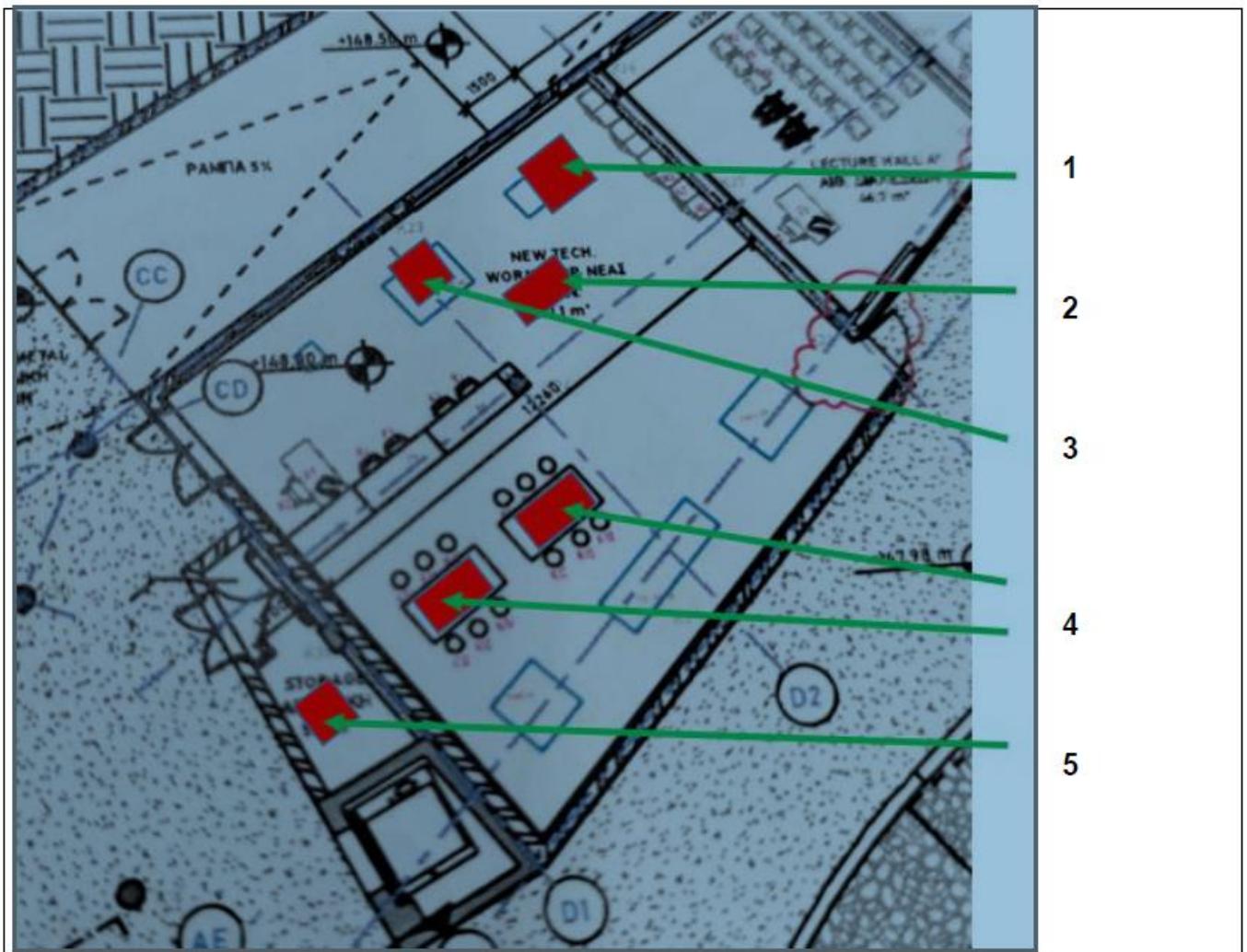
D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Dr. E. Margadjis	Chairman of MIEEK Council	
Mr. K. Kyriakou	Coordinator MIEEK	
Mr. P. Zacharoplastis	Quality Assurance Officer MIEEK	
Mr. C. Schinis	District Director MIEEK Limassol – AITE	
Mr. A. Pierides	Assistant District Director MIEEK Limassol	
Mr. S. Sofokleous,	MIEEK Programme Coordinator	

Date: 21 Sept 2022

ANNEX

Proposed layout of conventional equipment in “New Tech Workshop - NTW”.



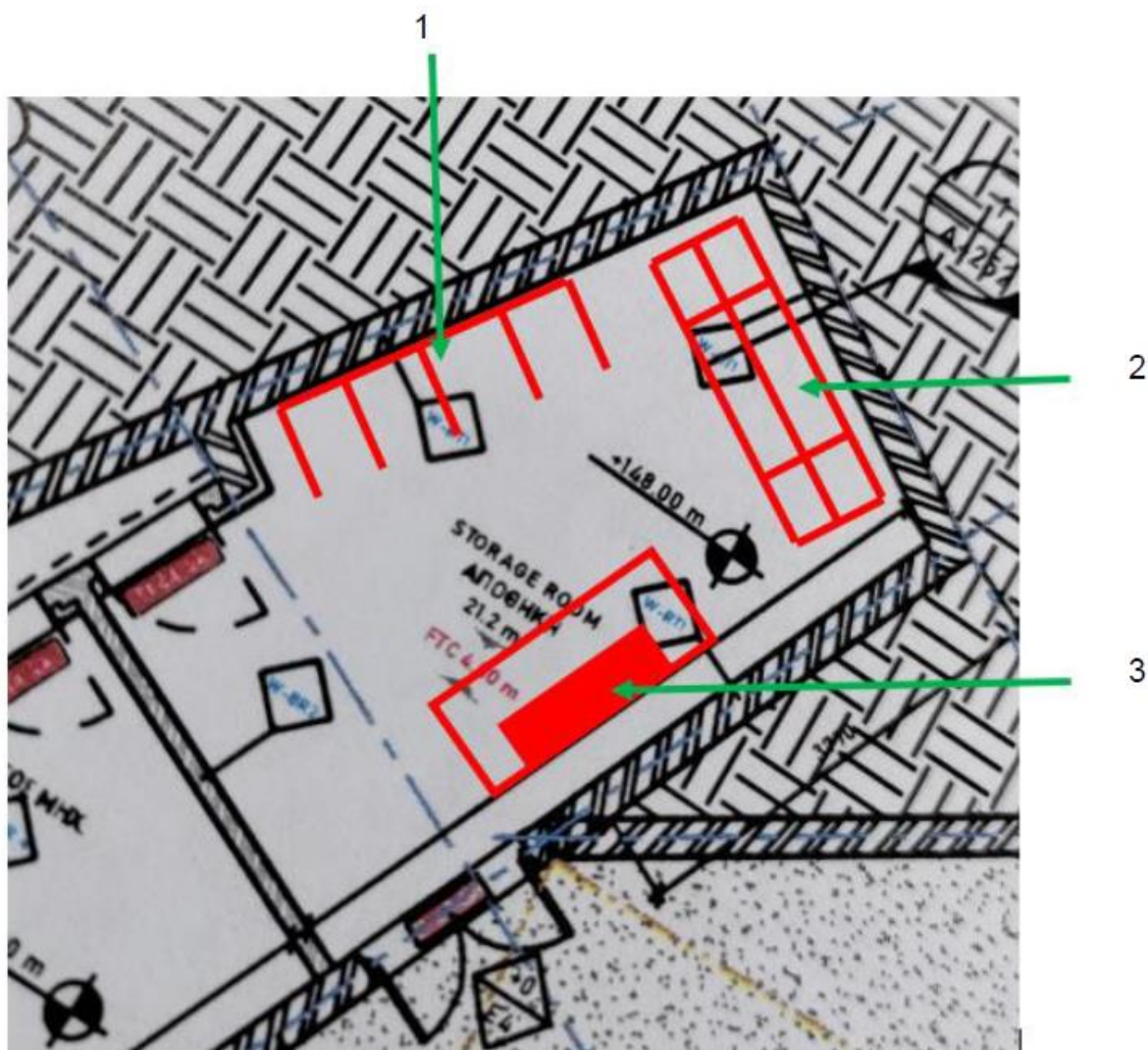
- 1: Sliding table panel saw with digital control.
- 2: Combination machine (planner, thickness planner, spindle moulder (with router), mortise).
- 3: Bandsaw.
- 4: Woodworking bench.
- 5: Air compressor.

Proposed layout of conventional equipment in “Wood Processing Lab - WPL”.



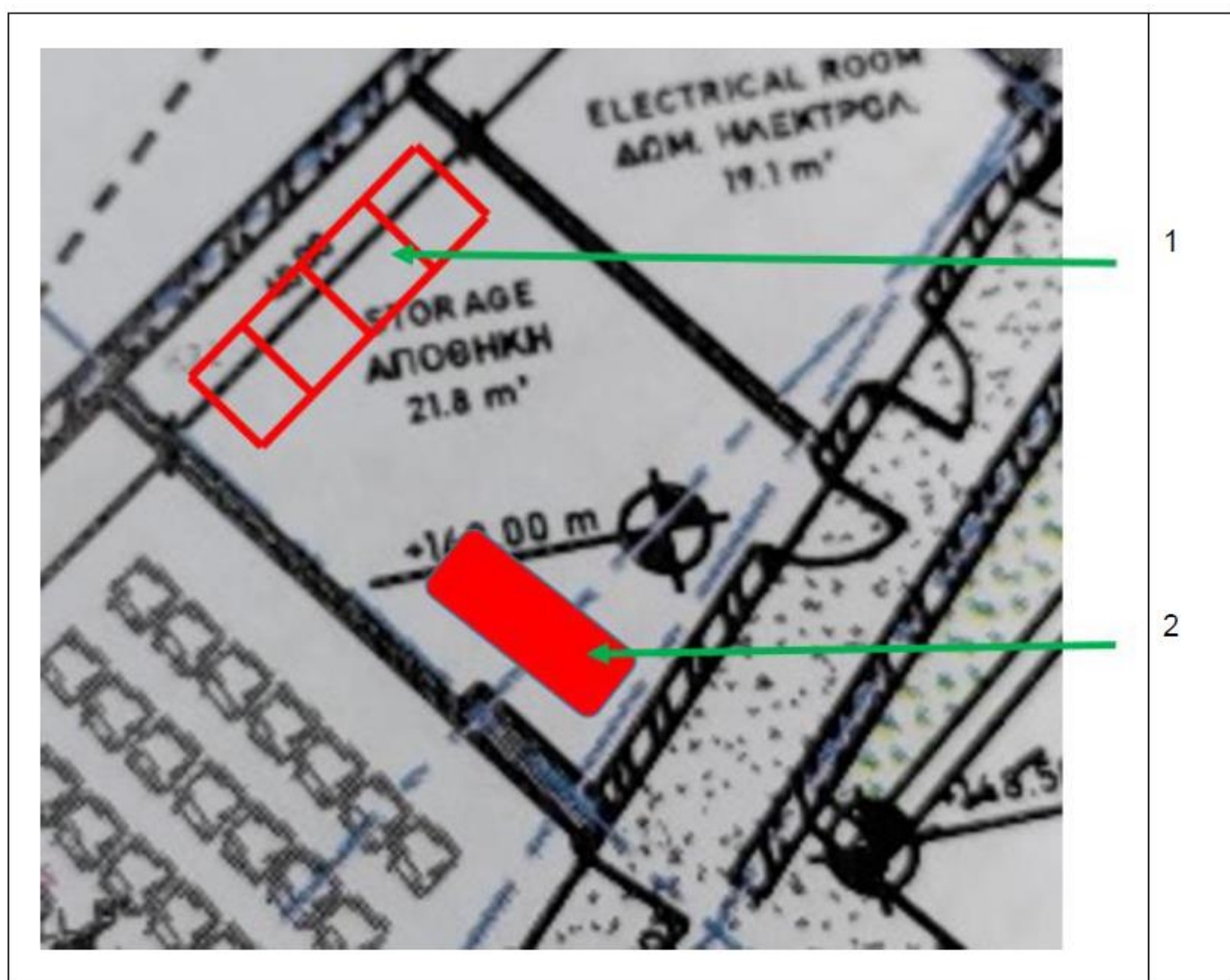
- 1: Storage area for raw materials
- 2: Vertical panel saw with digital control

Proposed layout of conventional equipment in “Wood Finishing Lab - WFL”.



- 1: Furniture drier area
- 2: Lacquer room
- 3: Furniture grinding area

Proposed layout of conventional equipment in “Recyclable Residues Area - RRA”.



- 1: Area of recyclable wood residues
- 2: Extractor hood



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



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