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# External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
Neapolis University Pafos
- **Town:** Pafos
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Architecture, Engineering, land & Environmental Sciences
- **Department/ Sector:** Civil Engineering
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**  
**In Greek:**  
Πολιτικών Μηχανικών (4 χρόνια, 240, προπτυχιακό)  
**In English:**  
Civil Engineering (4 years, 240, bachelor)
- **Language(s) of instruction:** English/Greek
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**  
**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. Introduction

*This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.*

*The committee members visited the University during the period of July 5 to 7 2023. The committee members were provided with a considerable number of resources and participated in in-depth discussions with various academic, administrative and student staff to carry out their evaluation for the undergraduate programme in Architecture & Civil Engineering at Neapolis University Pafos.*

*The members of the Department gave extensive and detailed presentations and were very willing to answer questions asked by the committee and offer additional data and complimentary information as requested.*

*The committee firmly believes that the assembled report and its findings are very representative of the current situation.*



## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>(Chair) Yong Lu</b>	Professor	The University of Edinburgh, UK
<b>(Member) Dimitrios Lignos</b>	Professor	École Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne, Switzerland
<b>(Member) Emmanouil Chatzis</b>	Associate Professor	University of Oxford, UK
<b>(Member) Marios Tsangaris</b>	Student Member	University of Cyprus, Cyprus
<b>(Member) Petros Athinakis</b>	Professional Engineer	ETEK, Cyprus
Name	Position	University

## C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
  - (a) sub-areas*
  - (b) standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
  - (c) some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

### **Findings**

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

### **Strengths**

*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

### **Areas of improvement and recommendations**

*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

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

### Sub-areas

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance
- 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
- 1.3 Public information
- 1.4 Information management

### 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

#### Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
  - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
  - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
  - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
  - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
  - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
  - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

### 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

#### Standards

- *The programme of study:*
  - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
  - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
  - *benefits from external expertise*
  - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
  - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
  - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
  - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*

- *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

### 1.3 Public information

#### Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
  - *selection criteria*
  - *intended learning outcomes*
  - *qualification awarded*
  - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
  - *pass rates*
  - *learning opportunities available to the students*
  - *graduate employment information*

### 1.4 Information management

#### Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
  - *key performance indicators*
  - *profile of the student population*
  - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
  - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
  - *learning resources and student support available*
  - *career paths of graduates*
  
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*



## Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

The programme appears to remain pertinent and consistent with the developments of the society including a balance of theory, digital technologies as well as field applications and visits, which are important for a Civil Engineering/architecture and curriculum. It does correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF). The 4-year program features 240 ECTS out of which, 108 are allocated in core courses, 78 are complementary, 33 are specialization and free electives and 15 ECTS are attributed to the actual dissertation. Information regarding the programme is evident and up to date and is publicly accessible via a website that is regularly maintained. Moreover, the academic staff has doubled their capacity over the last 10 years to keep up with the needs of the program. Across campus, the student-to-faculty ratio is 14:1, which is also respected in Civil engineering.

The quality assurance is established via an international guide as well as a committee that is comprised of at least a member from each faculty. Therefore, it does follow the international standards. Moreover, quality assurance considers the evaluations from students, which are obligatory (otherwise, they cannot receive their grades). Some of the student responses are filtered as part of the process because they are not pertinent. Moreover, quality assurance is ensured via numerous platforms such as, Prose tool, Moodle, TARGIT among other tools. Interestingly, the student analysis is conducted via KPIs and is taken into consideration including predictive capabilities per course per student as well as per program across the university but also within architecture and civil engineering. These results are analysed explicitly and are taken into consideration for further planning and training activities of the academic staff. At the end of the academic semester, the assessment board assembles to validate the student grades.

At the university level, there have been dual joint degrees under development (e.g., Sawnsea University, Reading, University of Piraeus) that could provide students the opportunity for further career development. Moreover, there have been agreements with several universities as part of the Erasmus program. Interestingly, in Department of Architecture & Civil Engineering their employability touches nearly 100%, which suggests that the graduates of the program are placed well in the market. This is also an indirect measure of “success” in the market.

The programme aims and objectives are based on established programme learning outcomes including theoretical background in applied science and engineering, use of data, design of experiments, engineering practice and more broadly the understanding of the civil engineering profession. Critical thinking is promoted in most core courses. These are generally offered in Greek. However, if there are at least 3 foreign students enrolled then the respective courses are also offered in English, thereby providing potential opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme. The lecture notes are offered in both Greek and English; tutoring activities are offered in English. The programme receives students either from secondary education graduates from Cyprus Greece or other counties as well as Greek TEI graduates.

The average student time for graduation is 4-1/2 years. The success rates based on available statistics are as follows: about 82% in year 1, 79% year 2, 67% year 3 and 79% year 4. So far, dropouts are at 4 to 5%. These could be related to individual/personal issues. Moreover, dropouts may be related to transfers with less background that voluntarily withdraw. The university seems to provide some tutoring classes in these cases to improve the situation. Moreover, the department of Civil Engineering has established additional requirements for enrolment in 2 out of 3 key areas.

### Strengths

*A list of strengths, e.g., examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

It is of particular interest that the Quality assurance Rate is A. This is reflected from the established good practices of the department for feedback (student and faculty) across different levels up to the senate. It is also important that the performance evaluation for administrative and academic staff considers work ethics, productivity, and other pertinent indicators. The evaluation report is comprised of student evaluation, course evaluation, faculty evaluation among other indicators that are weighted accordingly.

During the visit, it was found out that the university/department has already put in place a new platform that provides flexibility for adaptive learning design features. However, this is not used yet. It is also interesting that there seem to be continuously changing evaluation practices as well as training activities for faculty with modern practices for preventing academic fraud, which is of particular concern in our days to ensure quality of an academic program.

Interestingly, the program is organized in 10 thematic modules attributed to 6 pillars including international profile and collaboration, social contribution, and public image. There seems to be coherence in the program with complementary courses along with core courses. A link has also been established with the professional body of Cyprus (ETEK). Moreover, ETEK as well as the Cyprus Association of Civil Engineering have established awards that are regularly given during the graduation ceremonies. This is motivating to high caliber students who wish to join high profile industry.

In year #1 there is a technical writing course to assist students in presenting/writing their technical reports. Moreover, Specialization courses seem to meet the requirements regarding industry needs and consistent to university programs abroad. The passing score is 50% to meet the learning outcomes for all individual courses. There is typically a mid-term exam in addition to the final exam for all courses.

It is encouraging to see that there is a liaison office that establishes connections with a variety of industry.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

To date the programme seems to be on a solid footing. However, a number of recommendations may be useful for its further development:

- It appears that more “learning by doing” type of courses/activities (project-based learning) could potentially improve the overall student experience and further improve team works. This could be enhanced in the form of semester projects that may already be in place. Moreover, this could be potentially improved with the expansion of facilities that allow for hands on work.
- A classification system that distinguishes ranking of students within their transcript could be motivating for future graduates. This may be easily put in place by expanding / improving current practices.
- Project economics and management courses shall be demonstrated to students more evidently. This appears to be very important for the professional body of Cyprus (ETEK) as well. This can also be stressed more clearly by co-organizing related seminars in collaboration with ETEK to demonstrate via coherent project examples the importance of project economics and management so that the students get a bigger picture of an actual construction project. This could also be done in coordination with construction



management divisions as this relates more to this discipline, but it certainly resonates with future civil engineering graduates.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

<b>Sub-area</b>		<b><i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i></b>
<b>1.1</b>	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
<b>1.2</b>	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
<b>1.3</b>	Public information	Compliant
<b>1.4</b>	Information management	Compliant

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

### Sub-areas

**2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology**

**2.2 Practical training**

**2.3 Student assessment**

### **2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology**

#### Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

### **2.2 Practical training**

#### Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

### **2.3 Student assessment**

#### Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*

- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

The programme has a robust process in place to ensure access of advice and support on students learning at all stages from both the teaching and supporting staff. Teaching and assessment methods are available and communicated to the students in a clear and timely manner, via course information on the online platform Moodle, as well as induction sessions at the start of semester.

There is good culture that encourages and ensures active teaching-learning feedback route, and support on individual student's need in the learning process, through flexible consultation arrangement at the course level, and regular exercise/coursework submission, grading and feedback. It is notable that close interaction between students and teaching staff has also benefited from a relatively small student cohort and a healthy staff-student ratio (<14).

There is a standard process to identify special needs of individual students, and such needs are informed and addressed at teaching, coursework submission and exam stages.

There is a system in place to address different learning needs of individual students. Course materials, assignment and exam papers are available in both Greek and English where necessary, and extra help is available for students who may require additional assistance in their learning of specific subjects.

There is a standard process to gather student's feedback to identify areas for improvement in the teaching and assessment from the students' perspective. There is good mixture of coursework submission, mid-term and final exams in the assessment across most individual courses.

Inter-connection between practical and theoretical studies is facilitated by site visits and physical experiments at the laboratories, as well as placement (which at the moment is tied to students taking the initiative).

All students have to carry out a dissertation project, and this facilitates comprehensive training and involvement of students in research-oriented process and activities. It is noted though the scope of research exploration is constrained by the limited availability of experimental facilities to the dissertation students as well as the supervisors.

### Strengths

*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

The use of new technologies and assistive tools, such as the Smart Board, facilitate the delivery of the lectures. The IT support and the further services enabled via the Moodle, Computer Labs, the access to engineering & computing software, as well as the library resources is on par with international standards.

There is good practice of active teaching-learning interaction such as through flexible arrangement of consultation. Access of help is readily available and this in part has benefited from a relatively small staff-student community at the department, and an apparent connected community culture.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

There is good practice in encouraging active teaching-learning feedback process through flexible arrangement of consultation. Nonetheless, it would be good to allocate specific time slots to ensure availability of teaching staff and encourage good practice in time management in the learning process.

Also the mechanisms of formative feedback throughout the semester should be explicitly stated at individual course level to ensure students' awareness and consistency of practice across the board.

It is clear that teaching staff are well positioned to deal with ongoing difficulties due to issues such as sickness that may have affected a coursework submission. It would be good to have a standardised process to address such special circumstances, which may also have affected a student's ability to demonstrate their learning achievement.

Placement could be better coordinated – this is not to say that the programme should be responsible to look after the placement opportunity for each student, but more about trying to establish identifiable industry links and communicate such links with students.

Since placement is awarded ETS credits, for students who do not get a placement opportunity, it would ideal if this could be substituted with an “equivalent” experience, such as a research or design oriented project, rather than taking extra theoretical modules, for the same credits.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

#### Sub-areas

- 3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**
- 3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
- 3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

#### **3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**

##### Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

#### **3.2 Teaching staff number and status**

##### Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

#### **3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

##### Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*



- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

The department has invested on 11 permanent and 4 temporary faculty members to maintain the programme continuity and coherence. The academic staff is comprised of a full professor, an associate professor and the rest are all lecturers (i.e., assistant professors). This suggests a good percentage of junior permanent lecturers and more senior faculty. Each faculty member appears to teach, on average, 3 courses per semester.

The workload appears to be appropriate. On the other hand, because of the lack of assistants, this compromises a bit the faculty's ability to conduct uninterrupted research activities that could further improve the university's public image. However, teaching activities and allocation does connect with pertinent research that the respective faculty members appear to have.

The teaching performance per faculty member is assessed via a course evaluation form that is distributed to students; hence, student evaluation is explicitly considered as part of the process. The results are analysed via a platform that is based on predictive analytics and based on those the faculty receives feedback on the effectiveness of their teaching.

### Strengths

*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

The current members of the department are comprised of highly pertinent faculty members. Each one of them thinks that they are provided with the corresponding feedback and abilities for further improvement of their teaching methods and effectiveness as part of the pedagogical process.

The fact that most of the faculty members have a considerable practical experience helps the students to better integrate practical aspects with the theoretical foundation they are provided as part of their coursework.

Classrooms offer the possibility to the instructor to provide a more effective teaching experience. However, there seem to be shortage on facilities, teaching rooms and laboratories to ensure that a high quality of studies can be continued especially if the program grows further. Particularly, while there is equipment for hands on experiments as part of experimental courses, there seem to be a shortage for demonstration experiments, thereby arranging this currently with private companies. Same applies for computer equipment in certain rooms that are used for teaching.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

A series of recommendations are summarized to further improve the teaching staff and recruitment:

- It would help to establish relationships (formal agreements) with public universities and pertinent laboratory facilities along with training activities to assist young faculty to further develop their research path. This could effectively assist their teaching.
- It may be best to consider initiating a research fund (through IDEK or through internal funding resources, if possible) so that teaching academics would be able to apply for funding / matching funds. It is understood that this may be challenging to apply at a more global scale, but it could first be established for the faculty member(s) that receive(s) a “best teaching award” of the year. This could also motivate all faculty to further improve their teaching methods.
- Further develop facilities (e.g., classrooms and laboratories) on campus to support architecture and civil engineering students.
- As discussed, each faculty teaches, on average, 3 courses per week (9h lecture time per week). This should be re-balanced in a longer term to ensure current faculty can increase their research output. This could be achieved by hiring 2-3 additional faculty members in key thematic areas.



Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

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

##### Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2 Student progression
- 4.3 Student recognition
- 4.4 Student certification

##### 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

###### Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

##### 4.2 Student progression

###### Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

##### 4.3 Student recognition

###### Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
  - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
  - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

#### 4.4 Student certification

##### Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

##### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

The University follows the ECTS system the number of units attributed to each course, and the overall number of credits are in agreement with the system. The number of compulsory, core/complementary and elective courses are advertised and the students know that in advance. The 4 year degree is a BSc, this is in agreement with the requirements of ETEK and TEE, and a sufficient number of years to award such a degree. The programme is dedicated to civil engineering and this makes the expected requirements to accreditation from professional bodies obvious to the students.

Recognition and transfer: The students are informed about which courses are transferred /recognised before they start their degree. Those transferred credits are decided by the Head of the Department. The recognition of degrees from other Universities (Higher Education Institutions) follows standard practices in terms of recognising degrees as BSc. A special category is that of students coming from Greek TEI's who start on year 3 and hence fall under the category of transfers (and not fully recognized degrees). Not recognizing that degree as BSc is in alignment with the suggestions of professional institutions in Cyprus and Greece. For the transfers from TEI, ETEK is in discussion with the Department to jointly agree on the recognized credits. This is a very good practice given the variability of TEI's, and is reasonably applied in other situations of transfer from institutions where there could be some doubts on the level or relevance of the courses taken.

All of the previous points have been made clear to the students before admission and hence there is suitable transparency.

Progression: Resit exams in September. Resits cannot change a mark by more than Good (64%). Students pass a course if they go above 50%. Students can progress to the next year but can't select the courses that require as a prerequisite the course that the student failed. The rules of progression (for failed courses) are written in a study guide. Students can replace course with lost prerequisites with courses from other years so that they can avoid the situation where they would not be allowed to fill in the maximum number of ECTS in a year (with the only exception being the final year for the leftover mandatory courses).

Students found the transfer process reasonable and in all cases reported they were informed about which points were transferred and why.

### Strengths

*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

- The programme is in agreement with the ECTS
- The programme is well aligned with the requirements of accrediting bodies especially ETEK (Cyprus) and TEE (Greece).
- The practices for progression are clear and well written in the study guide.
- The practices for transfer of credits are good. The Programme has also carefully thought the case of students coming from TEI and applies a case by case approach in collaboration with ETEK.
- There is good communication between the programme and ETEK, (and TEE).

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

Generally the practices followed are good. As the Department obtains more statistics over the next years in terms of students failing specific core courses and how that may affect their progression, those statistics can be used to make improvements in the timing of certain core courses.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**



Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

## 5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

### Sub-areas

#### 5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

#### 5.2 Physical resources

#### 5.3 Human support resources

#### 5.4 Student support

### 5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

#### Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

### 5.2 Physical resources

#### Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

### 5.3 Human support resources

#### Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*



- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

## 5.4 Student support

### Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.*

The tools that are used are appropriate for student-based learning. The Department makes good use of resources in that matter in collaboration with the Library. The students have access to notes that also correspond to the lecture slides in both Greek and English. The lectures would be in Greek unless there are more than 3 international students attending. In such cases, the international students are supported with extra hours of tutoring and the lecturers spend more time to answer their questions. This system appears to work reasonably well right now despite its challenges because the lecturers follow the approach of lecturing using the same slides as the notes. There is hence a direct correspondence between the lecture slides in Greek and the notes in English. Certainly, this is an area where the faculty can consider further improvement such as the upload of recorded lectures in English.

Generally the format of lectures, exercises, intermediate tests and final exams is good and the students had very positive comments about the teaching style. All appears to be in good shape in terms of the teaching material used.

Currently the number of students in the programme is small and cohorts are of the order of 20 students or less. This is currently well aligned with the size of classrooms. The classrooms are well equipped, the writing boards are modern and allow for projection and digital writing. The rooms are well lit and air conditioned. The desks are spacious and allow for comfortable space between students.

The library is well organized and with a good ratio of reading spaces. The use of e-books is also positive, but the students have also access to physical copies of books. Some of the spaces in the library are used as computer rooms. Perhaps a consideration would be to add more such spaces, even outside the premises of the library. E.g. include computer rooms which are used for teaching courses that use computers. And include a computer lab. Having such spaces outside the library allows for lecturing and interacting of the students without disturbing those studying in the library.

As will be mentioned later, the current space and rooms are good for the size of the cohort. However, as the Department has the aspirations of growth in size new classrooms should be added that can host more students. The University overall should consider also the addition of amphitheatres that can be used for very well attended courses (from different Departments), seminars and conferences. The facilities are reasonable for the current size of the Department but there should be a plan for increasing the rooms, and adding some rooms of larger size. Such a growth would further require a larger space for the library as well. Of more immediate need is the addition of a computer room for teaching and a room to be used as a computer lab outside the premises of the library.

In terms of laboratories, again those are reasonable for the size of the cohort. It would certainly be useful to consider the growth of the laboratories space which is a direction that the department has within its plans. Of more immediate attention is the addition of further testing equipment for both demonstration and for supporting the research needs of some of the faculty. The members of the Department have a list of items to be pursued in the future and they should be supported in that effort.

Separate consideration should be given to a policy about giving access to the members of faculty in the testing facilities of national laboratories for specific experiments. The University should consider allocating a budget for such experiments.

The feedback from the teaching staff and students is that they are generally happy with the current facilities for demonstrating. There is a recorded need for rooms with computers for both teaching and use as labs. There is a recorded need for more testing equipment in laboratories for teaching and research and giving access to other testing facilities to researchers. The Department could consider formalizing visits to

construction sites by making a direct agreement with the related companies for such visits so that this is not organized by the demonstrators. The joint use of design rooms between Civil Engineers and architects was found by students as OK. They would prefer however a separate space which would again allow for people doing separate activities. This may perhaps be addressed by allocating new rooms as computer or design laboratories.

There were several positive things about support services. A special department called Skepsi makes assessment of potential disability of students and provides the lecturers with suggestions. The staff feels happy with resources in terms of their own job and the tools to support the students. All offices of support are in open communications between them and with the tutor.

There is good help of the students in terms of mobility for Erasmus and related applications.

Overall there is a good network for supporting students.

### Strengths

*A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.*

- A very good support network for students.
- A well organized library
- Well equipped classrooms, which are OK for the current size of the cohort (although perhaps not for the future plans of growth).
- The staff and students are happy with their working environment.
- There is a vision for growth of the Department and the recognition that this will mean more teaching rooms and larger laboratories.
- The current facilities are well taken care of and maintained.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

There are certain areas that the University can consider for improvement, they were mentioned in detail above and so are summarized here:

- While what is currently done for international students appears to work reasonably well, there is some room for improvement in terms of the lectures. Those students should be offered lectures in English even when there is only one international student attending a class. Perhaps the use of recorded lectures in English could help in this direction.
- A computer lab and a teaching room with computers should be added.
- The University has a growth plan and hence should support the Department with more teaching rooms, and the addition of larger rooms.

- The Department should be supported in terms obtaining new equipment for teaching and research in the current labs.
- Researchers should be given a budget for accessing national laboratories and other laboratories that offer specialized equipment. This will also require budgeting in the use of the equipment by the personnel of that lab. The University should allocate a budget for this. The researchers should also be supported by administrators who track related research opportunities from funding agencies.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

### Sub-areas

- 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**
- 6.2 Proposal and dissertation**
- 6.3 Supervision and committees**

### **6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**

#### Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
  - *the stages of completion*
  - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
  - *the examinations*
  - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
  - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

### **6.2 Proposal and dissertation**

#### Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
  - *the chapters that are contained*
  - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
  - *the minimum word limit*
  - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

### **6.3 Supervision and committees**

#### Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
  - *regular meetings*

- reports per semester and feedback from supervisors
- support for writing research papers
- participation in conferences
- The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.

You may also consider the following questions:

- How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?
- Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?
- Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?

### Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

This section is not applicable.

### Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

This section is not applicable.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

This section is not applicable.

**Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:**

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
<b>6.1</b>	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
<b>6.2</b>	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
<b>6.3</b>	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

## D. Conclusions and final remarks

*Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.*

With regards to the undergraduate programme, its design and development, it appears that the programme has well established procedures to ensure high standards regarding the quality assurance including electronic platforms and tools that monitor student / faculty / course evaluations, the use of predictive capabilities for analysing the data and prognosticating which course(s) may be problematic and in which cases further training may be important. Moreover, there seem to be very few dropouts, which are well monitored. The academic programme is coherent and provides excellent opportunities for future employment. The average time of graduation is 4-1/2 years, which is deemed reasonable.

The programme itself, with 240 ECTS ensures a good balance between theoretical underpinnings as well as practical / field applications. One aspect of improvement may be the effective communication with the professional engineering body of Cyprus (ETEK) so as courses associated with project economics and management could become electives of the current curriculum so as future engineers could be provided with the required skillset, which seems to be important for ETEK. Another aspect to be considered is to include more opportunities for project-based learning, which is an important element of contemporary higher education. The expansion of facilities, classrooms and laboratories will enhance both the opportunities for effective learning, teaching as well as research, which appears to be a concern of existing faculty members. These are comprised of primarily lecturers who firmly believe that have a clearly established career development plan and opportunities to grow within the university. Though, access to research funds is perhaps limited and should be strengthened via the establishment of a small research fund that could aid access to facilities as well as testing equipment, which seems to be necessary for maintaining the high quality of teaching activities and the creation of future research activities that could eventually inform more effective teaching.

There is a healthy environment, good attitude and systematic process at the department and programme level that facilitate student-centred learning. There is good culture and practice of teaching staff – student interaction that help ensure the needs of individual students in their learning are met in a timely manner. Teaching materials are easily accessible and information about assessment is clearly communicated to students. Interconnection between theoretical studies and practical skills is facilitated through sit visits and laboratory experiments at course levels and placement opportunities. Research oriented training is available through dissertation projects. Areas for improvement in terms of student learning experiences could include: arrange allocated time slots for consultation for each course; consider innovative approaches to overcoming the shortfall in availability of experimental facilities for research oriented projects – for example possible collaboration with other institutions in nearby regions; put the placement programme in a more co-ordinated way and consider “equivalent” on-campus assignment, such as research or design oriented project, for students who do not get a placement opportunity.

The teaching material is appropriate. Both lecturers and students had many positive comments. It does appear that the engagement of lecturers secures student-centred learning. Perhaps the only consideration that the University and Department can make in this area is regarding international students. Such students should be offered the opportunity to have lectures in English. Perhaps recorded lectures can help in this direction. The committee notes that the international students were quite positive about the current arrangement.



In terms of teaching facilities: the small size of the cohort allows for a very efficient use of the current teaching rooms. The same applies to the library. Some suggestions were made in terms of adding teaching rooms with computers and computer labs outside the library. The labs are adequate and allow for teaching but there was an identified need for their expansion and the addition of new equipment. As the University and Department plan to expand, the University should help the Department in planning for additional teaching spaces and the addition of larger teaching spaces. The University should also accommodate such an expansion by increasing the size of the Library. However, it should be noted that currently both the teaching staff and the students had many positive comments about the teaching facilities, albeit few comments that were generally covered by the previous suggestions.

The support network of the University is very good. The support officers engage with the students well and support them. They feel that they have the correct tools in their disposals to do so, the feedback from the students is in agreement with those remarks. It is a positive point that the administrative staff appears broadly satisfied with their working environment.

In terms of student selection, progression and transfer, things follow a well regulated path. The Department is still relatively young and so very reasonably there were few statistics on percentages of pass and fail courses. But overall the Department follows the EU guidelines for recognizing degrees. They are in alignment with the ETEK in terms of dealing with cases of students coming from the TEI system. The faculty spends an appropriate time to deal with individual cases and often consults with ETEK. The rules for progression are transparent and clear. Very few suggestions were made for improvements in this area, as the current practices were found very good.





## E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Yong Lu</b>	
<b>Dimitrios Lignos</b>	
<b>Emmanouil Chatzis</b>	
<b>Marios Tsangaris</b>	
<b>Petros Athinakis</b>	
Click to enter Name	

**Date:** July 06 2023