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Date: 20 June 2023

External Evaluation Report

(Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Letters
- **Department/ Sector:** Architecture, Civil Environmental Engineering, History and Archaeology
- **programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Μάστερ στη Συντήρηση και Αποκατάσταση Ιστορικών Κτηρίων και Συνόλων

In English:

MSc in Conservation and Restoration of Historic Buildings and Sites (3-8 academic semesters, 94 ECTS)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek, English
- **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 undertook a series of meetings and inspections during our visit to the University on 20th June 2023, as outlined below:

A meeting with the Vice Chair of the Internal Quality Committee of the University
UCY presentation

Participants:

- Vice Chair of the Internal Quality Committee
- Head of the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Head of the Department of Architecture
- Head of the Department of History and Archaeology
- Head of the Programme Coordinating Committee
- University Officer QA Coordinator

A meeting with the Heads of the relevant departments and the Coordinator(s) of the programme discussing:

- mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)
- connecting with society
- development processes and action plan

Participants:

- Head of the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering
- Head of the Department of Architecture
- Head of the Department of History and Archaeology
- Head of the Programme Coordinating Committee
- Head of the Department of Civil & Environmental Engineering

A meeting with the Heads of the relevant departments and the Coordination Committee of the programme discussing:

- the content and the standards of the programme of study;
- the information for the effective management of the programme of study;
- the process of teaching and learning and the student-centred teaching methodology, the practical trainings and the student assessment;
- admission, processes and criteria, progression, recognition and certification.

Participants:

- Head of the Department of Architecture
- Head of the Department of History and Archaeology
- Head of the Programme Coordinating Committee
- University Officer QA Coordinator

A meeting with members of the teaching staff on each course for all the years of study discussing:

- self-presentation;
- the content of each course and its implementation;

the learning outcomes, the content and the assessment of each course;
assessment criteria, samples of final exams or other teaching material and resources.

Participants:

Six members of full and part-time staff from the Departments of Civil & Environmental Engineering, Architecture and History & Archaeology

A presentation on the premises of the institution and a site Visit - Library

Participants:

University Officer – Librarian

A meeting with members of the administrative staff

Participants:

Senior Administrative Officer

University Officer A' – QA Coordinator

Lab Officer, Department of Architecture

A meeting with students and graduates

Participants:

Seven students and graduates covering the last 4 years of the programme

Inspection of samples of course work

A final meeting with the Coordination Committee for the programme.

Head of the Department of Architecture

Head of the Department of History and Archaeology

Head of the Programme Coordinating Committee

These meetings were all conducted in a single room on the University Campus. The Evaluation Committee received some verbal presentations, some presentations with Powerpoint and a video, with the opportunity then to follow these presentations with discussion and close questioning. Most of the day ran to time, but on a few occasions, more time would have been helpful (e.g. with the students).

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Alexander Wright	Professor of Architecture	University of Bath
John Schofield	Professor of Archaeology	University of York

Giuseppe Andrea Ferro	Professor of Structural Engineering	Politecnico di Torino
Alexis Kallis	Student	Cyprus University of Technology

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.

From the evidence provided we found the programme to clearly comply with the requirements of this standard. We were encouraged to hear that the Coordinating Committee was willing to consider options for online and distance learning provision alongside the existing commitment to deliver the programme in English. This initiative falls directly into line with the University of Cyprus 2025 Strategy. This development would also address another aspect of that Strategy: internationalisation. To inform the programme's approach to internationalisation, we recommend a piece of intelligence gathering around competitor analysis. This will need to extend beyond the national study (recently published), to a wider international reach.

Strengths

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

Overall the programme was well tailored to constructively align theoretical and practical components in preparation for future graduate careers in the sector. The pace and progression through the degree were generally appropriate and care had been taken to allow entrants from different undergraduate programmes to acquire sufficient knowledge and skills to collaboratively engage with each other.

The cooperation with professionals from governmental bodies involved in the conservation of cultural heritage in Cyprus is a strength of the programme.

The relatively high faculty to student ratio is also a strength of the programme.

The programme is delivered by special scientific / teaching staff with professional experience in the field.

A willingness to embrace the opportunities of online/distance-learning and internationalisation of the student cohort, through programme delivery in English.

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.

We suggest the distinctiveness and unique selling propositions of the programme are clearly articulated in order to present the merits of the programme to potential applicants and other stakeholders.

We understand that the programme is transitioning to English language delivery and that this has the potential to widen the pool of potential applicants. We encourage the programme team to consider ways in which this potential can be fully realised.

We suggest that, in future periodic programme reviews, the department fully engages with all stakeholders, including full and part-time staff, administrative staff, students and industry representatives.

We noted from the Departmental organisational charts, that administration appeared separate from governance (e.g. Departmental Board) with no direct connection. Administration is central to governance, so it is encouraged that these relationships are adjusted to give greater alignment, where appropriate, with administration representation on departmental boards. It is not clear whether that is currently the case or not.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

2.2 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

2.3 Practical training

2.4 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 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.*

In both the application documentation and the evidence gained during the visit, the Committee found the programme to be compliant with the standards required.

The programme employs a variety of pedagogical methods in its design and delivery. The learning outcomes are clearly set and demonstrated across all courses. The students are engaged in their studies and contribute to the development of the programme through the feedback they provide.

The programme introduces students to modern methods of working and current technologies used within the subject area. Flexibility is provided in the form of electives and in the duration of the programme through full and part-time modes, allowing students the opportunity to complete the programme in periods up to 4 years in duration. There is evidence of good and constructive relationships between students and teaching staff. The programme is structured and delivered to allow students to apply their learning in situations analogous to the professional roles and

responsibilities that they will fulfill in the future in the broad area of historic building conservation and management.

Strengths

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

The multidisciplinary embedded in the programme is one of the key strengths of the programme. This is seen in the profiles of the teaching staff, the students and the taught content. In particular we found the Advanced Group Project to be an innovative and successful example of multidisciplinary learning which offered a highly distinctive element to the programme. This project was also central in preparing the graduates of the programme for the future professional roles in the sector.

The introduction of modern methods of working is also a strength of the programme in helping to prepare graduates for the rapidly changing technology processes and methods used within the conservation and restoration of historic buildings.

There is a strong local flavour in terms of course content and source materials. This is one of the key reasons stated by some students for selecting this over competitor courses.

The students are exposed to current research in the field and encouraged to explore relevant research. We were able to review examples of student work some of which had been published. The potential of the programme, its students and graduates to contribute to research in the field is a strength of the programme, and we noted at least one of the graduates at the student meeting was now engaged in a doctoral programme.

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.

We noted that the assessment of the Independent Study is a pass/fail assessment and therefore does not contribute to the classification of the final award. We understand that Independent Study together with the Advanced Group Project represent the elements of the programme considered to be equivalent to a dissertation. We understand the master's dissertations are normally graded and therefore we suggest that the Independent Study could usefully also be graded. This would provide students with additional summative feedback for this item of work. This change may also support students wanting to progress to PhD research, where a good mark for the dissertation can be the determining factor in funding allocations.

While we appreciate the value of the multidisciplinary group work carried out as part of the Advanced Group Project, it appears to operate most successfully when there is a good balance of students within each group offering backgrounds in Architecture, Archaeology and Civil Engineering. We recommend that every effort is made to ensure a balanced cohort so that the skills within each group for the group work are well balanced. We also noted that the survey work required in the second semester was also potentially demanding, given the limited time available in this semester. We

suggest the sites/buildings for the project are therefore suitable in their scale and complexity, or that additional time might be found to ensure the workload in this semester is consistent with the other semesters.

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 Evaluation Committee concluded that the programme of study was compliant in the area of Teaching Staff, in terms of recruitment and development, number and status, and in terms of synergies of research and teaching. The Evaluation Committee was impressed at the range of skills and expertise in evidence, the depth of knowledge, the commitment to learning and teaching across disciplines, and the research profiles and research-led teaching practices of all of the staff met on the visit. The CVs presented to the Evaluation Committee demonstrate an impressive and diverse academic community, with focus on those key areas central to the delivery and ambitions of this programme. The Evaluation Committee was also very impressed at the highly collaborative and collegial nature of the multidisciplinary Coordination Committee, a trait shared by other members of the teaching staff and reflected in the students. Throughout all of the meetings involving staff and

students, the body language was very positive suggesting that this is a very tight and highly committed group of staff. The Evaluation Committee did have a few concerns, detailed below. These concerns summarise around the perceived lack of University investment in the programme, one implication of which might be the reliance on teaching staff on short-term contracts. These arrangements may suit the HEI but not so much the individuals concerned or - potentially in the longer term - the programme.

Strengths

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

The key strengths evident from the submission and from the site visit are:

Clear commitment to research-led teaching.

Balancing of theory and practical skills and techniques.

Course content reflects a strong commitment amongst the staff to enhancing employability, with students learning to be critical thinkers, but also learning how to apply relevant methodologies that are widely used across the heritage sector.

The willingness to deliver and promote this as a highly interdisciplinary programme, in spite of the challenges that this inevitably introduces.

The willingness to embrace new approaches to teaching and learning, and not least online delivery should the programme decide to transition to distance learning/hybrid, or develop a parallel distance learning/hybrid pathway. It is noted that this approach to online/remote delivery would be aligned with the UoC 2025 Strategy.

The quality of the student work is excellent, reflecting the contribution of staff in helping them to develop the skills needed to reach these high standards.

The teaching staff are to be congratulated on keeping this programme running effectively across the period of COVID-19 lockdown.

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.

Key to maintaining and enhancing any successful programme is the continued support of and investment from the University. The core teaching staff have permanent contracts, but the course also relies on numerous staff with key/critical skills whose contracts are only short-term. There were reports in the meeting that some of these short-term contract staff were not being fully remunerated for some key elements of the course. If these staff members are central to module delivery, this recruitment and employment strategy represents additional risk. Managers are encouraged to

consider how sustainable the course would be without these individuals, should they take a permanent role elsewhere for example, and to create a strategy for mitigating the risk.

Equally, for a course like this, students would benefit from receiving teaching from professionals working across the heritage/conservation sectors, nationally and also perhaps internationally (especially if the net for student recruitment is to be cast more widely). However, we understand there is limited funding for the recruitment of external speakers to deliver teaching.

Key to the delivery of vital practical skills is the availability of high-end and up-to-date technical equipment. Yet some/much of the current equipment is now aging and in need of replacement. There is seemingly a lack of funds to allow the replacement of this key equipment. A prioritised list of needs, and urgency, would be helpful in managing the risk of losing access to vital equipment, liaising with other departments who may wish to use/share the same items.

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

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

Sub-areas

- 3.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 3.2 Student progression
- 3.3 Student recognition
- 3.4 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.

From the documentation, and from the evidence of academic staff, the Evaluation Committee found that the programme of Study was fully compliant in terms of student admission, progression, recognition and certification. The programme's purpose and scope, pathways, structure, modes of assessment and application process were all clear and appropriate to this level of study. The Committee recognised the programme as the first and only graduate programme on conservation at a public Cypriot university, and the only such multidisciplinary programme in the Greek language. From the evidence presented, and from the students we met during the visit, the quality of students has been consistently high since the first recruitment in 2017. In the meeting, we met with University admin staff. There were no departmental admin staff present, with responsibility for student

recruitment and progression. The Evaluation Committee wishes to raise three areas of concern, for improvement, listed below.

Strengths

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

Robust recruitment procedures.

A clear commitment to the programme amongst admin staff.

Excellent students, albeit small numbers.

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.

First, on a wider but nonetheless relevant issue: there will be additional challenges as the programme transitions to being taught entirely in English and aspires to recruit more widely, involving students with demands that may extend the course's current focus on local issues and materials. This may require staff to be given time for CPD, or the recruitment of additional staff to cover new areas of expertise to meet student expectations.

Second, the Committee felt that the programme would benefit from having a more coordinated and dedicated admin support, not least to cover recruitment and progression. This will become increasingly important if recruitment of students increases with the advertising of a course being delivered entirely in English. Admin support would also be essential for delivering an online or hybrid programme. This provision could also ensure better coordination of recruitment to consistent standards across departments, and therefore more likely to ensure a good balance in student numbers, this being a key factor in the success of this multidisciplinary programme.

Third, there is a concern about the comparatively low number of students recruited to the programme: 40 over 6 years. This number is close to the margins in terms of sustainability. Offering the programme in English might lead to an increase in numbers, especially if the university were to invest in marketing. The Committee encourages the University management team to consider a small investment for this purpose.

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

4. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Teaching and Learning resources
- 4.2 Physical resources
- 4.3 Human support resources
- 4.4 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.

Overall the Evaluation Committee found there was evidence in the application and in the materials supplied on the visit that demonstrated the standards in this area were met. Specifically:

On Teaching and Learning resources, students reported the availability and quality of course materials, such as textbooks, lecture notes, and supplementary readings. These notes were available both in physical and in electronic form, where lecturers uploaded their course material ahead of lectures. Support, including that offered during and in preparation for fieldwork, site visits, laboratory experiments, and in workshops significantly enhanced the student learning experience. Resources also include specialized equipment, some of which was described as 'aging' by staff in our meetings.

On Physical resources, the University offers students access to laboratories, including access to the variety of specialized equipment which they contain. The University also has an impressive library which is being updated with new material every year specific for the course as per the academic staff's request. The Evaluation Committee noted however that this new material was not necessarily being incorporated onto module reading lists. Some of these lists contain references, the youngest of which are nearly 20 years old, in a fast-evolving field of study.

On Human Support Services, although the programme does not have a designated administrator, each student enrolls on to the programme through one of the three parent departments and thus has support through the administration of these departments. Students also undertake a dissertation and have dedicated supervisors who provide guidance and expertise.

On Student support: The University provides non-academic facilities including catering, social amenities and sports facilities. The course is also tailored to cover the needs of students who have full time jobs, having most of its classes during after work hours, and those with special needs, although we were told about this during the visit. However, we understand that special needs provision is compliant with general University policy.

Strengths

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

It was clear from the comments of the students that the teaching and administrative team performed exceptionally well in response to the Covid pandemic to ensure the best possible continuity in the

students' experience during this time. This demonstrates resilience within the programme and staff in extraordinarily challenging circumstances that we wish to acknowledge.

The site visit and field work integrated within the programme are a strength of the course. The access students enjoy to the laboratories and workshop also allows for students to engage with practical work as part of their learning which was regarded as a key benefit by some of the students whom the Evaluation Committee spoke with.

The group work and culture within the programme create a learning environment that encourages student interaction and peer-to-peer learning. The result is a strong collegial community within each cohort, across discipline boundaries.

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 laboratories and workshops are under the supervision and guidance of a dedicated lab administrator who also has responsibilities in other areas. The programme could benefit with additional laboratory support to meet the demands of the role.

The programme is unique in that it is shared between three departments and two schools. We are aware that various areas of administrative support are provided centrally. We also noted that general administrative support is shared between the three departments through rotation. The unique nature of the programme appears to result in the roles and responsibilities for all forms of administrative support being less clear than for a programme which is exclusively administered through one department. As a consequence we noted that a greater than normal administrative support load was undertaken by the academic team. We suggest that the programme would benefit from the identification of an administrator who would act as the coordinating administrative support for the programme. We understand that given the size of the programme this may need to be a role undertaken in conjunction with other roles.

In the digital age, incorporating technology into teaching and learning is essential. According to students, the use of interactive online platforms, and multimedia resources greatly enhanced understanding and engagement in theoretical modules, especially during the COVID pandemic. Following the pandemic, it will be useful for these resources to be easily accessible to students to complement traditional teaching methods.

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Choose answer
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
6.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer

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.

Overall the Evaluation Committee was impressed by the programme's content, design and delivery. It is clearly an innovative programme that addresses an important area and is highly valued by its students and staff. Given the impressive attributes of the programme we wish to record our concern that any fall in recruitment could threaten the viability of the programme. The loss of this valuable programme would be highly regrettable and we therefore encourage the Coordination Committee to creatively consider all options for maintaining and ideally growing the intake to a more secure level. We hope the University offers the necessary institutional support to the Coordination Committee and the programme to guarantee its development and continued success. The various recommendations with the five sections of this report should be read in this context.

We also wished to suggest that in order to provide greater clarity and transparency with regard to the allocation of income, costs and resources associated with the programme that it may be beneficial to allocate a separate designated budget for the programme against which costs could be drawn.

We would also like to suggest the benefits of active commitment towards intelligence gathering around competitor courses and programmes in Cyprus/Greece but also beyond, as a way of strategically targeting recruitment efforts.

In conclusion the Evaluation Committee wishes to thank all those associated with the preparations for the visit and all those who took part in the visit itself. The meetings were all conducted in an open and constructive manner and greatly helped the Evaluation Committee in preparing this report. We enjoyed our meeting with the students and graduates of the programme who were highly articulate and appreciative of the programme. We are confident they will become valuable ambassadors for the programme in the years ahead. We observed a dedicated and expert team who collectively deliver an impressive programme of study and we wish it every success in the years ahead.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Alexander Wright	
John Schofield	
Giuseppe Andrea Ferro	
Alexis Kallis	

Date: 21 June 2023