

Doc. 300.3.1

Date: 24/06/2020

External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
PHILIPS UNIVERSITY
- **Town:** NICOSIA
- **School/Faculty:** LANGUAGE SCIENCES AND COMMUNICATION
- **Department:** COMPUTER SCIENCE
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

BSC COMPUTING AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (4 years full-time, 240 ECTS)

Programme 2

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

Programme 3

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

- **Department's Status:** New

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws of 2015 to 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

Due to covid-19 pandemic, the whole evaluation took place remotely and online. The site visit at the Philips University in Nicosia took place on June 24, 2020. The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) met on the 23rd of June to discuss the external assessment of the proposed new Department of Computer Science at Philips University. During the site visit, the EEC was accompanied by Natasa Kazakaïou, the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education representative.

During the site visit, the EEC met and had a series of constructive discussions with members of the governing board of the University and also with members of the teaching and administration staff who assisted in the presentation of the proposed program of studies. In particular, the EEC met with Mr Philippos Constantinou (President), Prof Dimitrios Natsopoulos (Rector), Prof Constantina Shiakallis (Vice Rector of Academic Affairs), Prof John Yfantopoulos (Research Coordinator), Prof Andreas Hadjis (Dean of School), Prof Emmanuel Yiannakoudakis (Department Chair), Mr Soteris Constantinou (IT Specialist), Prof Avgousta Kyriakidou-Zacharoudiou (Program Co-ordinator), Dr Anastasios Kouzalis (Director of HR), Dr Eleni Chrysostomidou (Director of International Relations/ Admissions Officer), Marita Teesdale (Student Affairs), Ms Christina Palikaropoulou (Student Rep), Mr Nondas Metaxas (Ex Chief-Executive Director of the Cyprus Stock Exchange) and Mr John Koutkoudakis (CFO of the EpsilonNet) amongst other participants. The EEC received a series of presentations about the university's, school's and department's vision and ambition and also about the structure, the teaching and research environment of the proposed department under evaluation. A video tour of the campus and a presentation about its resources and facilities were also provided.

During the evaluation process, the EEC had access to: a copy of the 200.1 Application for Evaluation – Accreditation – New Program of Study document and a copy of the 300.1 Application for Departmental Evaluation – New Department document. The following supplementary documents were received upon the EEC request: Annual Performance Evaluation System, Monitoring Review, Self-Assessment, Tables Academic Staff and Mentoring, The Philips University School Advisory Board, Sample of Overall Teaching Learning and Assessment Approach, IT Computer Labs presentation, Proposed New School Name, Course Evaluation Questionnaire. Philips University provided a comprehensive documentation of the program.

The EEC considered all aspects of the submitted documentation and the site visit discussions. The EEC would like to acknowledge the organizational arrangements.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
NIK BESSIS (CHAIR)	PROFESSOR AND HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE	EDGE HILL UNIVERSITY
PETER TRIANTAFILLOU	PROFESSOR AND HEAD OF DATA SCIENCE THEME	UNIVERSITY OF WARWICK
PHILIPPE BONNET	PROFESSOR	IT UNIVERSITY OF COPENHAGEN
VALENTINOS PARIZA	STUDENT	UNIVERSITY OF CYPRUS
<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas and sub-areas.*
- *Under each assessment area there are quality indicators (criteria) to be scored by the EEC on a scale from one (1) to five (5), based on the degree of compliance for the above mentioned quality indicators (criteria). The scale used is explained below:*

1 or 2:	<i>Non-compliant</i>
3:	<i>Partially compliant</i>
4 or 5:	<i>Compliant</i>

- *The EEC must justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.*
- *It is pointed out that, in the case of indicators (criteria) that cannot be applied due to the status of the Department, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the Department's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality indicator.*
- *In addition, for each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - 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 followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- *The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.*

1. Department's academic profile and orientation (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
1. Department's academic profile and orientation		
1.1 Mission and strategic planning		1 - 5
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	3
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	3
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	2
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	4
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Department's development strategies.	4
1.1.6	Stakeholders such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Department's development strategy.	4
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Department's academic development is adequate and effective.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
Overall, most criteria are satisfied, with the following exceptions:		

The mission of the program as communicated through (i) the placement of the Department within the School of Language Sciences and Communication and (ii) by the presentations made during EEC's online interaction with the Department leads to a confusion about the true department's mission and is at odds with the actual program of study.

There is a lack of a detailed strategic plan that includes milestones and risk analysis/management for the Department's growth and development.

Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.
2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

The program of study is based on a core set of modules, offering three specializations for the last two years, which is in line with international practices.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

Click to enter text.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.2 Connecting with society

1 - 5

1.2.1	The Department has effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities.	3
1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	4
1.2.3	The Department ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	4
1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	3

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.3 Development processes

1 - 5

1.3.1	Effective procedures and measures are in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure that they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach, carry out research and effectively carry out their work.	4
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1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	4
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	3
1.3.4	The funding processes for the operation of the Department and the continuous improvement of the quality of its programmes of study are adequate and transparent.	3

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Additionally, write:

- Expected number of Cypriot and international students
- Countries of origin of international students and number from each country

It is expected that most students, in the first instance, come from Cyprus and Greece; future plans include the recruitment of foreign students.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The mission of the program vis-à-vis the placement of the Department within the School of Language Sciences and Communication and the presentations made during EEC's online interaction with the Department (which emphasized Business aspects) leads to a confusion about the true department's mission and is at odds with the actual program of study.

There is a lack of a detailed strategic roadmap that includes milestones and risk analysis/management for the Department's growth and development.

The program of study is based on a core set of modules, offering three specializations for the last two years, which is in line with international practices.

The Department will be offering industrial placements for its students and has an advisory board whose members come from the society at large. These will ensure that the Department can gather all necessary information and adapt to satisfy societal challenges. However, the mechanisms through which this interaction can be beneficial for the Department is not yet made concrete enough.

More effort should be devoted towards defining plans for continuing improvement of funding and program of study.

A more concrete mechanism for creating, maintaining, and nourishing the Department's relationship with its alumni can significantly strengthen the going forward.

Strengths

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

Students' industrial placements, interactions with local industry, and advisory board members with industry and government representatives.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The EEC suggests that the Department develops concrete plans for interacting with alumni, for leveraging feedback from industry (e.g., through student placements).

A detailed roadmap for the Department's growth should be completed within the next year.

A risk analysis and management report should be completed as soon as possible (especially, given the COVID crisis).

The marketing message of the department should be made crystal-clear; alternative Schools for the Department or changing the name of the School would help clarify the mission of the Department and be more in line with international standards.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	Partially Compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	Partially Compliant
1.3 Development processes	Partially Compliant

2. Quality Assurance

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8)

Sub-areas

- 2.1 System and quality assurance strategy
- 2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
- 3: *Partially compliant*
- 4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
2. Quality Assurance		
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy		1 – 5
2.1.1	The Department has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of the Institution's strategic management.	5
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	4
2.1.3	The Department's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.	3
2.1.4	The quality assurance system adequately covers all the functions and sectors of the Department's activities:	
2.1.4.1	Teaching and learning	4
2.1.4.2	Research	4
2.1.4.3	The connection with society	3
2.1.4.4	Management and support services	3
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
Click to enter text.		

2. Quality Assurance

2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study		1 – 5
2.2.1	The responsibility for decision-making and monitoring the implementation of the programmes of study offered by the Department lies with the teaching staff.	4
2.2.2	The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Department are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	4
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective.	4
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	4
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	4
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	3
2.2.7	The Department publishes information related to the programmes of study, credit units, learning outcomes, methodology, student admission criteria, completion of studies, facilities, number of teaching staff and the expertise of teaching staff.	3
2.2.8	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	4
2.2.9	The Department flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods.	3
2.2.10	The Department systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.	4
2.2.11	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	N/A
2.2.12	The Department ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and/or international practices, particularly:	
2.2.12.1	Building facilities	4
2.2.12.2	Library	4
2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	4

	2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	5
	2.2.12.5	Academic support	4
2.2.13	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.		5
2.2.14	The Department's mechanisms, processes and infrastructure consider the needs of a diverse student population such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities.		3
2.2.15	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.		3
2.2.16	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.		N/A
2.2.17	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff, enables continuous and effective feedback to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.		N/A
2.2.18	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.		N/A
2.2.19	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.		3

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

[Click to enter text.](#)

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The EEC felt that Philips University overall policies and plans on quality assurance are generally consistent within the national framework of operation. There is a University-wide internal evaluation committee and a department council. There is a set of monitoring review indicators and a structured self-assessment report which as practices are both recommended practices under the European Standards Guidelines. The quality assurance system covers all the department's activities.

The intended learning outcomes at both program and course level specifications and the policies underpinning teaching, learning and assessment, marking and degree classification show that the provider will be using sector-recognized quality standard practices. The appeals and complaints procedure was also well explained.

The EEC could not see program/course handbooks neither samples of assignment briefs. These were under development. Course material is also under development and have not populated to the VLE. Plagiarism is detected through Turnit in and is managed via a relevant committee as part of a comprehensive procedure. Plagiarism on coding is not detected through Turnit in and it is an international concern, the program team must look for best practices used in other places.

Staff who met the EEC have a reasonable understanding of the approach to maintaining quality standards and are fully committed to applying this the once program delivery has started. They articulated the approaches to the mapping of learning outcomes against the relevant national quality framework, assessment setting and approval and the role of monitoring in maintaining standards. However, they could not articulate in a consistent way the application of the complaints procedure which highlights the need for a more comprehensive and centrally organised induction and training as part of staff development.

Admission plans are appropriate and cater for different education backgrounds.

Resources including library, IT Labs, software and classrooms are well equipped and appropriate. Welfare and generally speaking student support services were also well detailed.

Strengths

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

Quality assurance plans and processes are generally consistent within the national framework of operation.

Range of IT resources

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Staff could not articulate in a consistent way the application of the complaints procedure which highlights the need for a more comprehensive and centrally organized induction and training as part of staff development.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	Compliant
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study	Compliant

3. Administration (ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		1 – 5
3. Administration		1 – 5
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	4
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of specified procedures, in the management of the Department.	2
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	N/A
3.4	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Department's council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	4
3.5	The Department applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	2
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	N/A
3.7	The Department's council operates systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the law and / or the constitution of the Department without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	4
3.8	The manner in which the Department's council operates and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	3
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	4
3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	3

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

At present, the department is not operational and there is no administrative staff at department level.

Administrative staff is not represented in the department council.

There is a lack of clarity about mechanisms, that would guarantee the transparency of decision-making.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

Administrative functions are covered by central and department staff, in line with legislation and the department's mission. At present, central administrative functions are staffed, but there are no administrative personnel in the department. Administrative staff is not represented in the department council. Academic decisions are taken by academics, in the department council and by the department chair. There is a lack of clarity about mechanisms, that would guarantee the transparency of decision-making, and procedures for disseminating and implementing the decisions.

The department council has not yet been in session. A clear procedure is defined for handling academic misconduct but the procedure for handling complaints at the level of the council of the university does not provide any protection for plaintive.

Strengths

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

Academic decisions are taken by academics at department level, under supervision of the school and senate.

Clear procedures are defined to address potential academic misconducts.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The department is new and administrative functions at department level are not yet in place. There is a lack of clarity about procedures that could guarantee transparency and efficiency of decision-making.

The rules for dealing with complaints do not protect the plaintive (e.g., in case of sexual harassment).

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
3. Administration	Partially compliant

4. Learning and Teaching (ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Planning the programmes of study
- 4.2 Organisation of teaching

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
- 3: *Partially compliant*
- 4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.1 Planning the programmes of study		1 - 5
4.1.1	The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study.	3
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	2
4.1.3	The content of the programmes of study, the assignments and the final exams correspond to the appropriate level as indicated by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	3
4.1.4	The programmes of study are in compliance with the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	4
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
There is no evidence that external stakeholders were involved in the preparation of the BSc program. There is no forum at department level for gathering input or feedback from external stakeholders.		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.2 Organisation of teaching		1 - 5

4.2.1	The Department establishes student admission criteria for each programme, which are adhered to consistently.	4
4.2.2	Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	4
4.2.3	The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	4
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Department has regular and effective communication with their students, promoting mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship.	NAP
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	NAP
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	NAP
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	4
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	NAP

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Teaching has not started, so it is not possible to evaluate the criteria related how learning and teaching is implemented.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The department is following the university guidelines for the definition of new programmes. The planning is compliant with existing rules and frameworks. There is evidence that external stakeholders will be involved in providing case studies for courses and that the definition of the programme provides a good integration of theory and practice through group work and case studies in regular courses as well as several projects.

The EEC finds that the department does not promote a strong relationship between research and teaching, i.e., in particular young researchers should not be overburdened by teaching.

The department does not have a framework that requires more than one examiner per course assessment. There has been no teaching, so it is not possible to evaluate the implementation of the learning activities.

Strengths

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

The proposed organization of teaching is reasonable and provides good visibility to students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

There is no forum for gathering input/feedback from stakeholders.

The EEC recommends that the department ensures that young researchers are not overburdened by teaching.

The EEC recommends that the department requires more than one examiner per course assessment.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Partially Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	Partially Compliant

5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		1 - 5
5. Teaching Staff		1 - 5
5.1	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	4
5.2	The teaching staff of the Department has the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	4
5.3	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Department's programmes of study.	4
5.4	The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study.	4
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	3
5.6	The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught by teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	3
5.7	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the programme of study.	4
5.8	Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	3

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

[Click to enter text.](#)

Also, write the following:

- Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of visiting Professors
- Number of special scientists on lease services

- 2
- 6
- 0

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

There are currently 15 academic staff in which 2 are specialist staff and 6 are visiting professors. The spread of staffing base is within the acceptable limits at this point of operation.

The staffing base seems appropriate to deliver the program of study at the first year of operation. Teaching workloads will be increased due to the large number of optional subject specific courses that have to be delivered over the 4-year time period. With the proposed teaching workloads and the projected student intake (50 in year 1 raising to 100 in year 4 to the total of 280-300 students in the 4th year of operation) in mind the student/staff ratio will be manageable and healthy only up to the 3rd year of operation.

The high ratio, even within the acceptable limits, of visiting staff that is affiliated with other institutions is a risk and will cause an identity loss in representing the proposed department and university, which also limits the development of a culture belonging to the university itself.

The CVs of existing staff demonstrate sufficient evidence of appointed academic staff having prior and relevant teaching and research experience in higher education institutions and are members of professional organizations. Research expertise and publication records are relevant to the program of study.

There is a student survey which gathers student feedback and the intention is to use it as part of the self-assessment. However, there are no teaching and observation peer review procedures.

Strengths

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

Staff expertise and relevance to the program of study and department.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Lack of teaching and observation peer review procedures.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
• Teaching Staff	Compliant

- **Research**
(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
6. Research		1 - 5
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	3
6.2	The Department consistently applies internal regulations and procedures of research activity, which promote the set out research policy and ensure compliance with the regulations of research projects financing programmes.	4
6.3	The Department provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	3
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development of students' research skills.	4
6.5	The results of the teaching staff research activity are published to a satisfactory extent in international journals which work with critics, international conferences, conference proceedings, publications, etc. The Department also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	4
6.6	The Department ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	NAP
6.7	The Department provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	4
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	NAP
6.9	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the teaching staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	3
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		

Click to enter text.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

For many of the categories listed in the above table, the EEC finds that the Department's stated policies, plans, and intended future practices are in line with International Standards. However, some key questions remain, as detailed below.

Nonetheless, the EEC finds that despite plans and documentation, the reality on the ground may be different.

For example, the Department's research policy is not clear on how it fits with its stated program mission – in particular, as the latter was found to be unclear, as per findings in Section 1 of the Programmatic Evaluation.

The research policy should be accompanied with a clear plan and vision of how to move forward. How will the research output (eg academic papers) is planned to increase over the coming years. Likewise, for research income. Which are the most impactful academic fora in which the department will focus.

It is not very clear how the department plans to support new academic hires; e.g., with start-up grants to cover hiring of graduate students, purchasing equipment, etc. It is not clear how the department will support/recruit graduate students (e.g., with Scholarships for tuition and living expenses): What budget is set aside for such purposes? Where is this budget coming from?

The Department should have more clear plans for hiring/attracting new academic staff, as this is a period of great scarcity of top talent internationally. And accompany this with a risk analysis, as strong academics may not be available for hiring by the Department.

The Department should have explicit and costed internal funding budgets. Likewise, for specific goals and plans for attracting external funding. The documentation should have clarified if current external-funding levels are deemed adequate and why and how does it compare with other Departments, e.g., within Cyprus.

The EEC did not find concrete evidence of transferring know-how to the industrial sector, or otherwise societal impact of the department's research.

Finally, as most provided labs are currently based on Cloud Services, the EEC feels that this solution may not be scalable (economically viable) as the Department grows and the requirements for compute-communication-storage resources largely increases with time. The department should consider this and plan accordingly.

Strengths

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

The Department's documentation touches upon most of the issues, as would be expected by international standards (such as expectation to publish in international fora, providing adequate resources for staff and students, incorporating research into its taught program etc.)

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

A growth plan is missing. The EEC recommends that the department produces a roadmap with specific milestones with respect to the growth in terms of societal impact, knowledge and income generation. The department should also develop a research infrastructure to support the expected level of research activities.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
6. Research	Compliant

- **Resources (ESG 1.6)**

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
3: *Partially compliant*
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
7. Resources		1 - 5
7.1	The Department has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Institutional and Departmental bodies.	4
7.2	The Department follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	3
7.3	The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	NAP
7.4	The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	3
7.5	The Department carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.	1
7.6	The Department's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	NAP
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	3
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
There is no risk assessment analysis and no plans for mitigating risks.		

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The EEC finds that the department has the financial resources to get started and establish the proposed BSc program. New academic staff has been hired. There are plans to hire administrative staff. There are plans to upgrade the IT infrastructure. However, there is no risk assessment analysis and no plans for mitigating risks.

Strengths

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

New academic staff has been hired. There are plans to hire administrative staff. There are plans to upgrade the IT infrastructure.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

There is no risk assessment analysis and no plans for mitigating risks.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
7. Resources	Partially Compliant

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 Department under review may be achieved.



The EEC has found a number of strengths and particularly some of them are:

- Links to support students' industrial placements, interactions with local industry, and advisory board members with industry and government representatives
- Quality assurance plans and processes are generally consistent within the national framework of operation
- Range of IT resources
- Academic decisions are taken by academics at department level, under supervision of the school and senate
- Staff expertise is relevant to the program of study and department
- There are plans to hire administrative staff and to upgrade the IT infrastructure

The EEC has also found a number of areas for improvement, which require addressing, those of higher importance are:

- The department develops concrete plans for interacting with alumni, for leveraging feedback from industry (e.g., through student placements)
- A detailed roadmap for the Department's growth should be completed within the next year
- A risk analysis and management report should be completed as soon as possible (especially, given the COVID crisis)
- The marketing message of the department should be made crystal-clear; alternative Schools for the Department or changing the name of the School would help clarify the mission of the Department and be more in line with international standards
- The need for a more comprehensive and centrally organized induction and training as part of staff development
- The rules for dealing with complaints do not protect the plaintive (e.g., in case of sexual harassment)
- There is no forum for gathering input/feedback from stakeholders
- The department ensures that young researchers are not overburdened by teaching
- The development of a teaching and observation peer review procedure
- A growth plan is missing and as such the department produces a roadmap with specific milestones with respect to the growth in terms of societal impact, knowledge and income generation
- The department should also develop a research infrastructure to support the expected level of research activities
- The development of a risk assessment and mitigating risks plan

E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
NIK BESSIS (CHAIR)	
PETER TRIANTAFILLOU	
PHILIPPE BONNET	
VALENTINOS PARIZA	
FullName	
FullName	

Date: 24/06/2020

