

Doc. 300.3.2

Date: *Date*

Higher Education Institution's Response (Departmental)

- Higher Education Institution: **Cyprus University of Technology**
- Town: **Limassol**
- School/Faculty: **Fine and Applied Arts**
- Department: **Fine Arts**
- Programme(s) of study under evaluation
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα στην Ιστορία και Θεωρία της Τέχνης

In English:

Master of Arts [MA] in Art History and Theory

Programme 2

In Greek:

Διδακτορικό Πρόγραμμα στην Ιστορία και Θεωρία της Τέχνης

In English:

Doctor of Philosophy [PhD] in Art History and Theory

Programme 3

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

- Department's Status: **Currently Operating**



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. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the department in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.3.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

Sub-areas

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

1.3.3 The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.

1.3.3 The Department is attracting high-level students from Cyprus, but - as yet - very few from abroad. It's not clear what CUT's bigger strategy is here but it is perhaps early days in terms of international exchanges for students and staff alike. Clearly the EU+ consortium will be vital in ensuring exchanges for the department (Dublin Technical University being the key partner as the only other art school in EU+ and leading HEI in the GradCam consortium for artistic research in the Republic of Ireland.)

We discussed the importance of Erasmus+ in bringing students (and staff) into Cyprus (all levels - BA. MA. PhD). Once they have experienced study in Cyprus they are likely to return for the next Cycle of their studies. Staff exchanges create their own research opportunities and are good way of engaging like minds. We discussed short term and virtual exchanges (the Norden model of KUNO being one to look at here.) We also discussed the importance of MENA (Middle East North Africa) staff and students - creating links with MENA countries offering up the Mountain Arts Residency Centre as an important lure here. MENA representation and presence in the Department's mountain residency and in its curriculum is vital if the Department is to become the 'melting pot' of Med cultures it claims to be.

Expected **Current** number of Cypriot and international students; Countries of origin of international students and number from each country: MA - 42 [37 Cyprus + 5 Greece]; PhD - **4** **5** [Cyprus]

The hitherto low number of students outside Cyprus (and Greece) is largely due to the fact that programmes (BA and MA) are offered mostly in Greek (the current number of PhD students is 5, not 1 as given by the evaluation committee). The department agrees with the committees above suggestions for expanding its student base. At university level, there are also (currently formulated) plans for strengthening student exchanges, including, the university's membership in the European University of Technology (EUt+), which will result in the incorporation of parts of the programme curricula within a wider, pan-European programme/degree. Currently, and more specifically at departmental level, some student exchanges are in the pipeline, which will amount to creative collaborations. We are currently investigating the possibility of a bi-lingual postgraduate degree.

2. Quality Assurance

Sub-areas

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

2.2.10 The Department flexibly uses a variety of methods

2.2.10 Teaching and assessment methods in History and Theory of Art are not as varied as they should be; especially so given that the MA predominately attracts lifelong learners returning to higher education after a gap (both established art professionals and K-12 educators) in addition to recent BA graduates.

The department feels that the MA programme utilises the appropriate methods of evaluation for the various modules (in such a theoretical programme), which include a greater variety than the above comments seem to suggest. There is, however, also the risk, in the name of a too great of a variety of assessment methods, to sacrifice the level and quality of the learning process, in the programme. Nevertheless, we note that, various technological tools and platforms (e.g. Moodle, on-line teaching, electronic plagiarism tools, etc., as well as the use of audio-visual equipment in various courses) are at the staff's disposal for enhancing teaching methods and performance. We are currently evaluating the possibility of student work placements in various institutions, which will provide alternative forms of teaching and assessment.

2.2.18 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.

2.2.18 There is only one PhD student in the Department presently, so the answer is currently affirmative (4). The number of doctoral students (singular), 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. The Department's staffing resources are such that it would be wise to set limits (cap) on how many PhDs are supported at any given time. A good model here would be that pursued by art academies / technological universities in Finland and Norway where a limit of 3 PhDs is the norm (perhaps too low, but a limit rather than a target is useful nevertheless). This enables the Department to form supervisory teams (no solo supervisors) both internally and via their Erasmus connections. It also ensures that PhDs are adequately resourced and that they are treated as early career researchers who input into teaching (effectively they are early career staff).

The Committee, here, seems not to have taken into account the updated information sent to the Evaluation Agency (as well as the information contained in the presentations, on the evaluation day). There are currently four (soon to be more) members of the department involved in the PhD programme, who at present supervise five [5] students. Moreover, the department's regulations (which were submitted in great detail, in the original application documents) provide for a 3-member supervising committee (that includes the student's main supervisor), for the entire duration of a student's study. Normally, two members are departmental (or school) staff, while we always include an external member, who is directly related to the student's research area. All three members are actively involved in the student's supervision, including the various stages of the programme (Comprehensive Exam, Research Proposal Submission, Research

Application, Thesis Writing etc.). The university enforces a policy whereby there is a limit in the number of PhD students in the department, at any given moment, based on the number of staff members.

2.2.20 There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.

2.2.20 We are sure this exists; but the EEC could not find it easily. MA and PhD students need to be taught the ethics of authorship and intellectual property, so the policy here needs to be more centre stage. It should be linked to where it needs to be implemented (in the website and in the curriculum).

The University does have, in place, such a policy. Moreover, both MA and PhD students are taught and made aware of authorship ethics and intellectual property issues. Specifically, with regard to plagiarism, the policy is clearly visible in the relevant information given to students, and in the studies and library content on the university's site (see https://libguides.cut.ac.cy/citing/plagiarism_definition [in Greek], <https://library.cut.ac.cy/en/node/353> [in English]). There is also a university research ethics policy, as well as a university committee (with representatives from all faculties) on research ethics (<https://www.cut.ac.cy/university/administration/senate/senate-committees/deontologias/> [In Greek]).

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

4.1.2 Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.

4.1.2 It's not entirely clear how students and stakeholders are involved in the curriculum design and validation process. The course content doesn't reflect such involvement (e.g. there are no examples of non-academic partnership based teaching or explicit knowledge exchange). A curriculum design sprint or similar design thinking approach would need to be implemented to achieve this. The EEC are not sure if such an approach is common in Cyprus.

We will incorporate more actively the students' feedback, which they offer at the end of each semester. We will also liaise more extensively with stakeholders (museums, etc.) for their feedback, as well as explore more collaborations with relevant institutions.

4.1.3 Intended learning outcomes, 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).

4.1.3 The MA programme is compliant; the PhD programme is not. The EQF for the PhD needs to be applied to the composition of the Learning Outcomes for the whole PhD programme. Please see the Programme Evaluation Document for details.

We have provided, in our [programmatic evaluation response](#), all relevant clarifications and the evidence of all changes (which are in the process of submission to the various university bodies, for approval), regarding the PhD programme, to be implemented in September 2021.

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.

4.2.2 Credit transfer in the MA is compliant; in the PhD programme it is not. The RPL ECTS accreditation of the PhD is not correct. It's not possible to attribute any Level 7 Credits to a Level 8 PhD. This should be removed. Additionally, the EQF is clear that credits do not normally apply in the Third Cycle.¹ Removing all of the credits from the PhD programme is highly recommended. Please see the Programme Evaluation Document for details.

We have provided, in our [programmatic evaluation response](#), all relevant clarifications and the evidence of all changes (which are in the process of submission to the various university bodies, for approval), regarding the PhD programme, to be implemented in September 2021.

4.2.8 The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved

4.2.8 While assessment currently allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved, the fact that assessment methods in History and Theory of Art are not as varied as they should be means that students are being denied a range of means by which to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved (see feedback on 2.2.10). Given that the fine art department is an art school, and that art schools use a wide range of assessment methods, it would be appropriate to include a broader range of assessment methods in the MA History of Art programme.



The department feels that the MA programme utilises the appropriate methods of evaluation for the various modules (in such a theoretical programme), which include a greater variety than the above comments seem to suggest. There is, however, also the risk, in the name of a too great of a variety of assessment methods, to sacrifice the level and quality of the learning process, in the programme. Nevertheless, we note that, various technological tools and platforms (e.g. Moodle, on-line teaching, electronic plagiarism tools, etc., as well as the use of audio-visual equipment in various courses) are at the staff's disposal for enhancing teaching methods and performance. We are currently evaluating the possibility of student work placements in various institutions, which will provide alternative forms of teaching and assessment.

3. Teaching Staff

5.1 Staffing levels are not yet adequate (at the time of our visit) but this appears to have been fixed with imminent new appointments. This will rise to a 4 when the appointments begin.

The department continually strives to fill the gaps in staffing, based on the content of its programmes of study. New positions are allocated, centrally, among all departments, based on the posts approved by the State (as CUT is a publicly-funded university)

5.3 It's not clear how the Visiting Professor programme functioned during Covid (albeit it clearly ran). Did it make use of e-visits? Perhaps the online pivot can enable more virtual visits to continue in the future, thus increasing the international diversity of the BA, MA and PhD programmes?

During the past three semesters, various technological tools and platforms (eg. Moodle, on-line teaching, electronic plagiarism tools, etc., as well as the use of audiovisual equipment in various courses) have been at the staff's disposal for enhancing teaching methods and performance.

4. Research

6.1 The Department does not yet offer either an MA or PhD programme in Fine Arts that is examined by practice. The research policy of a Fine Art Department that offers instruction in artistic practice should include a PhD by practice as part of its vision; its mission should thus be formulated or updated to set out to achieve such a goal. In this sense, the Fine Art Department needs to strike a balance with the History of Art programmes (which are offered at MA and PhD level). This would be a long term ambition but, since it is strategic, it should be present now in its research policy.

The department's long[er] planning, does incorporate postgraduate programmes (at PhD and/or MFA level) that are practice-based. Currently, the department has neither the facilities nor the human resources for such an expansion. However, with the recent addition of new members of staff that are involved in the PhD studies, the programme's scope has widened to include research that incorporates, more directly, artistic creation. Such a widening of scope can also be achieved, in the medium term, with regard to the current MA programme: an increase in the members of staff would allow the offer of parallel strands, in the programme, to include more artistic oriented studies, before we are able to establish a new, practice-based programme.

6.3 The Department should ensure that the PhD students have a dedicated study space (just like a member of staff or a BA student would). The new building doesn't seem to include space that's set aside for or dedicated to PhDs. They need a dedicated space.

The university, in general, has a severe shortage of building facilities – something which is reflected in the department's spaces, as well. So far, PhD students have been accommodated in an ad hoc manner, depending on each department's available spaces. Currently, an overall, university policy has been formulated (which will be submitted to the Senate for approval, in May), so that all (full-time) PhD students are assured work space. For the moment, however, this concerns mostly office (workstation) spaces. Currently, lab spaces are available to PhDs only in connection to staff's research spaces. The Dept. of Fine Arts aims at being able, at some point, to provide PhD students with studio space, as well.

6.4 The Department seems to be able to support early career research activity (PhD, post-doc) in terms of policy and supervision but it doesn't engage enough with research training via ETNs and ITNs. In particular, it should engage with GRADCAM via its consortium partnership with TU Dublin in Ireland. Moreover, it isn't clear how it supports PhDs from a broader range of backgrounds. The current response to this question is inadequate (that the cohort are professionals so this is not an issue!) There needs to be a clear strategy for widening participation in the PhD programme and a very clear system of scholarship support and ongoing financial support for training provision. It is not entirely clear what sort of transparent financial support is offered; is this support means-tested? Please clarify this publicly.

Admittedly, the resources for financial support of PhD students are limited. There are, however, opportunities for scholarships (administered centrally, by the university), as well as employment of PhD students as either adjunct faculty ("special scientists", in the BA programme) or as student assistants. In terms of research training, we aim at establishing a Doctoral Training Network / International Training Network, as well as introducing Training Needs Assessment, and signpost Level 8 Erasmus opportunities.

6.7 Vis a vis research ethics; it's not obvious how this is managed. Research ethics need to be taught at every stage and every Level of all programmes (BA, MA, PhD) since Fine Art students conduct research with human subjects and/or non-human animals throughout their studies (not the case in all academic subjects). Research ethics is actually very poorly understood in Fine Art programmes and is seldomly formally taught due to the prevalence of the 'Aesthetic Alibi' (Jay 1992). Founding a new Fine Art Department is a perfect opportunity to rectify this misonomner by integrating research ethics into every level of the curriculum.

Ethical approval can be made at a course level (most taught courses in BA and MA studies should support pre-approval of their assignments). This “blanket consent” approach is common. Specific ethical review has to be carried out in research projects at BA, MA and PhD level where students, individually, have good reason to work with human subjects and/or non-human animals.

There is a university research ethics committee, with representatives from all faculties (<https://www.cut.ac.cy/university/administration/senate/senate-committees/deontologias/> [In Greek]), which has recently set up a number of policies, regarding: a) Practice and Ethics for Empirical Research, b) Policy for Internet Research Dissemination, c) Policy for Dealing with Complaints by Participants in Research. All three policies were approved, by the University Senate, on April 7, 2021, and will be published in May. There are also, published on the university’s site, documents on (among others): a) Good Research Practice Guidelines (https://www.cut.ac.cy/digitalAssets/438/438980_1Good_research_guidelines.pdf), b) Good Research Practice Principles (https://www.cut.ac.cy/digitalAssets/438/438980_1Principles.pdf), c) CMA Code of Ethics (https://www.cut.ac.cy/digitalAssets/438/438980_1CMA.pdf). At Fine Arts departmental level, students in all programmes (BA, MA and PhD) are taught and/or made aware of (issues of) research ethics; moreover, we are in the process of incorporating ethics approval for all research projects that involve contact with human subjects and/or non-human animals.

B. Conclusions and final remarks

As noted above, the department does not yet offer either an MA or PhD programme in Fine Arts that is examined by practice. Establishing both - to run alongside the existing MA and PhD - should be an aim since there are no MA or PhD programmes that support artistic practice in the Republic. The lack of MA and PhD programmes for fine artists in Cyprus is an issue since it disadvantages artist-scholars employed as academic faculty within Higher Education and forces them to study abroad (something that is completely impractical for graduate students due to their family and caring commitments). Increasingly artist-scholar faculty have acquired PhDs through artistic research routes in order to be able to take part in larger funding bids. It's also becoming Fine Art PhDs have existed since the early 1990s - so this is long overdue.

The balance between the Fine Art Department is - understandably - uneven for now (BA is practice-based, MA and PhD are art historical). The balance will emerge over time as the BA grows and develops. Long-term, achieving this balance would be a worthwhile goal for the Department.

As noted above, the department's long[er] planning, does incorporate postgraduate programmes (at PhD and/or MFA level) that are practice-based. Currently, the department has neither the facilities nor the human resources for such an expansion. However, with the recent addition of new members of staff that are involved in the PhD studies, the programme's scope has widened to include research that incorporates, more directly, artistic creation. Such a widening of scope can also be achieved, in the medium term, with regard to the current MA programme: an increase in the members of staff would allow the offer of parallel strands, in the programme, to include more artistic oriented studies, before we are able to establish a new, practice-based programme. We are currently investigating the possibility of a practice-based, bi-lingual postgraduate degree.



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	

Date: [Click to enter date](#)

