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Date: 19/06/2023

External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Nicosia
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Social Sciences and Engineering
- **Department:** Engineering
- **Department's Status:** Currently Operating

- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation:**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Oil and Gas Engineering (4 years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Science)

Programme 2

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Oil, Gas and Energy Engineering (1.5 years, 90 ECTS, Master of Science)

Programme 3

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Oil, Gas and Energy Engineering (3 years, 180 ECTS, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD))

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].

Department’s programmes (to be filled by the CYQAA officer and verified by the EEC):

DEPARTMENT	PROGRAMMES OF STUDY
Department of Engineering	
	Oil and Gas Engineering (4 years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Science)
	Oil, Gas and Energy Engineering (1.5 years, 90 ECTS, Master of Science)
	Oil, Gas and Energy Engineering (3 -8 years, 180 ECTS, Doctor of Philosophy (PhD))

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

Following the invitation by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA), the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) had the opportunity to evaluate the Department of Engineering at the University of Nicosia.

The EEC consisted of three academics and a student representative: the Chair of the Committee, Professor Ida Fabricius (Technical University of Denmark), the members Associate Professor Roozbeh Rafati (University of Aberdeen) and Associate Professor Christos Kolympiris (University of Warwick), and the student representative Mr. Panagiotis Chrysanthou (University of Cyprus).

The evaluation of the department took place at the University of Nicosia premises on the 15th and 16th of June 2023. Prior to the site visit, as well as during the visit, the EEC was provided with comprehensive documents and copies of presentations in PowerPoint format. The EEC met with the senior management team, academic faculty, administrative and other support staff. Specifically, the EEC met, among others, with Prof. Philippos Pouyioutas, Prof. Panayiotis Angelides, Prof. Constantinos Mavromoustakis, Dr. George Gregoriou, Dr. Stelios Neophytou, Dr. Constantinos Hadjistassou, Dr. Ernestos Sarris, Dr. Panayiotis Polycarpou, Dr. Elias Yfantis, Dr. Andreas Michaelides, Dr. Ioannis Kyriakides, Mr. Christos Theocleous, Ms. Mina Charalambous, Ms. Maria Panayiotou and Mr. Lakis Agathokleous. The EEC also met with students of the department in a separate session. The students were at the undergraduate, Master's and PhD level.

During the sessions, the EEC was presented with information about the university, the department, as well as some of the programs that the department offers. Following the presentations, the EEC was offered the opportunity to ask questions and gather further information through a Q&A session. The EEC was also offered a tour of the facilities including the laboratories and it was presented with an online recorded lecture as an example of its teaching approach.

The EEC would like to express its gratitude to Mr. Avramis Despotis, the CYQAA coordinator, for the efficient management of the process and for the preparation for the evaluation days. We also very much appreciate the hospitality of the department of Engineering, the welcoming attitude and the willingness to answer questions and provide additional material when asked.

The EEC reviewed and examined the reports and materials regarding the department. As we detail below, the EEC find that the department operates in compliance or in partial compliance with the stated criteria and standards. The EEC offers suggestions below to further strengthen the department. In general EEC has a very positive assessment of the department.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Ida Fabricius	Professor	Technical University of Denmark
Roozbeh Rafati	Associate Professor	University of Aberdeen
Christos Kolympiris	Associate Professor	University of Warwick
Panagiotis Chrysanthou	BCs Graduate	University of Cyprus

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report refers to the Department as a whole (programmes offered, teaching staff, administrative staff, infrastructure, resources, etc.).*
- *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:	Non-compliant
3:	Partially compliant
4 or 5:	Compliant

- *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 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.***
- *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 (including SWOT analysis)**
- 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 (including SWOT analysis)		1 – 5
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	5
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	5
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	5
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	5
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.	5

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.	5
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>The department has a clear mission statement which is communicated openly. The same holds for the overall strategy. The faculty appear to contribute to it and for their feedback to be accounted for but such contributions can be made in a more formal, explicit, way.</p> <p>Additionally, provide information on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 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). <p>The programmes of study provide a coherent set from undergraduate through to PhD in the Department. Modules are gradually becoming more technical and closer to the knowledge frontier, a consistent group of faculty members teaches the module and overall there appears to be compatibility among programmes. Remaining departments of the school of Engineering, where the focal department belongs, also appear compatible.</p> <p>Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.</p> <p>Click to enter text.</p>		
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.	5
1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	5
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.	5
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>The department engages in a number of activities that build bridges with the broader society including articles in the popular press, strong collaboration with industry and participation in events. The programs that the department provides address recent job</p>		

demands and the very high record of employability among its graduates speaks to that effect. The department is advised to document its impact on society in a consistent and measurable way.

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
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	5
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	4
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.

Faculty members are well qualified and the fact that there is a relatively low turnaround among faculty is an indication that the department offers an environment that the faculty members appreciate. The EEC notes that the current teaching load is rather on the heavy side and this may discourage promising candidates to apply. The teaching remission scheme is a positive step to address the issue and the EEC encourages further effort towards that end. Also, the EEC commends the university, and the department more specifically for the provision of different forms of funding opportunities for faculty including seed funding and publication-based bonuses. That said, funding for larger investments is a point of attention as the space for laboratories is limited and this stands in the way of further development for faculty and students alike.

Regarding student attraction, the department appears to rely on university wide-efforts to promote the university and local and international networks. The EEC notes that there is space for improvement especially on the former as the funds meant to promote the programmes of the department of Engineering can be increased.

Additionally, write:

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

Using data on enrollment over the last 5 years the department admits per year, on average, 22 undergraduate students, 8 graduate students and 1 or 2 doctoral students. The department aspires to grow these numbers by 30 percent which would translate to 29 undergraduate, 10 graduate and more than 2 doctoral students. The student

population is rather diverse in terms of country of origin where nearly half of the students are from Cyprus and the remaining from abroad with Russian, Lebanese, Greeks and Camerouns heading that category. Other countries in Africa are also represented among the student population.

Findings

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

The Department functions well with teaching and research activities being well organized and communicated to faculty. The mission and the strategy of the department are aligned with those of the University and in broad strokes the EEC assess the department positively.

Space limitations for laboratories are a point that needs attention for multiple reasons including safety, potential to grow and enrich research and practice and others.

Faculty appear collegial and teaching duties appear balanced across faculty with teaching duties matching faculty research and expertise. The programmes are generally well planned and indeed build on each other from undergraduate level up to the PhD. Teaching loads can become somewhere lighter and the teaching reduction plan is a promising step to address that issue. The EEC appreciates the provision of different forms of funding available to support research. Engagement with society such as participation in local events and the engineering summer school is strong but there is some space for improvement. Involvement with industry works well within the boundaries of the relatively limited local market.

Strengths

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

1. Efforts to promote research via publication bonuses and other means.
2. Matching of teaching with faculty expertise and qualifications.
3. Realistic ambition level fit to the resources of the university and its boundaries as a private university relying on tuition fees and not on government funding.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. Space limitations for laboratories. This is particularly important for a number of reasons prime among them being that doctoral students do not have dedicated space for their research. Also, having a safe and designated space for chemical storage is highly recommended.
2. Teaching load can become lighter for faculty. A potential way to do that is via the introduction of Teaching Assistants or recruitment of new full time/part time academics.

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	Compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	Compliant
1.3 Development processes	Compliant

2. Quality Assurance

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

Sub-areas

- 1.1 System and quality assurance strategy
- 1.2 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.	4
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	5
2.1.4.2	Research	5
2.1.4.3	The connection with society	5
2.1.4.4	Management and support services	5
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	5

2.1.6 Students' evaluation and feedback

5

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

The department has put in place a number of committees meant to provide quality assurance. These committees appear to work efficiently with rules and regulations being clearly communicated to students and faculty. The quality assurance approach follows the US system which relies on internal faculty members for quality assurance. A potentially promising approach to strengthen the quality assurance process is to introduce external examiners. External examiners are faculty from other universities, which could be from Cyprus or abroad, who are tasked with quality assurance checks including scrutineering exams, checking consistency between modules, reviewing alignment between learning goals and taught material and the like.

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.	5
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, which have been presented and discussed.	5
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.	5
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	5
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.	5
2.2.8	Names and position of the teaching staff of each programme are published and easily accessible.	5

2.2.9	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	5
2.2.10	The Department flexibly uses a variety of teaching methods.	5
2.2.11	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.	5
2.2.12	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	5
2.2.13	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	5
2.2.12.2	Library	4
2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	3
2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	3
2.2.12.5	Academic support	5
2.2.14	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.	5
2.2.15	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.	5
2.2.16	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.	5
2.2.17	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.	4
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.	4
2.2.19	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.	5
2.2.20	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.	5

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

The main area of concern is the rather limited laboratory space available to the department. Also, laboratory housekeeping and safety signs were rather poor and need further attention.

This is a boundary for the growth of research, for the development of doctoral students and for the efficiency of teaching. Along the same lines, safety protocols must be developed and followed closely. The fact that the labs are in a different location from the faculty offices presents an additional, lesser, concern as this adds logistical and transportation complications. The library appears to run well but given its space there is the potential to become crowded when semesters are in full swing.

Findings

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

Clearly stated and communicated quality assurance processes are in place but there is space for improvement especially when it comes to establishing and following safety protocols.

Introducing external examiners in the quality assurance process would be a very strong addition as the moment that process relies only on internal faculty members. External members can examine the processes with a fresh eye, bring in new ideas and likely be less prone to potential biases that can come along when quality process lack an outsider's perspective.

Strengths

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

Specific protocols and dedicated committees are in place in charge of quality assurance.

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 strongly recommends the introduction of external examiners as part of the quality assurance process.

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		
3. Administration		1 - 5
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	5
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.	5
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	5
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.	5
3.5	The Department applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	5
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	5
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.	5
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.	5
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	5
3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	5

3.11 Internationalization of the Department and external collaborations. 5

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

The EEC notes strong administrative support offered to faculty and students and the department is fully compliant regarding administration.

Findings

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

The Department complies with the administrative process set by the university which are clear, and follow standard practices.

Administrators are committed to offering strong support and may go well and beyond formal duties when there is a need. The fact that members of the admin support team are employed at the department for a number of years is a strong indication of a robust programme.

Plagiarism and similar practices are becoming more of a concern in the era of significant advances in Artificial intelligence and this is an issue to be dealt with carefully from all universities globally including the department of Engineering at the University of Nicosia.

The Department has a certain degree of autonomy in setting its mission, but many funding decisions lie at the university level and this is a limitation in terms of what the department can do in practice. For example, lab space limitations, which are arguably the main point of attention, can be dealt with only centrally.

Strengths

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

1. Committed and experienced administrative support.
2. Clear protocols put in place.
3. Administrative team has worked together at the department for a number of years.

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 finds the administrative component of the department to operate at the highest possible level.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
3. Administration	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.	5
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	5
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).	5
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.	5
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
The department reviews its programmes regularly, consults with stakeholders and the EEC found the programmes of study to be at least on par with comparable programmes abroad.		
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.	5
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.	5
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.	5
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	5
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	5
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	5
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	5

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

The small cohorts of most programmes, the clear protocols in place for quality control, and the positive attitude of instructors when it comes to mentoring even beyond class hours contribute positively to a proper organization of teaching and student-centered learning.

Findings

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

The EEC found the department to operate at a high level when it comes to learning and teaching.

There are protocols in place and dedicated personnel for student welfare, career support and pastoral care. Each student is also allocated a personal tutor and this is another layer of student support.

Faculty teach on modules they have expertise on and the programmes are structured in a way that minimizes overlap between modules. Indeed, latter modules build on early modules and students are progressively exposed to more challenging material.

Learning and teaching are student centered and this manifests in many ways including the following. The instructors have an open-door policy and the small cohorts allow them to monitor

student progress regularly. Classrooms are of adequate size but there is significant space for improvement when it comes to laboratory facilities. Student representatives participate in quality assurance committees and marking criteria are clear and communicated early in the term. The programmes offered by the department also offer practical training such as the internship of the Bachelor's programme.

The doctoral programme is rather small with 1 or 2 intakes per year and this is a point of concern as such a small cohort is bound to generate small, if any, knowledge spillovers within its members.

Strengths

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

1. Faculty teach on modules linked to their areas of expertise.
2. Open door policy for students.
3. Student representatives in quality assurance committees.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. Laboratory space.
2. While the programmes are organized in a coherent manner, it would help to also receive more feedback from the outside likely in the form of external examiners. This is a strong recommendation from the EEC as it noted that the delivery of some modules may not be following best practices including overly long collection of crowded slides. Having an external examiner would likely minimize the frequency of such cases.
3. The doctoral programme needs to grow so that students have the opportunity to learn from each other.

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	Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	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.	5
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.	5
5.3	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Department's programmes of study.	N/A
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.	5
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	5
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.	5
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.	5
5.8	Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	5

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

The EEC finds that the teaching staff is highly qualified and the small cohorts allow for very favorable teacher student ratios. Permanent and visiting staff are on a good balance too.

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

The department hosts 16 research teaching staff members, 1 special teaching staff member, 16 research teaching staff members from other departments of the University (Mathematics, Computer Science, Architecture), 23 Adjunct Faculty (industry, research centres, partner institutions) and 5 Research teaching staff members teaching free electives such as languages, business and economics.

Findings

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

The teaching staff are highly qualified and are selected carefully. Teaching is provided by 16 research teaching staff members, 1 special teaching staff member, 16 research teaching staff members from other departments of the University (Mathematics, Computer Science, Architecture), 23 Adjunct Faculty (industry, research centres, partner institutions) and 5 Research teaching staff members teaching free electives such as languages, business and economics.

The EEC find the teaching – support faculty numbers to be adequate to fully support the department's programmes and to offer a good teacher – student ratio. Teaching staff employ interactive teaching methods and the fact that they also engage in research is a plus as they bring, to the degree possible, their research into teaching.

Gender and nationality diversity among faculty can be improved significantly to match the international and gender diverse student population of the department and the university more broadly.

Strengths

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

1. Faculty bring their research into teaching
2. Faculty teach on areas of their expertise
3. Highly qualified faculty members

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. The EEC strongly recommends to the department to engage in targeted practices meant to improve diversity, gender and nationality, among its permanent and part-time faculty. These may include facilities for child care as a means to attract qualified female candidates, international recruiting campaigns, provisions for couple hiring and the like. Such efforts are unlikely to yield drastic results in the short run but are very likely to pay off in the medium and long run.
2. The EEC also recommends to offer more and more frequent training programs for teaching to ensure that faculty are up to date with the latest developments and methods in teaching delivery.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
Teaching staff number, adequacy and suitability	Compliant
Teaching staff recruitment and development	Partially Compliant
Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

6. 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.	5
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.	5
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.	5
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.	5

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.	5
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	4
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.	5

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

The EEC notes that the department faculty engage in research activities, has developed mechanisms to promote and sustain research and overall offers an environment that is conducive to research. The main point of attention is the relatively limited laboratory space. This is a significant bottleneck regarding research not only for faculty but also for students at all levels, particularly PhDs.

Findings

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

The department faculty engage in research in line with the University mission and regulations and the associated evaluation criteria for faculty comprising research, teaching and service.

The increase in the rate of publications over time is a strong indication of the research efforts among faculty. Importantly, the majority of those publications appear in leading outlets as proxied by Q1 publications in the SCOPUS database (e.g., 85 percent of SCOPUS-indexed publications in the Engineering department in 2022 are in the Q1 quartile). Indeed, by and large, faculty members have good research records. Faculty members also serve as journal editors and evaluation experts outside the university, participate in and organize scientific conferences and have attracted research funding at noteworthy levels. The EEC has also noted that faculty members have international collaborations both with industry and academia.

The department offers teaching reduction for faculty attracting research funds and importantly has devised a number of schemes to provide research funding including the yearly research budget, publication bonuses and seed funding distributed on a competitive basis. All these initiatives are much appreciated by the EEC.

Research is an integral part of promotion criteria which are communicated clearly to faculty members.

As noted above, limited lab availability is the largest challenge for the department and that scarcity can impact research performance and growth negatively.

Strengths

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

1. Different internal funding schemes available to faculty.
2. Faculty's research is of international standing with a focus on publishing on leading outlets. The publications records of the faculty are at least comparable to other departments in Cyprus and abroad.
3. Teaching remission available for faculty attracting external research funds.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. The EEC encourages the Department to consider mechanisms to support the faculty members in proposal writing. For example, faculty with recent experience in attracting funds may be invited to offer seminars or the department may set aside a budget specifically for professional proposal writing.
2. The internal funding opportunities are very welcome by the EEC and seem to be working well. But, they are not sufficient to launch larger and more ambitious projects.
3. Limited lab space and housekeeping is the main point of attention when it comes to growth of research.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
Research mechanisms and regulations	Compliant
External and internal funding	Partially Compliant
Motives for research	Compliant
Publications	Compliant

7. 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		1 - 5
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.	5
7.3	The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	4
7.4	The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	4
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.	5
7.6	The Department's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	4
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	4

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

The available resources seem to be enough to allow the department to continue operating at a good level but more needs to be done for growth. Donations do not appear to constitute a significant income source and there might be an opportunity there as an income source next to tuition fees.

Findings

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

The department receives funding from the university and the EEC did not note any major deficiencies when the benchmark is to continue operating at the current (good) level.

Deficiencies exist if the ambition is to grow as internal funding is typically not enough for larger projects and limited lab space is the outcome of resource scarcity. The faculty and administration recognize the issue and this is an important first step but significant investments are needed to address it fully.

Strengths

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

1. There seems to be good communication between the department and the central university.
2. The department owns a number of valuable and resource – demanding state of the art pieces of equipment and there appears to be a steady flow of acquisition of such equipment.
3. The department acknowledges limitations when it comes to funding.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1. The EEC recommends looking into donations carefully as an alternative source of income. The department operates for a number of years and this helps in starting to develop the critical mass required for donation efforts to yield meaningful results.
2. Internal resources can grow to become more fit even for larger research projects.
3. More resources must be devoted towards the promotion of programs offered by the department.
4. To the degree possible, efforts must be made to improve lab availability.
5. Fraction of the funding related to the oil and gas related research projects can be improved

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
7. Resources	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 found the department of Engineering at the University of Nicosia to be compliant in most the evaluation criteria and partially compliant in a handful of criteria. This positive evaluation is a clear indication of the EEC's favorable assessment of the department in terms of overall academic profile, quality assurance policies and administration, student-centered learning, faculty, research and resources.

As we have detailed in the sections above, the department hosts a strong cohort of faculty members, has a clear mission, engages strongly in research and offers a good teaching and learning environment from the undergraduate up to the doctoral level. Quality assurance protocols are in place and implemented clearly and administrative support is at high levels. The administration promotes research and is aware of its strengths and limitations.

The main areas where the EEC suggests improvements to further strengthen the department are the following:

1. Lab space is limited and housekeeping was rather poor. This has significant implications for, among others, lab safety, research endeavors and doctoral training.
2. The student population of the department and the general university is diverse in terms of gender and nationality. This is a positive fact. The EEC notes that such diversity is not present among the faculty at the department of engineering and strongly recommends for the department and the university to craft strategies to remedy this imbalance between the diversity of the faculty and the student population.
3. Quality assurance as well as learning and teaching can be improved if the department sets in place external examiners who will be involved in quality assurance primarily with regards to teaching. Indeed, the EEC strongly recommends working with carefully selected external examiners.
4. The doctoral programme is rather small and the EEC recommends to grow it considerably to reach a critical mass so that there is learning between doctoral candidates. Growing the programme would require more lab space and as such this is to be taken into account.

In summary of the assessment, EEC finds the department to operate at a very good level. There are also areas that can be developed further, discussed above, and in EEC's estimation such improvements are within reach either in the short run or in the medium and long run.

The EEC would like to thank all involved in the Department of Engineering at the University of Nicosia for the high engagement throughout the evaluation process - and for providing a rich set of supporting documents and videos before and during the site visit.

Finally, we would like to express our gratitude to Mr. Avramis Despotis for organising and facilitating the evaluation process.

E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Ida Lykke Fabricius	
Roozbeh Rafati	
Christos Kolympiris	
Panagiotis Chrysanthou	

Date: 19/06/2023