

Doc. 300.3.1

Date: 27.4.2021

# External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:** University of Nicosia
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** Faculty of Sciences and Engineering
- **Department:** Department of Computer Science
- **Department's Status:** Choose status

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

### Programme 1

**In Greek:** Πληροφορική (4 χρόνια, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

**In English:** Computer Science (4 academic years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor(BSc))

### Programme 2

**In Greek:** Πληροφορική (1.5 χρόνια, 90 ECTS, Μεταπτυχιακό) με κατευθύνσεις σε

**In English:** Computer Science (1.5 academic years, 90 ECTS, Master (MSc))

### Programme 3

**In Greek:** Διδακτορικό στην Πληροφορική (3 χρόνια, 180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό)

**In English:** Computer Science (3 academic years, 180 ECTS, Doctorate (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 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].**



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

DEPARTMENT	PROGRAMMES OF STUDY
Department of Computer Science	Computer Science BSc
	Computer Science MSc
	Computer Science PhD
	Computer Science MSc Distance learning

## A. Introduction

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

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) reviewed and examined the accreditation report and materials provided by the University of Nicosia pertaining to the department of Computer Science and its four-degree programs. The EEC evaluated the department and three of its programs that had not been previously evaluated and accredited: the BSc, MSc and PhD programs in Computer Science. The previously accredited distance learning-based MSc in Computer Science was not evaluated by the EEC; however, its material was examined in the evaluation. The committee had a preliminary remote meeting on 2.4.2021 to discuss the evaluation process and the two-day site visit held on 8-4.4.2021. The EEC work was facilitated by digital collaborative tools for preparing for the site visit and the writing of the evaluation reports.

The EEC was presented detailed information about the department and the degree programs. The committee met university, school and department leadership and met professors, teachers and current and past students of the programs. The EEC received answers for questions before and during the site visit that complemented the information provided in the accreditation materials. A majority of the open issues were addressed during the discussions.

Based on the examination and evaluation of the accreditation materials and the remote site visit, the EEC concludes that the required standards are met. The present assessment report describes how the standards are met and provides recommendations and suggestions for improving the department and three evaluated programs.

## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Sasu Tarkoma (chair)	Professor, Head of Department	University of Helsinki, Finland
Nik Bessis	Professor, Head of Department	Edge Hill University, UK
Giuseppe Di Fatta	Professor, Head of Department	University of Reading, UK
Michalis Michael	Student member	Public 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		
<b>1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	4
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	4
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	4
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.

[Click to enter text.](#)

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 study programs form a coherent whole. There is no overlap of modules between the BSc and MSc programs.

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.	4
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.	4

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

[Click to enter text.](#)

## 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.	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.	4

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

[Click to enter text.](#)

Additionally, write:

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

Most students are Cypriot across the BSc and MSc programs (BSc: 68% and MSc: 58% in 2018-2019). In addition, in the BSc program many students come from Greece (18% in 2018-2019). The PhD program is international with students from Greece (40%), Iraq (20%), Iran (20%), and Lebanon (20%) (2018-2019). The BSc program has a total of 108 students, the MSc program 14 students, and the PhD program 5 students (2018-2019).

### Findings

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

The department has a clearly formulated mission statement that aspires to educate experts for a wide variety of careers with education based on research and the broader community with essential computer science skills. The department has a clear process for strategic planning that follows an integrative annual cycle. The planning is monitored and connected with the departmental Quality Assurance process. The strategic plan is presented to the department and the final plan is a public document placed on the department's web site. The strategic goals are divided into three pillars with initiatives and success factors.

The department is led by the Head and it is governed by the department Council helped by various departmental committees. The Associate Head and Program Coordinators are responsible for the degree programs in collaboration with the course leaders. The operations of the department are grounded on the internal regulations of the University of Nicosia as well as the university decrees in Cyprus.

The university advocates student-centered learning. The Centre for Research and Counselling Services (KESY) provides individualized psychological support to students that face personal challenges. Academic counselling is provided to students by the department. The Student Success Centre provides tutorial services and workshops. The Student Affairs department helps students with accommodation, arrival and career matters. The Career & Employability Office provides students and alumni relevant career information. The university organizes the annual Cyprus Career Expo. The Industry Liaison Office provides internship opportunities with the industry. A number of seminars and workshops are organized for students and alumni.

### Strengths

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

The university and department have active student performance and wellbeing monitoring and support services available. Students' progress given the learning outcomes is continuously monitored with different instruments, such as exams, quizzes, tests, projects, case studies. Students receive proactive and constructive feedback on their progress.

The department advocates connecting research activities and findings with education. Students are reported to be active in research projects resulting in articles co-authored with students.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Examination of the three year average of student admittance and graduation numbers for the MSc and PhD programs indicate that the programs are operating as expected; however, the number of graduations with respect to the number of admitted students is low. Many of the students are working at the same time that explains why the completion of degrees can take more time than anticipated. The department is encouraged to analyse course and degree completion in more detail and mitigate any identified bottlenecks.

The Computer Centre of the university has laboratories with modern computers that are updated every two years and a design lab with 3D printer and traditional printers. The university has its own grid infrastructure. The virtual learning environment consists of MOODLE and LAMS. The computer laboratories appear adequate for the teaching purposes; however, the infrastructure could be more comprehensive for state of the art research activities. Mobile computing, cloud etc. would require dedicated lab infrastructure for education and research.

The EEC recommends extending the size and extent of the international university network.

**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

- 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.	4
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	4
2.1.4.2	Research	4
2.1.4.3	The connection with society	4
2.1.4.4	Management and support services	4
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	4
2.1.6	Students' evaluation and feedback	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, which have been presented and discussed.	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.	4
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.	4
2.2.8	Names and position of the teaching staff of each programme are published and easily accessible.	4
2.2.9	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	4
2.2.10	The Department flexibly uses a variety of teaching methods.	4
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.	4

2.2.12	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	4
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	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	4
2.2.12.5	Academic support	4
2.2.14	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.	4
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.	4
2.2.16	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.	4
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.	4
2.2.20	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.	4

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 department has a clear process for strategic planning that follows an integrative annual cycle. The planning is monitored and connected with the departmental Quality Assurance process. The strategic plan is presented to the department and the final plan is a public document placed on the department's web site. The strategic goals are divided into three pillars with initiatives and success factors.

The university has an established process for introducing, monitoring and evaluating a new program of study. Programmes of study can be revised through an internal program evaluation process.

The university advocates student-centered learning. The Centre for Research and Counselling Services (KESY) provides individualized psychological support to students that face personal challenges. Academic counselling is provided to students by the department. The Student Success Centre provides tutorial services and workshops. The Student Affairs department helps students with accommodation, arrival and career matters. The Career & Employability Office provides students and alumni relevant career information. The university organizes the annual Cyprus Career Expo. The Industry Liaison Office provides internship opportunities with the industry. A number of seminars and workshops are organized for students and alumni.

The Student Services Committee examines student complaints and handles them according to the guidelines and processes. The Research & Innovation Office and the Finance Office assists faculty in the acquisition and management of funded projects. The university has a research ethics committee that processes and approves research proposals for which ethical permission is required.

The university has a clear process for career advancement through ranking/promotion committees. Pedagogical training and support is available for staff.

The university and department have adequate processes for detecting and mitigating cheating and plagiarism. The faculty use the TURNITIN tool for plagiarism checking.

The department reports industry collaboration in terms of a summer school, cyber-security standardization and collaboration with the Ministry of Education, CYTA and Cyprus Computer relating to a game development competition.

### **Strengths**

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

The BSc and MSc programs are given mostly by permanent personnel and only a few non-permanent teachers support the programmes. All faculty members hold doctoral degrees in the modules they teach.

The department advocates connecting research activities and findings with education. Students are reported to be active in research projects resulting in articles co-authored with students.

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

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



The graduation statistics indicate delays in the completion of BSc and MSc degrees. The EEC recommends to develop the QA mechanism to include systematic degree program analysis that can reveal possible bottlenecks for timely course and degree completion.

The department's SWOT report indicates that bureaucracy as a weakness. The department is recommended to consider streamlining the processes.

The small Faculty size can be an advantage in terms of collaborations and community spirit. The EEC recommends to develop department level activities to support the computer science community at the university including extra-curricular activities, and connect the faculty members with students.

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		
<b>3. Administration</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
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.	4
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	4
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.	4
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	4
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.	4
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.	4

3.11 Internalization of the Department and external collaborations.

4

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 department management and administration services are effectively structured with a number of committees and individual roles supporting the Head of Department. These include: the Department Council, the Strategic Plan Design Committee, the Associate Head, the Program Coordinators and the Course Leaders. The department has a clear and transparent allocation of internal administrative duties and roles. In particular, the department's Council has 19 members and includes all FT staff and 3 students and is responsible to review and approve all major decisions. The Strategic Plan Design Committee consists of some selected members and provides a strategic orientation for the department.

The processes for the management, monitoring, evaluation, revision, as well as the introduction of programmes are in line with the Bologna Process Declaration, as clearly indicated in the documentation. ECTS credits are consistently associated with the learning activities and outcomes of students throughout the programmes.

The University administration services efficiently support the departmental activities. For example, the Research & Innovation Office provides support to researchers for the preparation and submission of research grant proposals.

**Strengths**

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

Although many services to the students are available online, direct support is also provided in person. For example, students can use the online platform to register, but they are encouraged to come in person to discuss their choices, achieving a better student experience.

**Areas of improvement and recommendations**

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

None suggested.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
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		
<b>4.1 Planning the programmes of study</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
4.1.1	The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study.	4
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	4
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
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.		
Better communication is required to ensure students are aware of the policies, i.e., complaints and appeals process.		
4. Learning and Teaching		
<b>4.2 Organisation of teaching</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>

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.	4
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	4
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	4
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.	4
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p><a href="#">Click to enter text.</a></p>		

### **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 fully compliant with existing rules and frameworks. There is some evidence that external stakeholders are involved in delivering guest talks, providing case scenarios for courses and that the definition of the programme provides a good integration of theory and practice through hackathons, group work and case studies in regular courses as well as several projects.

The EEC finds that the intended learning outcomes and indicative content of programmes and their courses are compliant with the national and international standard practices including the benchmark EQF.

The department supports co-production of knowledge and the relationship between research and teaching in various ways including support for conference registrations for both staff and students.

The department has a standard approach to admissions and recognition of prior learning. The low number of student intakes has helped the department deliver their courses with a small number of students in appropriately designed lab rooms. The department offers a non mandatory orientation week and following the meeting with the students the EEC has found that not all students were aware of the formal complaints and appeal procedure reflecting the need for improved communication with concerned students.

The teaching, learning and assessment practices are well thought, organised and implemented.

### **Strengths**

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

The intended learning outcomes and indicative content of programmes and their courses are compliant with the national and international standard practices including the benchmark EQF.

The department supports co-production of knowledge and the relationship between research and teaching in various ways including support for conference registrations for both staff and students.

The low number of student intakes has helped the department deliver their courses with a small number of students in appropriately sized lab rooms.

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

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

Better communication is required to ensure students are aware of the policies, i.e., complaints and appeals process.

**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		
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.	4
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.	4
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.	4

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

16 full-time permanent staff and 3 non-permanent staff

### 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 16 tenured academic staff in which 6 of them are full professors. There are also 3 non-tenured adjunct staff. The spread of the staffing base is appropriate and within the acceptable limits at this point of operation.

The total student population for both the BSc and MSc programmes of study is 176. With this population the 11 SSR (Student-Staff Ratio) is excellent and therefore the staffing base seems more than appropriate to deliver the programmes of study. Teaching workloads will only be increased due to the large number of optional subject specific courses that have to be delivered over the 4-year time period. The current position of the department is not to offer all optional courses at BSc level which defeats the purpose of offering them if not available; this also impacts the student satisfaction.

The CVs of existing staff demonstrate very good 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 and consistent to the programmes of study.

There is a student survey which gathers student feedback and it is used as part of the annual programmes of study review and self-assessment. There are teaching and observation peer review procedures.

As a whole the teaching staff is commendable highly from their students.

### Strengths

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

The spread of the staffing base is appropriate and within the acceptable limits at this point of operation.

The CVs of existing staff demonstrate very good evidence of appointed academic staff having demonstrable research expertise that are relevant and consistent to the programmes of study.

The teaching staff is commendable highly from their students.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The current position of the department is not to offer all optional courses at BSc level which defeats the purpose of the offer; this also impacts the student satisfaction.



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	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		
<b>6. Research</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	4
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.	4
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.	4
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.	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.	4

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 CVs of existing staff provide evidence that the academic staff carry out high quality research activities successfully leading to research funding and outputs. Research expertise and publication records are relevant and consistent to the programmes of study.

The department has identified challenging objectives in research, aiming at establishing a strong research profile with regional and international visibility. The department has three research groups/labs (AI, Mobile Systems, Information Security). Publications and external funding demonstrate that the department is on track towards these objectives.

The university provides internal research funding for small (15,000 Euro) projects via the 'University of Nicosia Seed Grant' (UNICSG). The Research & Innovation Office provides support to researchers for the preparation and submission of research grant proposals.

Research is used to inform teaching and students are often involved in research activities as demonstrated by the 24 (since 2010) publications with student co-authors.

### Strengths

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

Evidence of high quality research activities, integration of research into teaching, some engagement with industry.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Although there is evidence of some research engagement with industry, this is an aspect that can be improved.

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	Compliant
Motives for research	Compliant
Publications	Compliant



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ  
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



## 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		
<b>7. Resources</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
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.	4
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.	4
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
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>Click to enter text.</p>		

### Findings

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

Resourcing of the department appears to be on a good level and sufficient for running the educational programs and supporting research activities.

### Strengths

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

The SSR (Student-Staff Ratio) is excellent and therefore the staffing base seems more than appropriate to deliver the programmes of study.

The programs have excellent support from the university IT services, for example cloud services. The library facilities meet the expectations and the library services include access to IEEE and ACM digital resources.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Online programmes may be a good opportunity for supporting financial sustainability; addressing the need to attract more students to sustain growth.

Lack of a risk assessment plan for low student intake. The EEC recommends the development of an action plan leading to an increasing number of students over the next two-three years.

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 External Evaluation Committee (EEC) reviewed and examined the accreditation report and materials provided by the University of Nicosia pertaining to the Department of Computer Science and its four-degree programs. The EEC evaluated the department and three of its programs that had not been previously evaluated and accredited: the BSc, MSc and PhD programs in Computer Science. The previously accredited distance learning-based MSc in Computer Science was not evaluated by the EEC; however, its material was examined in the evaluation. The committee had a two-day remote site visit on 8-4.4.2021. The EEC was presented detailed information about the department and the degree programs. The committee met university, school and department leadership and met professors, teachers and current and past students of the programs. The EEC received answers for questions before and during the site visit that complemented the information provided in the accreditation materials. A majority of the open issues were addressed during the discussions.

The department should analyze the degree programs for identifying the root causes of the slow graduation process. Many of the students are working at the same time that explains why the completion of degrees can take more time than anticipated. The department is encouraged to analyse course and degree completion in more detail and mitigate any identified bottlenecks.

Some courses can be improved in terms of supporting the development of practical skills associated to conceptual and theoretical content: a continuous effort to balance between theory and practical skills in some courses is advisable. The distribution between elective vs major courses can also be reconsidered periodically.

Some of the optional courses may not be available to students at a given semester or year. The EEC recommends the alignment of course demand from the students, course planning and course selection.

The computer laboratories appear adequate for the teaching purposes; however, the extent of availability of the infrastructure to Computer Science courses was ambiguous. The department is recommended to clarify which of the laboratories are open to taught students. The mobile computing and the Internet of Things infrastructure could be more comprehensive for state of the art research activities.

A formal internal progress monitoring and assessment process involving academic members not in the supervisory team can be considered to add more robustness to the programme. Lack of a structured and annually produced monitoring report pertaining to student progression, attainment and other key performance indicators relating to the studies.

Based on the examination and evaluation of the accreditation materials and the remote site visit, the EEC concludes that the required standards are met.



**E. Signatures of the EEC**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Sasu Tarkoma (chair)	
Nik Bessis	
Giuseppe Di Fatta	
Michalis Michael	

**Date:** 27.4.2021