



Doc. 300.2.2

Date: Date

Institution

Response

(Institutional Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
ARTE MUSIC ACADEMY
- **Town:** NICOSIA
- **Institution Status:** Currently operating
-

The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [[L.136\(I\)/2015 – L.132\(I\)/2021](#)].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.2.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the Institution in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, in the section building facilities, student welfare services, infrastructure, the HEI must respond on the comments and scoring of the EEC.*
- *Under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.2.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

BUILDING FACILITIES - STUDENT WELFARE SERVICES - INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Building facilities

1.1 Plans and licenses

No deficiencies were noted by the EEC.

Other facilities

The civil engineer Evaluator found all the other Facilities Satisfactory

2. Student welfare services

2.1 Special Access for Students with Disabilities (PWD)

The EEC pointed out that there is no access to PWD on the first floor where the library, the events room, and other classrooms are located.

The Academy 's answer is that the event rooms are on the ground floor where there is direct access from the main street (A. Leventi Street) and the other is in the basement where there is access from the garden.

Classrooms are also on the ground floor (no. 8 and 9) and in the basement. In the case of the library, we would like to inform the committee that the librarian and the secretary are always available to help in any way they can the students who cannot reach the library. It is very important to remember that the building was built in 1915 and is listed as a heritage building so the option to build extra rooms or rebuilt the existing one in order to place the library somewhere else is forbidden by law. Based on this the owners believe the library's current location is the optimal one.

The EEC noted that the Academy did not present any regulations about students with disabilities., we agree that the Academy was not able to present that to the committee. Nevertheless, now the Academy included a booklet in the Internal regulations. (Please see attachment under the name «Εσωτερικοί Κανονισμοί Ατόμων με Αναπηρίες») It is also uploaded on the webpage of the Academy.

2.2 Recreation areas

The evaluation committee suggested to the Academy to cooperate with local businesses such as cafeterias, restaurants, etc in combination with a benefits and discount plan for students and alumni. The Academy supported this suggestion and already came in touch with some local businesses of this kind. We already have an answer from « Το Μαγειρείο της Ευφροσύνης» (Διαγόρου 4, 22 322344) (Please see attachment of the agreement). With other local businesses, we will come in touch again in September.

2.3 Policy and Statutes for academic support

The EEC mentioned that the policy of academic support should be revised to include information regarding the registration procedures, the academic advising procedures, the role and responsibilities of the academic advisor, the attendance and withdrawal policies, the examination policy, etc.

The Academy has revised the policy including all the information that was requested. (Please see the attachment named « Ακαδημαϊκοί Κανονισμοί»)

2.4 Policy and Statutes for financial student support

In alignment with the EEC T note that there are no policies and procedures for the financial student support that is provided to potential candidates/ students like terms, criteria, process, etc. The Academy included in the Institution's Charter all the policies and procedures that are needed to fulfil the committee's note. (Please see the attachment named «Υποτροφίες και Οικονομική στήριξη φοιτητών»). It is also uploaded on the webpage of the Academy.

2.5 Counselling Services

In cooperation with Frederick University **(Please see attached the letter from Frederick University)**

2.6 Career Office

In cooperation with Frederick University

2.7 Service linking the institution with business.

In cooperation with Frederick University

2.8 Mobility office

In cooperation with Frederick University

2.9 Student clubs/organizations/ associations

The EEC noted that there is no policy and procedures for the Student Union and the Committees. And also, that there is only one club with 5 members.

Annex 1 of the Institutions Regulations is given as an attachment with the Institutional Evaluation page 24 we wrote *'Student elections take place at the beginning of each academic year. The students vote for the members of the Board which includes a President, a Vice President, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and Members. The President of the Board is the official representative of the Student Union. The Academy provides the students with all possible support for the elections and formation of this collective body.'*

The Academy is now providing a more detailed policy about the Student Union.(
Please see attachment under the name Πληροφορίες και Κανονισμοί για την Ένωση Φοιτητών - uploaded on webpage)

As for the student Clubs, due to the number of students, there was never a variety of Clubs. However, there have been different music Clubs in the past like 'The Saxophone Quintet ARTE', 'Jazz Combo', and 'Jazz Big Band', all organized by the students.

The Academy always supports the idea of Student Clubs and is always ready to support and help in the organization of any Club.

Also, in cooperation with Frederick University as mentioned in the attached letter.

3. Infrastructure

3.1 Library

The EEC found the library poor and suggested the provision of RILM and RISM for enriching the set of online resources.

The Academy came in contact with the RILM and RISM but cooperation due to the size of the Academy is difficult at the moment. We are still in contact with Oxford Music Online, Cyprus University, and the ΚΚυΒ (Κοινοπραξία Κυπριακών Βιβλιοθηκών). Our students will have access to the library of Frederick University.

3.2 Computers available for use by the students

The EEC found the availability of the computers for the students satisfactory

3.3 Technological support

The assessors suggested that the Academy provide music-related software and equipment serving electronic music.

The Academy purchased 'Finale v27.3' (Please see the attachment named Receipt). The Software will be given to academic staff and students.

3.4 Technical support

The EEC found the technical support poor. It was mentioned that teachers use their personal laptops for their classes.

The Academy is providing from now on a laptop.

1. Institution's Academic Profile and Orientation

Sub-Areas

1.1 Mission and strategic planning

- 1.1.1. The EEC commented that the mission of our philosophy' should deal with the role of the institution in society to a larger extent. The Academy agrees with the comment and adjusted by adding the following:

Mission:

The Academy aims to help socially through the knowledge and philosophy of music.

The Academy aims to provide both the faculty and the students, with an environment that can achieve their full potential by organizing events, concerts, recitals, lectures, and cooperation with other organizations.

The Academy aims to expand the knowledge of the program for the benefit of society and to provide our students with all the knowledge, love, support, and impulse to create what they need in order for them to pass through any obstacles they face and be strong enough to bring change.

1.1.3. The assessors suggest a periodical revision and adaption of the strategic plan.

Based on the committee's comments, many changes have been made to the strategic plan.

Changes and documentation have been answered and provided in previous answers and answers to follow below.

1.1.7. The assessors have not found any mechanism for collecting and analysing data for the Institution's academic development apart from collecting data from the evaluation of courses by the students.

The Academy is now using <https://www.surveymonkey.com>. (Please see attached the receipt)

1.2 Connecting with Society

- 1.2.4 The assessors had not been provided with statistical analyses regarding the success & drop-out rates and career paths of graduates, even if the teachers of the Institution have up-to-date information on the career paths of their alumni through individual personal communication.

The Academy included in its webpage under the title Alumni that information from the beginning of its operation up to date.

1.3 Development processes

1.3.1 The assessors could not find any procedures and measures in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach, research, and effectively carry out their work.

The Academy included in the Internal regulations a policy that explains the whole procedure. (See attachment under the name «Πολιτική Πρόσληψης Ακαδημαϊκού Προσωπικού»).

1.3.3. The assessors could neither find a plan for the recruitment of academic staff nor a plan for their development according to European Higher educational standards.

As mentioned above at 1.3.1 we attached the policy of the recruitment of academic staff.

As for their development, the Academy will provide Training programs for teachers.

The Academy intends to participate in the Erasmus +

The Academy will increase its budget to support the participation of academic staff in Conferences and festivals both in Cyprus and abroad.

The Academy will support members of the Academic staff in order to publish their work, by finding funding.

The Academy will find funding and support research.

The Academy will continue organizing concerts for the members of the Academic Staff.

The Academy will continue to encourage innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies.

1.3.4., 1.3.5., 1.3.6

The Academy recognizes the difficulties it has faced until now regarding attracting new students both from Cyprus and abroad. With the aim of overcoming those difficulties, the Academy has hired George Georgiou as a new Director, we are part of UAGC and we are in contact with various organizations in order to be part of a bigger network for example:

1. Association Européenne des Conservatoires, Académies de Musique et Musikhochschulen (AEC)
2. <https://musiche.ac.uk/membership/>



and also our intention is to participate in more Education exhibitions

Click here to add text.

2 Quality Assurance

Sub-Areas

2.1 System and quality assurance strategy

2.1.1. The ECC noted that although quality assurance is in existence, it was not published on the website.

The Academy has published it under the Menu « Ιστορικό» - « Διασφάλιση της ποιότητας Σπουδών».

2.1.3. The assessors were not provided with a policy of gender & diversity & equal treatment nor with treatment nor with guidelines against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff.

The Academy agrees with the necessity of such a policy, and it provides it now. It can now be found on the webpage also as the EEC requested. (please see attachment under the name 'Πολιτική για Ισότητα, Διαφορετικότητα και ίση Μεταχείριση'). The policy can be found on the webpage also.

2.1.4 The internal Quality Assurance committee does not reflect the quality standards and indicators in the self-evaluation.

The academy found some inaccuracies in the answers, which the committee has also highlighted and has made the corresponding changes. Most of them have been answered and documented in previous or subsequent answers.

2.1.8. The assessors have neither been provided with a certificate in English nor with a diploma supplement.

The Academy provided a certificate in Greek as an attachment with the 'Program Evaluation'. The official teaching language of the Academy is Greek, therefore the sample we send was in Greek. The Academy was asked to send an email with a sample of the Certificate on the 2nd of March which we did. With a transcript and a certification of studies both in Greek since, as mentioned above, the official language the Academy uses is Greek.

2.2 Ensuring quality for the programs of study

2.2.5 A policy for dealing with plagiarism is in existence but mechanisms for identifying and preventing it (e.g., Turnitin) are not.

In the Academy, each member of the Academic staff is using their own way to detect plagiarism. In some cases, www.check-plagiarism.com. Nevertheless following the indication of the EEC we will cooperate with Frederick University for the use of Turnitin.

2.2.10.5 Support structures for students with special needs and learning difficulties.

Please see above no. 2.1

In cooperation with Frederick University.

2.2.10.7

In cooperation with Frederick University.

Click here to add text.

3. Administration

3.3 As a result of the board overlap between the academic and administrative staff and the owners, control over decisions in the sense of checks & balances is limited.

After the EEC'S indictment, the academy decided to divide the tasks among workers, giving them defined roles. The Division will be (Starting from September 2023):

- Director: George Georgiou
- Head of Course: Mrs Pitsa Spyridaki
- Head of Performance Orientation: Dr Rami Saredidine
- Head of Pedagogy orientation: Dr Anastasia Hasikou
- Head of Composition Orientation: Mr Andreas Moustoukis
- Head Librarian: Andromachi Spyridaki

As for the owners, following the law, they are not and have never been members of the disciplinary committee. Nor the Academic committee.

The aim of the Academy is to have a balance in the polarization of power, reducing mistakes and avoiding taking advantage of positions with decisions.

3.4. The assessors find clear dissemination of decisions but miss transparency in the decision-making process.

Administration Committee:

The Administration Committee oversees the Proper functioning of the Academy.

It meets twice a year and on an emergency basis whenever there is a need.

The secretary of the committee is in charge of writing the minutes of the decisions after each meeting.

The members of the Committee sign those minutes of decisions. (Please see the attachment of the 2 previous meetings before the visit of the EEC under the name « Διοικητικής Επιτροπής με ημερομηνίες 19 Μάϊου 2022 και 14 Δεκεμβρίου 2023».)

Academic Committee:

The Academic Committee oversees every issue related to academic levels, exams, promotion and graduation criteria of students, organizing events, seminars, master classes, etc. It monitors the progress of each student in all courses. In the case of statistical disharmony of the score, it is in charge of submitting to the Ministry of Education for differentiation of the score. It validates grades as well as students' final grade that is transferred to the student's academic record. (Please see the attachment of the 2 previous meetings before the visit of the EEC under the name « Πρακτικά Ακαδημαϊκής Επιτροπής με ημερομηνίες 5 Ιουλίου 2022 και 10 Φεβρουαρίου 2023».).

Internal Evaluation Committee:

The purpose of the internal evaluation committee is to form a general and critical opinion on the part of the institution about the quality of the cited work, based on internationally recognized objective criteria and indicators. The Committee is responsible for highlighting deficiencies that need revision and improvement, documenting the Academy's achievements, and self-evaluation and synthesis of the institution's overall quality image. . (Please see the attachment of the previous meetings before the visit of the EEC under the name « Πρακτικά Εσωτερικής Αξιολόγησης με ημερομηνία 23 Ιανουαρίου 2023».).

We remind that all the minutes of decisions are checked twice a year by a committee from the Ministry of Education.

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-Areas

4.1 Planning the programs of study

4.1.5. In order to get their BA certificate, students with orientation 'composition', and 'music education / academic study of music' only have to collect additional ECTS points from courses without a final presentation or examination. Research-based, written BA thesis is not demanded for any orientation.

In order to get the BA certificate students with composition orientation must present compositions from all four years (portfolio), the composition of a piece for orchestra, for a specific kind like symphony, concert, opera, ballet etc. Compositions will be performed in concerts all through the year. (Program Evaluation, Annex 1, page 17, see attachment). The Academy believes that the composition of a Symphony, concert, opera, or ballet, etc for an Orchestra, has the same value and difficulty as a BA thesis.

As for 'Music education/ academic study of music' after the comment of the EEC, to clarify this orientation, the Academic committee decided to rename the orientation 'Music Pedagogy' (More details can be found in the answers about the Program Evaluation).

The students that follow this orientation have to submit a portfolio (up to 10000 words):

- General bibliography review of teaching and learning theories (5000 words)
- Two attendances of music lessons that will be accompanied by reflective commentary. Commentary should answer several given questions (1000 words)
- A video-recorded example of student teaching that will be accompanied by commentary on how to organize and implement it. Reference to the utilization of specific theories, strategies, and techniques from the relevant literature is necessary (2000 words).
- Feedback document of the video-recorded lesson from the teacher in charge.
- Future action plan in response to feedback with reference to theoretical principles from the bibliography (2000 words)

In their findings, the EEC recommended the reworking of the BA curriculum to clarify the function, naming, and content of individual orientations and to thoroughly elaborate the final examinations of each orientation with special regard to the general criteria of BA degrees in the European higher education area.

Please see attached the new Curriculum, also uploaded on the website.

5. Teaching Staff

5.1. The Assessors received the oral information from the members of the teaching staff participating in the meeting that they are teaching on the basis of self-employment and paid per given teaching hours. They do not have permanent contracts or any proper academic jobs. The status of the members of the academic staff (full-time or part-time/ employed in academic positions or paid on the basis of teaching hours) is unclear in the documents submitted by the institution. The assessors urge the institution to create permanent/full time positions for the academic staff in the required number of 70%.

Based on the Cyprus University Law articles 21 and 32, paragraph 2(1) a full-time or a part-time position is established by the council, following a proposal from the senate, based on the university's needs.

2(2) the number of permanent and temporary positions, as well as the salary scales are determined in the university's budget.

5.9 The Visiting professors' subject areas adequately support the institution's programs of study. Nevertheless, the Assessors mentioned that through the conversations during the onsite visit, those colleagues were invited to give masterclasses.

The Academy wants to clarify that, yes in many cases visiting professors were only for masterclasses, however, the following visiting professors were either for a full semester or a full year:

1. Antreas Yiannakouras – Trumpet lessons for a full semester
2. Sokratis Anthi- Trumpet lessons for a full semester
3. Constantinos Loizou -Lessons for piano tuning for a full semester.
4. Andriana Ahitnova – Lessons for 'Ney' – full year.

The assessors urge the Institution to create permanent/full-time positions for the academic staff in the required number of 70 %.

The Academy understands the necessity of having permanent academic staff. However, we believe that 70% is quite a big number for the Academy considering the size of it.

Based on the University of Cyprus Law 2.(1) "A permanent or temporary position is established by the council following a proposal by the Senate, based on the needs of the university at any given time.

2(2) the number of permanent and temporary positions as well as the salary scales are determined in the University Budget.

Nevertheless, the Academy will now create permanent/full-time positions on a smaller percentage according to the Academy's needs and possibilities.

6. Research

The assessors recommend the Institution find its goals in the fields of research and finance research activities.

The Academy understands the necessity of academic research activities. Unfortunately, however, the financial plan of the Academy cannot support something like that at the moment.

Nevertheless, the Academy supports both academic members and students, by offering the event rooms for concerts outside the framework of the Academy, for free.

The academy has entered into discussions with other institutions for cooperation in terms of research grants. Such as Leventis Foundation (which has already funded concerts and seminars that are part of the 20 years Celebration events) and the Deputy Ministry of Cultures.

The Academy is also in contact with other Foundations for future cooperation. (Will be able for more details by the new Academic Year).



7. Resources

7.1,7.3,7.4: The assessors could not find any resources to increase the number of full-time academic staff and start financing their research activities.

Please find the answers above.

B. Conclusions and Final Remarks

The Academy recognizes the pros and cons of its *modus operandi*.

Since we received the answer of the EEC we have been working on achieving all the comments and being able to justify them also.

However, because of the notes that the EEC pointed out, it is impossible to change everything in the 4 months that we are given.

As you can see in our answers the Academy has made changes in various occasions and we are still trying to fulfil all the requirements suggested by the assessors.

In order for the Academy to meet the standards of the European Higher Education Area, one of the most important changes that the Academy did is the cooperation with Frederick University.

D. Higher Education Institution Academic Representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Μαρτίνος Τιρίμος	Καλλιτεχνικός Σύμβουλος	
Πίτσα Σπυριδάκι	Υπεύθυνη Κλάδου Σπουδών	
Δρ Ανθή Αγρότου	Πρόεδρος Ακαδημαϊκής Επιτροπής	
Δρ Αναστασία Χάσικου	Υπεύθυνη Κατεύθυνσης Μουσικής Παιδαγωγικής	
Dr Rami Sarieddine	Υπεύθυνος Κατεύθυνσης Εκτέλεσης	
Αντρέας Μουστούκης	Υπεύθυνος Κατεύθυνσης Σύνθεσης	

Date: Click to enter date

Date: 10/07/2023

