

Doc. 300.2.1

External Evaluation Report (Institutional)

Date: 16-17th May 2022

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Aigaia School of Art & Design
- **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. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The EEC conducted their visit onsite. We met with a wide range of academic and para-academic faculty responsible for teaching, research, quality enhancement, student support, information technology and the library.

We were also able to meet the Diploma students in their studios and in the main meeting room.

The faculty took us on a comprehensive tour that enabled us to see the studios and workshops, the library, cafe, materials shop, gardens, and the gallery/theatre spaces. We were also able to see the surrounding neighbourhood.

The staff and students at the School were fantastic hosts and the EEC would like to thank them for their warm and generous hospitality. :)

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Prof Neil Mulholland	Professor (Chair of EEC)	The University of Edinburgh
Professor Xenofon Bitsikas	Professor	University of Ioannina
Professor Susanne Clausen	Professor	University of Reading
Menelaos A. Menelaou	Head of Academic Affairs and Student Welfare Service	University of Cyprus
Maria Agisilaou	Student	Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), Limassol
Frangos Prokopas	Civil Engineer	Cyprus Scientific and Technical Chamber (ETEK)

C. Building Facilities - Student Welfare Services - Infrastructure

- *Under plans and licenses, choose Yes or No depending on the existence of the given documents.*
- *Note whether the statements given under the other facilities, the student welfare services and the infrastructure are considered satisfactory/poor/unsatisfactory for the operation of the Institution.*
- *The EEC must justify the answers provided for the building facilities, the student welfare services and the infrastructure by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.*

1. Building facilities

1.1 Plans and licenses

Choose Yes or No depending on the existence of the following documents.

1. Building facilities			
1.1 Plans and licenses		Yes / No	
	The following should be copies from the original building permit. On the copies, there should be a visible official stamp of approval from the respective authorities.		
1.1.1	1.1.1.1	A topographical plan, which displays in a clear manner the extent of the development.	Yes
	1.1.1.2	A general site plan, which marks the building facilities, allocated parking spaces (for students, academic and teaching personnel, visitors and disabled individuals), sports premises and outdoor areas.	Yes
1.1.2	An operating license issued by the Local Authorities		Yes
1.1.3	The following operating license certificates, duly completed:		
	1.1.3.1	Visual Inspection Form E.O.E. 102	Yes
	1.1.3.2	Visual Inspection for the Building's Seismic Sufficiency Form E.O.E.Σ.E.K 103	Yes
	1.1.3.3	Inspection Certificate Form 104	Yes
	1.1.3.4	Fire Safety Certificate, issued by the Fire Department	Yes
1.1.3.5	Certificate for Adequate Electrical and Mechanical Installations, issued by the Electromechanical Department	Yes	

Justify the answers provided for the building facilities by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

1.1.1.2 a) Being an exercise and sports premises, there is an agreement with Strovolos Municipality for the use of its facilities.
b) As per the suggestion of the issuing Municipality, there is a parking area at the basement within the building, to be used by people with disabilities.
c) A fee has been paid to the issuing Municipality for the buy-out of seven parking spaces, upon receipt. The Municipality hasn't appointed them yet.

1.1.2 There is a receipt issued by the Municipality for a work permit and other taxes.

1.1.3.5 There is no issued licence by the Electro-Mechanical Department. There are assurances though, by the Electrical and Mechanical scholars.

1.2 Other Facilities

Choose Satisfactory or Poor or Unsatisfactory depending on the level of compliance of each statement.

1. Building Facilities		
1.2 Other Facilities		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
1.2.1	Number of teaching rooms and their respective areas, capacity and the percentage of daily occupancy for all units	Satisfactory
1.2.2	Number of offices for teaching staff and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.3	Number of laboratories and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.4	Number of rooms/offices for directors/administrators and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.5	Number of rooms/offices for administrative services and their respective areas and capacity	Satisfactory
1.2.6	Number of parking spaces designated for students	Poor
1.2.7	Number of parking spaces designated for teaching staff	Poor
1.2.8	Number of parking spaces designated for people with disabilities	Satisfactory

Justify the answers provided for the building facilities by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

1.2.6 - 1.2.7

This is a preserved building and therefore requires a reduced number of parking spaces. For the issuing of the building permit, a fee has been imposed for the buy-out of seven spaces which haven't been appointed yet. Upon agreement with the committee of the neighbouring Church, the temporary use of its yard can be used as a parking space by the teaching staff and students. This agreement is temporary until the Municipality appoints the seven parking spaces.

2. Student Welfare Services

Choose Satisfactory or Poor or Unsatisfactory depending on the level of compliance of each statement.

2. Student Welfare Services		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
2.1	Special access for students with disabilities (PWD)	Satisfactory
2.2	Recreation areas	Satisfactory
2.3	Policy and statutes for academic student support	Satisfactory
2.4	Policy and statutes for financial student support	Satisfactory
2.5	Counselling services	Satisfactory
2.6	Career office	Satisfactory
2.7	Service linking the institution with business	Satisfactory
2.8	Mobility office	Satisfactory
2.9	Student clubs/organisations/associations	Poor
2.10	Other services	Satisfactory

Justify the answers provided for the student welfare services by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The student welfare services are provided by one member of the academic staff with parallel administration responsibilities. Additionally, to her art related qualifications, she is a holder of an MBA. Where necessary the Director of the School, complements these services, while some of the services can be outsourced, if necessary, i.e. psychological support. The very small number of students (15 students) makes this structure adequate for the time being. Surely, if the number of students increases substantially (as stated in the strategic planning presentation), additional staff members should be considered.

2.1. Special access for students with disabilities

There is no special treatment for students with disabilities upon entry. Students are evaluated on their academic level, regardless of having a disability or not. Nonetheless, the school can provide preparation classes so they can upgrade their level to meet course/diploma expectations. The school can provide special support during their studies, such as more time to deliver a project, peer support, support by a third party etc. All relevant information is disclosed in the application form. The premises meet the specifications for accessibility.

2.2. Recreation areas

The School has a canteen offering snacks and beverages to students and visitors. There is also a small sitting area (tables and chairs).

2.3. Policy and statutes for academic student support

At the beginning of the academic term, the students are assigned to an academic advisor. This role is picked up by members of the academic staff, based on how many hours they are present/teaching at the School and also taking into consideration the personal relationship with the students. Moreover, due to the very small number of students, staff have direct and daily contact with them, so they have the opportunity to discuss any issue, academic or not, that arises.

2.4. Policy and statutes for financial support

The School provides scholarships upon merit and student financial situation. The students are informed from the beginning on their financial obligations and timeline of payments of tuition fees. Flexibility can be provided if necessary and upon request and agreement between the two parties.

2.5. Counselling Services

General counselling is provided by the academic advisor and the academic staff. If a need for further counselling support arises, the student is directed to external services, e.g. the Youthboard of Cyprus Psychological Support Services and other private qualified practitioners.

2.6. Career Office

The student welfare officer provides basic career advice and information to students, mostly on choosing their next academic step, i.e., the topic and place for their top up BA. The officer also helps in preparing a CV (Europass and a more custom-made one), interview tips, informs students on internships opportunities and small-scale jobs (gigs). In line with the above, the School provides a relevant course as part of the curriculum.

2.7. Service linking the institution with business

As mentioned above, the School provides small-scale job opportunities to students, in order for them to gain experience and develop their network with the industry and society at large. They also provide them with information on relevant competitions they can participate in and a small number of internships, found mainly through personal contacts.

2.8. Mobility Office

There is no “official” mobility office. The Director is mainly responsible for participation in European mobility projects. The School participates in Erasmus+ projects as partners, hosting workshops for foreign partners and also participating in similar outgoing activities of students and staff. There is room for more exploration and participation in E+ projects and other

European mobility and funding programs such as the European Solidarity Corps and acquiring the E+ charter.

2.9. Student Clubs/organisations/associations

There are no student clubs or associations. Nonetheless often teams of students ask to organise an event or other activity either in the School or elsewhere and the School provides the space and organisational support to them. Also, often students participate in volunteering activities with collaboration with the School.

2.10 Other Services

The Student Welfare Officer aids students who seek housing and also the school director liaisons with other governmental authorities or services such as Immigration in case a foreign student needs help with visa related issues.

The School also issues a Student Card and guides its students to register for the European Youth Card, issued by the Youthboard of Cyprus, so they can gain access to benefits including discounts in bus transportation, access to cultural events, etc.

3. Infrastructure

Choose Satisfactory or Poor or Unsatisfactory depending on the level of compliance of each statement.

3. Infrastructure		Satisfactory - Poor - Unsatisfactory
3.1	Library	Satisfactory
3.2	Computers available for use by the students	Satisfactory
3.3	Technological support	Satisfactory
3.4	Technical support	Satisfactory

Justify the answers provided for the infrastructure services by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

There are no deficiencies.

D. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas and sub-areas.*
- *For 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, 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 Institution based on evidence from the Institution's application and the site - visit.

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

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

1. Institution's Academic Profile and Orientation

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

1.1 Mission and strategic planning

1.2 Connecting with society

1.3 Development processes

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

1 or 2: Non-compliant

3: Partially compliant

4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
1. Institution's academic profile and orientation		
1.1 Mission and strategic planning		1 - 5
1.1.1	The Institution has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	4
1.1.2	The Institution has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	3
1.1.3	The Institution's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	4
1.1.4	The offered programmes of study align with the aims and objectives of the Institution's development.	4
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Institution's development strategies.	4
1.1.6	In the Institution's development strategy, interested parties such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Institution's development strategy.	3
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Institution's academic development is adequate and effective.	3

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

- 1.1.6 The institution's three-year strategic development plan needs some finessing. Engaging with peer review by inviting in external stakeholders from academic and professional sectors would raise the educational standards of the institution and also enable it to make the most of its existing resources.

1.1.7 This isn't happening routinely presently; should be put in place. The EEC recommends that the institution *anonymously* collect, analyse, and use student feedback. A system for data analysis should be adopted from a comparable higher educational institute.

1.2 Connecting with society

1 - 5

1.2.1 The Institution 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 Institution provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.

4

1.2.3 The Institution ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.

4

1.2.4 The Institution has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.

3

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

1.2.4 The EEC cannot verify how the institution follows its graduate destinations.

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 research and effectively carry out their work.

3

1.3.2 The Institution has a two-year growth budget that is consistent with its strategic planning.

4

1.3.3 Planning academic staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Institution's academic development plan.

3

1.3.4 The Institution applies an effective strategy of attracting students/ high-level students from Cyprus.

3

1.3.5 The Institution applies an effective strategy to attract high-level students from abroad.

1

1.3.6 The funding processes for the operation of the Institution 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.

1.3.1 Presently, on the whole, the Institution does not attract qualified academic staff and it doesn't yet have any mechanisms to support their Researcher Development or their Scholarship of Learning and Teachings (SoTL).

1.3.3 The Institution doesn't have any non-Cypriot students and does not yet have an effective strategy to attract high-level students from abroad.

Expected number of non-Cypriot students = 0

Expected number of Cypriot students 15

Findings

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

The strategic planning presents an exclusively 'resource-base view of the firm' and fails to provide any research-based evidence or insight into how it relates to existing high quality First Cycle provision in ADM in Cyprus.

Strengths

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

1.2.1 The institution has highly effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities. It is very well integrated into the School>HE transition areas and it plays a very active role in the arts community. The EEC wishes to congratulate the School on its work here! The EEC felt that this was the institution's USP (something akin to 'social practice') and that all of its provision, present and future, should build upon this firm foundation. The institution offers support – in the form of scholarship / fee reduction – to support the widening of participation in ADM. Developing a social justice approach and tying this to the strategic planning and Mission would be beneficial.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

1.3.1 Academic Staff Recruitment and Training

The Institution should seek attract qualified academic staff by creating permanent fractional and full-time posts that are commensurate with those in other AMD institutions in Cyprus, the MENA region and the EHEA. It should also create mechanisms to support staff Researcher Development and their Scholarship of Learning and Teachings (SoTL). Clearly this could prove to be a challenge regarding remuneration – however, the Institution offers other in-kind benefits (such as studio support for staff and access to Erasmus+ networks, etc.) that it can combine into an attractive package. It can also offer micro-residencies as a way of attracting temporary visiting staff-researchers.

1.3.3. Strategically plan for non-Cypriot students

The institution needs to seriously consider *how* it might attract non-Cypriot students from the MENA region and, perhaps, beyond. It should do this by focusing on its existing strengths in supporting the transition into higher education at a reasonable price in a safe and supportive environment. Having brought in student for portfolio-preparation, it can work on retaining them as Diploma students.

The lack of non-Cypriot students and staff is responsible for the programme being relatively cut-off from what is happening in the ADM sector across the EHEA and beyond. The staff student body is cultural homogenous and, thus, not representative of the ADM workplace in the EHEA. Since Cyprus is an EU member state, this is not excusable.

Since the institution *does* aim to start to attract non-Cypriot students from the MENA region and, perhaps, beyond – it needs to diversify its curriculum to include engagement with Islamic / Arabic art and design and with contemporary cultures.

1.1.6 Improve Strategic Planning

The institution follows Birger Wernerfelt's resource-based view (Wernerfelt 1984), focusing the *supposed* uniqueness of its resources. The competitive advantages here, however, are negligible since the institution's resources are *not* unique in Cyprus – on the contrary, they already exist in other validated ADM programmes. (The institution does not present any research-based *scoping*, knowledge or analysis of this fact). Moreover, the existing institutions remain *the best* resourced organisations in Cyprus in this respect.

If the institution wishes to be successful in the Cypriot ADM environment, then it needs to move beyond the limitations of its 'resource-based view of the firm'. Michael Porter's positioning school (Porter 1980: 871) is more concerned with the organisation's milieu, with how it analyses and strategically adapts to 'threats' and 'opportunities' generated by its and thus is unable to position the institution's resources in relation to the field in which it operates. To be able to do this, the institution needs to understand that their main 'competition' is the *quality* that other institutions offer. If they are to compete here, they need to learn how to better position the resources they have currently with the *contemporary* ADM sector. Presently they are beginning to do so, but they have a way to go before they are convincingly integrated with Cyprus' and international *contemporary* ADM networks in ways that will raise their peer esteem in the sector. Recognising that their USP here currently lies in how they integrate with schools and continuing education (Lifelong Learning), would be key to a successful positioning school approach to strategic resource management. Perhaps engaging an external professional educational consultant with experience of Porter's positioning school analysis of their field would be helpful here?

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

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

2. Quality Assurance

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

Sub-areas

2.1 System and Quality Assurance Strategy

2.2 Ensuring quality 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 Institution has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of its strategic management.	2
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	2
2.1.3	The Institution'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 Institution's activities:	
2.1.4.1	The teaching and learning	3
2.1.4.2	Research	N/A
2.1.4.3	The connection with society	5
2.1.4.4	Management and support services	4
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	3
2.1.6	The Institution consistently applies pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of student 'life cycle', e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.	4

2.1.7	Institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, cooperation with other institutions and quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre.	4
2.1.8	Graduates receive documentation explaining the qualification gained.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
2.1.1 The Institution has a handbook for quality assurance, but it does not yet have a Policy for quality assurance		
2.1.2 Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance, yes, but they do not do so through appropriate structures and processes, nor do they involve external stakeholders in creating such QAE assurances.		
2.1.4.1 Teaching and Learning need to supported by more robust QAE procedures.		
2.1.5 The quality assurance system does not yet promote a culture of quality.		
2. Quality assurance		
2.2 Ensuring quality 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 Institution 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 Institution are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	3
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective.	3
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.	3
2.2.6	The institutionalised procedures for examining students' objections/disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	3
2.2.7	The Institution provides information about its activities, including the programmes of study it offers and the selection criteria for them, the intended learning outcomes of these programmes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to the students as well as graduate employment information.	4

2.2.8	The Institution ensures that effective methodology is applied in the learning process.	3
2.2.9	The Institution systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.	3
2.2.10	The Institution ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and / or international practices, particularly:	
2.2.10.1	Building facilities	5
2.2.10.2	Library	4
2.2.10.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	5
2.2.10.4	Technological infrastructure	4
2.2.10.5	Support structures for students with special needs and learning difficulties	3
2.2.10.6	Academic Support	4
2.2.10.7	Student Welfare Services	4

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

2.2.2 - 2.2.3 Monitoring isn't happening using data collection methods currently.

2.2.5 There is a Plagiarism Policy / Awareness Training, but it needs to be 'upgraded' into a fully-fledged Academic Integrity Policy that covers art and design practice and is for staff and students. The ADM sector has seen a steep increase in self-plagiarism (re-submitting the same studio work for more than one course) and plagiarism (submitting studio work created by someone else)/ The Academic Integrity Policy, thus, must also cover the submission of AMD artefacts and processes and not just writing.

2.2.6 There is no (Research) Ethics Policy; The process for students making appeals re: their assessment is not clear.

2.2.8 The Institution needs to make more use of staff training (online MOOCS) to support effective methodology being applied in the learning process.

2.2.9 Monitoring isn't happening using data collection methods currently.

2.2.10.5 Support structures for students with special needs and learning difficulties are not clear; (how does the institution support, for example, students with dyspraxia).

Findings

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

The implementation of the current Quality framework is asymmetrical – very good in the case of some courses, very poor in others (there is little in-between). This reveals that the QAE system is not fully understood and implemented by all staff. This should be easy to fix through training and mentoring all staff. A number of courses will need to be re-validated to ensure they are up the same standards as those that are coherent and follow best QAE practice.

In part, this asymmetry arises since the Institution has a complex and confusing structure of multiple overlapping committees responsible for QAE. There are many conflicts of interest here that need to be eradicated by moving to a simpler, less Byzantine, structure that is in scale with the size of the Institution (15 students). The EEC understand that the Byzantine structure in place was created at the behest of their last validation. The EEC see that this structure is wholly inappropriate to the scale of the institution and recommend that this structure be replaced with a scalar one that *actually represents what the institution does*.

Strengths

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

The Institution has been busy putting a QAE system in place and has made great progress here. The EEC would like to commend the Institution on coming this far given how few staff it has to devote to creating a QAE framework. The Institution has proven itself to be highly adaptable, resilient and resourceful in how it does all of the things expected a much larger institution.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- 2.1.1 ***The Institution has a handbook for quality assurance, but it does not yet have a Policy for quality assurance.*** It should develop a QAE policy and ensure that improving the quality of its provision is the #1 priority within its strategic plan. It should *then* make both the QAE Policy and updated Strategic Plan public.
- 2.1.2 ***Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance, yes, but they do not do so through appropriate structures and processes, nor do they involve external stakeholders in creating such QAE assurances.***

Engaging external stakeholders including more experienced academic staff, in addition to qualified parties such as ADM students in other Universities, ADM graduates of other Universities and other professional ADM associations in other institutions to mentor, support and offer 'critical friendship' for Curriculum Design and Development is essential in such a small specialist school.

Small specialist institutions in the vast majority EHEA states are required by law to take such measures to ensure their quality standards and, in the majority of cases to *validate their higher education programmes*. Hence, the EEC feel that, at very least, the School must seek to formally engage external stakeholders (including more experienced academic staff) from other institutions in the QAE processes, including the review and validation of its courses and programmes.

Engaging ‘external’ examiners to review final projects would help raise the standards expected from students. External examiners must have academic expertise; a team *might* also have professional expertise (ideally both).

Implementing both externality measures would significantly raise confidence in the ability of the School to meet, maintain and enhance standards in the Diploma.

2.1.4.1 Teaching and Learning need to be supported by more robust QAE procedures. The EEC have detailed how to improve the QAE procedures elsewhere in this report. Please see 2.1.1 (above) for example.

2.1.5 The quality assurance system does not yet fully promote a culture of quality. The institution has many of the measures that will support a culture of quality, but it’s missing some key elements of peer-review (and thus peer-esteem). It needs to remove the sense that it operates in a ‘bubble’ separate from QAE indicators and processes in other ADM fields. Some changes will be required to ensure that a culture of quality enhancement is fully in place. Please see 2.1.1 (above) for example.

Please select 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	Partially Compliant
2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study	Partially Compliant

3. Administration (ESG 1.1)

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 in force and the Institution's declared 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 based on specified procedures, in the management of the Institution.	4
3.3	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Institution's Council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	4
3.4	The Institution applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	4
3.5	The Boards of Departments and Schools, as well as the institutionalised committees of the Institution, operate systematically and exercise fully the responsibilities provided by legislation and / or the constitution and / or the internal regulations of the Institution.	3
3.6	The Council, the Senate as well as the administrative and academic committees, operate systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the statute and / or the constitution of the Institution without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	4
3.7	The manner in which the Council, the Senate and/or and the administrative and academic committees operate and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	4
3.8	The Institution applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, academic and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	3

3.9	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation in force and the Institution's declared mission.	4
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Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

3.5 Needs to be simplified and consolidated. The Committees needs to be called what they do.

3.7 Need to create a fully-fledged Academic Integrity Policy that is for staff and students from the current Plagiarism/ Misconduct Policy / Awareness Training.

Findings

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

Administration is done by members of the academic staff with parallel teaching and assessment responsibilities. Additionally, Director of the School, complements this team, while some of the Administration can be outsourced if necessary.

Both in reference to its documentation and in our interviews with staff, the EEC found that the Institution has a complex and confusing structure of multiple overlapping committees responsible for QAE. This is an aspect of Administration that needs to be rationalised and professionalised.

Strengths

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

All academic staff in all universities are expected to conduct *Administration* as a part of their role; so this is perfectly acceptable. The EEC were impressed with how all staff take the administrative aspects of their role very seriously. The very small number of students (15 students) makes this administrative approach adequate for the time being. Surely, if the number of students increases substantially (as stated in the strategic planning presentation), additional specialist Admin to support specific pressure points must be considered.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

3.5 The Institution has a complex and confusing structure of multiple overlapping committees responsible for QAE. The EEC understands that the Byzantine structure in place was created at the behest of their last validation. The EEC see that this structure is *wholly inappropriate* to the scale of this specialist ADM institution and recommend that this structure be replaced with a scalar one that *actually represents what the institution does well and needs to support*. The EEC request that the Institution simplify and consolidate all of the various current Committees that deal with QAE into one Committee that covers Course/Programme Validation and QAE. This singular Committee – which must have external stakeholder membership - needs to be named after what it does. A key consideration when developing this new structure is the removal of the existing forms of effort duplication and conflicts of interest.

3.7 While there is a Plagiarism/ Misconduct Policy / Awareness Training, this needs to be upgraded into an Academic Integrity Policy that covers art and design practice. The ADM sector has seen a steep increase in self-plagiarism (re-submitting the same studio work for more than one course) and plagiarism (submitting studio work created by someone else). The EEC are concerned that Self-plagiarism could be a live issue is the same portfolio is used to assess students on more than one 3 ECTS course. The Academic Integrity Policy, thus, must also cover the submission of AMD artefacts and processes and not just writing.

Fixing 3.5 and 3.7 would make the institution fully compliant here.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

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

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

Sub-Areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

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

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

Quality indicators/criteria		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.1 Planning the programmes of study		1 - 5
4.1.1	The Institution provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing programmes of study.	3
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	3
4.1.3	The programmes of study are in compliance with the ESG and the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	N/A
4.1.4	The Institution ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	2
4.1.5	The assessment and evaluation procedures and content are in compliance with the level of the programme of study (in reference to EQF).	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
4.1.1 The Institution needs to ensure that its QAE processes are more robust.		
4.1.2 Students yes; academic and ADM stakeholders, no. There are no external stakeholders involved in the QAE elements.		
4.1.4 The Institution needs to ensure that effectively theory and practice are complimentary and intellectually robust, both in the History of Art <u>and</u> practice courses.		
4.2 Organisation of teaching		1 - 5

4.2.1	The Institution 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.	5
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Institution have regular and effective communication with their students.	5
4.2.5	The teaching staff of the Institution provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	4

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

Fully compliant here.

Findings

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

The EEC were able to fully explore the learning environment offered by the School and were able to ask questions pertinent to how it manages the planning and design ("curriculum architecture") of learning and teaching.

Strengths

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

The EEC found that the institution was highly commendable in relation to the **quality of its learning environment** (i.e. its purpose-built art school estate).

The number of students in the teaching spaces is very generous and the provision of practical workshops is more than adequate. The school itself is particularly well designed and provides an oasis for ADM students to work in.

The scale of the School, the small number of students and the very high level of contact teaching (50-75%) guarantees that teaching staff have regular and effective communication with 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.

4.1.1 The Institution needs to ensure that its QAE processes are **more robust**. We have provided information on how to do this already in this report. Please see 2.1.1 (above).

4.1.2 Students yes; academic and ADM stakeholders, no. There are no external stakeholders involved in the QAE elements and this is a key issue that needs to be addressed. Please see 2.1.12 (above).

4.1.4 The Institution needs to ensure that effectively theory and practice are **complimentary and intellectually robust**, both in the History of Art and practice courses. The EEC are not confident that ADM theory is being taught in a way that is robust and up-to date, nor that it is clearly inter-related with practice (via praxis and critical thinking). What does exist presently does not meet the benchmarks established in other comparable ADM Diploma programmes in EHEA.

For example, *History of Art I* course design simply does not correspond with the current provision in the Art History Discipline at the Diploma level within Art & Design/Media (ADM) in the EHEA or beyond. The ‘survey course’ approach is no longer used in ADM programmes; herein the focus is on contemporary art and emerging art historiography methods. Drawing on the conversations we had with students, the EEC unanimously felt that the ‘survey course’ approach is very evidently **not** preparing the students to understand and engage with either. An Introduction to visual culture that uses contemporary art historical tools and examples of current art and art theory should be pursued. (e.g. Rampley, M. *Exploring Visual Culture: Definitions, Concepts, Contexts*, Edinburgh University Press, 2005 is an example of a 101 approach appropriate to this level of ADM.) Within the ADM field, *Introduction* to visual culture courses always include Design and Media (not just archaeology and Fine Art), present global (*rather* than an Italian Renaissance-bias) perspective and are more centered on art historical and visual culture analytical tools than on the ill-perceived need for ‘coverage’.

For example, some of the *Introduction* courses in the programme resemble the South Kensington system (c19th) - e.g. the still-life drawing studio - and show no hint of post-Bauhaus reforms. This would make them over 100 years behind the curve for comparable foundation courses. Some courses need more attention than others in this respect to make them up to date and relevant.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Partially Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	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 Institution have the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	3
5.3	The Visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Institution'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.	3
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.	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.	5
5.8	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	4
5.9	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Institution's programmes of study.	4

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

5.2. and 5.4 See EEC's comments in the Programme review document.

Also, write the following:

- Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work = 1
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work = 0
- Number of visiting Professors = 1
- Number of special scientists on lease services = 0 (not applicable)

Findings

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

There are a large number of staff teaching on the programme with respect to the size of the cohort. The staff:student ratio (SSR) is very low, especially in comparison with other private and public ADM programmes in the EHEA. Nevertheless, the EEA found that the teaching staff of the Institution do not all routinely have the relevant formal and substantive qualifications or professional experience for teaching their individual specialisms. No staff as yet have the relevant formal and substantive qualifications or professional experience *for teaching in Higher Education per se*.

Strengths

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

The 12 members of academic faculty are enthusiastic and dedicated and should be praised for the wide range of responsibilities they undertake. The ratio of teaching staff to the total number of students (staff:student ratio = SSR) is impressive and should be upheld as one of the institutions key USPs. The staff:student is more than sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the current Diploma Programme of Study.

There are a large number of staff teaching on the programme with respect to the size of the cohort. The staff:student ratio (SSR) is very low, especially in comparison with other private and public ADM programmes in the EHEA. The institution also uses Visiting Staff very effectively to improve its provision in niche areas (folk art). From what the EEC could ascertain, only one member of staff is full time; the other 11 are part-time ('fractional').

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

This relates to:

5.2.

5.4

While the SSR is laudable, the teaching staff of the Institution do not all routinely have the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation nor do they have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach the ADM programme of study at Diploma level. No staff as yet have the relevant formal and substantive qualifications or professional experience *for teaching in Higher Education per se*.

The institution appoints a number of visiting staff (part-time) with fixed-term fractional contracts to teach specific courses related to their specialisms. This can be *appropriate to offer a quality*

programme of study, and is used in the ADM sector. However, this also generates precarity for staff who are reliant on their ‘elective’ courses being chosen by enough students to determine that they will run. Visiting staff (part-time) with fixed-term contracts are thus disadvantaged by the course elective system. The consolidation of the courses (such as *Introduction to... 3ECTS*) would eliminate this issue and ensure that such staff could be employed on a permanent fractional contract.

The institution appoints a very small number of full-time staff. Full-time staff take on a broad range of institutional roles, teaching, administrating and governing the institution. Administration and governance are understaffed in comparison with teaching and are not yet quite *appropriate to offer the highest quality programme of study* that the institution aspires to provide.

The EEC felt that teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is *not consistently* adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.

The EEC recommend that:

1. Existing staff be supported and trained in-service as teachers and researchers to ensure that their teaching and research matches the standard the School presents through its PR. There are many excellent, free, accredited courses that would also help to support and improve staff as teachers. The EEC highly recommend than all academic faculty complete the following free online courses in due course as part of their professional development training:
 - a. Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) **(38hrs)** Course is offered by CAULLT - Council of Australasian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching.
 - b. Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology, *coursea*, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning Exchange. **(15hrs)** This would support and fill gaps in the School’s use of learning technologies.
2. Existing Staff be remunerated for time allocated specifically for such training in staff workload plans. (e.g. 38hrs spent on Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching must be remunerated at 38hrs.)
3. The institution finds sustainable means of supporting existing staff to complete higher degrees (Second Cycle, Masters degrees are normative for staff teaching BA students) while they continue to teach.
4. The institution hires new permanent-contract staff with more advanced qualifications (Second Cycle, masters) and engage more high profile visiting artists/designers *specifically* to raise the bar in terms of research culture.
5. The institution supports micro-residents of this advanced calibre as researcher-in-residences at the school (with studio and accommodation support, plus an exhibition).

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment Area	<i>Non-Compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
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5. Teaching staff	Compliant
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6. Research

(ESG 1.1, 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 Institution has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	N/A
6.2	The Institution 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.	N/A
6.3	The Institution provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	3
6.4	Through its policy and practices, the Institution encourages research collaboration within and outside the Institution, as well as participation in collaborative research funding programmes.	3
6.5	The Institution uses a policy for the protection and exploitation of intellectual property, which is applied consistently.	1
6.6	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 Institution also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	N/A
6.7	The Institution 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.	N/A
6.8	The Institution provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	N/A
6.9	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of academic staff is similar to other Institutions in Cyprus and abroad.	N/A
6.10	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the academic staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	N/A

6.11	The programmes of study implement the Institution's recorded research policy.	N/A
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Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The institution does not pay staff to conduct research. As such, it has no research policies.

Findings

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

The EEC found that **Research** (ESG 1.1, 1.5, 1.6) is not within the Institution's remit or something that would be essential to the provision of the Diploma. Most of the items in this section simply do not apply to this institution.

Strengths

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

Even through **Research** (ESG 1.1, 1.5, 1.6) is not within the Institution's remit nor something that would be essential to the provision of the Diploma, the institution nevertheless provides its staff with adequate facilities (studios) and equipment (workshops) to cover many of their research activities.

Through its policy and practices, the Institution encourages research collaboration within and outside the Institution, as well as participation in collaborative projects with local and international ADM researchers.

In these matters, the EEC wish to congratulate and encourage the institution. These two elements are the sound footing for the development of a Research Strategy that is rooted in Researcher Development for existing staff.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The Institution would benefit greatly from a policy for the protection and exploitation of intellectual property, and its consistent application. Benchmarking with ADM institutions that do this successfully – such as OCADU in Toronto – and consulting with external stakeholders in other Cypriot Universities that have intellectual property polices that protect the rights of staff, students and the institution, and enable fair and sustainable strategies for monetisation of intellectual property, is strongly advised.

If the institution seeks to create and validate a BA programme, it will have to create and implement a Research Policy and show evidence that staff research is directly improving the quality and ambition of learning and teaching.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment Area	<i>Non-Compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6. Research	Non-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 institution has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Council/Senate.	4
7.2	The Institution follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	3
7.3	The Institution's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	4
7.4	The Institution's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	4
7.5	The Institution 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 Institution'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.		
7.2 They institutions has resources to develop teaching currently, but not research.		

Findings

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

The EEC found that the institution follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically.

Strengths

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

In short, the EEC found that the institution maintains very good learning resources and that it has the financial resources and sound budgeting to maintain them.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

No recommendations for improvement here from the EEC.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

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

E. Conclusions and Final Remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the Institution under review may be achieved.

The School is still relatively new and is still finding its feet in the world of Higher Education. It has been formed around provision to support students at EQF Levels 2, 3 and 4 to gain entry to Higher Education in ADM. The School is of vital importance in that it fills a gap in Cypriot art education where little provision is in place within the secondary school (EQF Levels 2, 3 and 4) system. Cypriot school students wishing to pursue a degree and career in ADM have few options to support their applications to ADM programmes. The School provides vital support here, running Portfolio preparation courses, GSCE and A-Level, and a BTEC in ADM. It is, thus, in a perfect position to enable transition through EQF Levels 4 and 5 and on to Level 6. This is the vital role that the school plays in the ecology of the arts in Cyprus.

The School is very small and niche; a strength that it recognises as one of a number of Private Institutions of Tertiary Education (PINA) in Cyprus, but, simultaneously, a weakness that it perhaps does not recognise as clearly ;) The School has come a long way in a very short space of time and during a period in Cyprus that has been fraught with unimaginably difficult conditions. The staff and students should be very proud of what they have achieved here.

The institutional fleetness of foot that circumstances have afforded here is a great gift - it's something that the School should be very careful to retain if it wants to ensure that its plans for sustainable growth remain centre stage in what, and how, it teaches. To achieve this, the School may wish to commit to becoming a learning organisation (Senge 1992) and formally embed the values of research-led teaching in its Vision and Mission.

The EEC felt that the School was doing a very good job of managing all of the student support elements that a large institution would have to put in place. The staff do this by taking on multiple roles (both academic and para-academic) as is often the case in small-to-medium enterprises (SMEs). They do this very professionally and the students are justifiably appreciative of their efforts.

While the EEC were generally happy with what they saw, we have identified a number of areas for Quality Enhancement that will need to be addressed by the School. What follows are some broad recommendations from the EEC to the School.

Quality Assurance and Enhancement for Level 5 Second Cycle

The main area for improvement lies in the design and maintenance of effective Quality Assurance and Enhancement. The Diploma requires that the institution understand and be able to *prove* parity with other institutions with validated Diploma Level 5 courses. This is where the Quality Assurance and Enhancement approach on the Diploma currently programme falls short. A number of measures can be put in place to rectify this:

Engaging with peer review by inviting in external stakeholders from academic and professional sectors would raise the educational standards of the institution and also enable it to make the most of its existing resources.

Engaging external stakeholders / more experienced academic staff in other institutions to mentor, support and offer 'critical friendship' for Curriculum Design and Development is essential in such a

small specialist school Small specialist institutions in the vast majority EHEA states are required by law to take such measures to ensure their quality standards and, in the majority of cases to *validate their higher education programmes*. Hence, the EEC feel that, at very least, the School must seek to formally engage external stakeholders (including more experienced academic staff) from other institutions in the QAE processes, including the review and validation of its courses and programmes.

Engaging 'external' examiners to review final projects would help raise the standards expected from students. External examiners must have academic expertise; a team *might* also have professional expertise (ideally both).

Implementing both externality measures would significantly raise confidence in the ability of the School to meet, maintain and enhance standards in the Diploma.

Support for Academic Faculty: Learning and Teaching support and enhancement

Academic faculty are enthusiastic and dedicated and should be praised for the wide range of responsibilities they undertake. They need to be supported and trained in-service as teachers and researchers to ensure that their teaching and research matches the standard the School presents through its PR. There are many excellent, free, accredited courses that would also help to support and improve staff as teachers. The EEC highly recommend that all academic faculty complete the following free online courses in due course as part of their professional development training:

Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching (HE) **(38hrs)** Course is offered by CAULLT - Council of Australasian University Leaders in Learning and Teaching.

Get Interactive: Practical Teaching with Technology, *coursera*, Offered by University of London, Bloomsbury Learning Exchange. **(15hrs)** This would support and fill gaps in the School's use of learning technologies.

Remunerated time should be allocated specifically for training in staff workload plans. (e.g. 38hrs spent on Contemporary Approaches to University Teaching must be remunerated at 38hrs.) Pastoral care is excellent in this small specialist school. As the school grows, it needs to grow its expertise in Quality Assurance and Enhancement, research and student support and begin to create specialist roles here, employing additional staff to focus exclusively on such work.

Support for Academic Faculty: Researcher Development

If a BA programme is on the horizon then the institution needs to begin to develop a research culture. Currently, there is no research culture. In short, without a research culture, it will not be able to run a BA programme.

To create a research culture, the School should start by supporting (paying for) developing staff research competencies. The common route in the EHEA to this effect is as follows:

Consulting the EHEA Researcher Development Framework (RDF). The EHEA's RDF is upheld across Europe (including in many third countries such as Scotland and Georgia). The exemplar of what it includes is the Vitae Researcher Development Framework (UK). Consult this and then work on the following:

TNA - research training needs analysis of each member staff.

What training can be provided for free, at cost? What can the institution afford? Supporting existing staff to complete higher degrees (Second Cycle, Masters degrees are normative for staff teaching BA students) while they continue to teach.

Hiring new staff with more advanced qualifications (Second Cycle, masters) and engaging more high profile visiting artists/designers *specifically* to raise the bar in terms of research culture.

Supporting micro-residents of this advanced calibre as researcher-in-residences at the school (with studio and accommodation support, plus an exhibition).

Programme of Study

The EEC met with students to hear about the programme, the institution and their own work. While the students were highly enthused about the institution and their tutors, the EEC were not convinced that the students had a sufficient grasp of the current state of the field of ADM. Their contextual knowledge was *not* current and their frames of theoretical and practical reference were not adequate and up to date. This would severely hamper their educational progress if they were to transfer from their Diploma to a BA programme in Cyprus or, indeed, anywhere in the EHEA. The content and ambition of the courses needs to improve to ensure they are kept up to date with the latest developments in ADM so that students are adequately prepared for transition to work or further study. *Replacing* the extant History of Art courses is key to this; **AND** updated ADM theory provision (Visual Culture courses) that is focused on contemporary resources and debates are essential.

The small scale, supportive family structure is clearly very appealing to the current cohort of students. However, this kinship model is also a source of complacency among the student body regarding what they think they know and what they imagine they might need to learn. It creates a bubble that leads to a lack of accountability vis a vis the ADM field and in relation to QAE. Students need to be challenged (dissensus), this means they have to have their worldviews expanded and be asked to step out of their comfort zones. The students need to have support *and* to be given rigorous feedback. The emphasis is very much on support but not enough on rigour.

Admin

The Institution should simplify its structures and procedures for administration, assessment and governance to ensure that they deliver what they say they deliver.

The Institution must remove all conflicts of interest from its QAE processes; consider adding external academic members of staff to your Course Review and Approval Panels.

F. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Professor Neil Mulholland	
Professor Xenofon Bitsikas	
Professor Susanne Clausen	
Menelaos A. Menelaou	
Maria Agisilaou	
Frangos Prokopas	

Date: 18th May 2021

