Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: Date.

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  Frederick Institute of Technology
- **Town: Nicosia**
- **Programme of study**
  Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

  In Greek:

  Τεχνολογία Πληροφορικής και Επικοινωνιών (2 έτη/120 ECTS, Δίπλωμα)

  In English:

  Information and Communication Technology (2 years/120 ECTS, Diploma)
- **Language(s) of instruction: Greek/English**
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: Concentrations
  In English: Concentrations

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.300.1.1or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*

- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*

    - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
    - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*

- *The institution should respondtothe EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*

- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development
(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Areas of improvement and recommendations**by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official UseONLY
1.1. The dual nature of the course, being taught in parallel between two sites, could cause potential complications. The institute should consider how to alleviate potential issues around, for example, differences in teaching quality between sites or misalignment of material covered during semesters.	We acknowledge the EEC's concern regarding the potential complications of courses being taught in parallel between two sites, therefore we have implemented the following actions: • Unified course structure and materials: As stated in the Applications for Evaluation – Accreditation of both Limassol and Nicosia, common courses follow a single, centrally approved syllabus, with shared learning outcomes, assessment methods, and course materials which will be uploaded on the Moodle platform to ensure uniformity. • Centralised coordination and alignment meetings: The Programme Coordinators, in both sites, oversee the teaching deliverables and monitor progress to avoid deviations in pace or coverage of material. In addition, they organise common program meetings in which instructors participate to harmonise teaching. • Course scientific advisors: Each course is supported by one or more scientific advisors who ensure alignment of syllabus, learning outcomes and teaching consistency and provide guidance to instructors wherever corrective actions are required. • Shared staff training: The institute organises mandatory Professional and Personal Development training seminars, where all instructors receive common guidance, reflect on teaching methodologies and share teaching resources. These seminars provide alignment in practices across sites and	Choose level of compliance:

	ensure consistency in student experience. [Please click here for the Personal Professional and Professional Development at Frederick University].	
1.2. While the proposed courses cover much of the basics needed, it would be worth considering the balance of soft and 'hard' skills taught in the course overall. One identified potential would be for more project management skills perhaps through the introduction of a new course covering such skills.	We would like to thank the Committee for its valuable observation regarding the balance between soft and hard skills. While the Diploma in ICT is primarily designed as a hands-on, technician-oriented program, we fully agree that strengthening soft and transversal skills is essential for employability and workplace readiness. In response, we have introduced a new compulsory course, ICT116 – Project Management for ICT (3 ECTS). The analytical course description can be seen in Annex 1. This course equips students with practical skills in project planning, teamwork, communication, scheduling, and stakeholder management, contextualised to ICT-related tasks (e.g., system deployment, troubleshooting, and upgrades). It complements existing courses such as Technical Communication Skills (ICT114) and Troubleshooting Skills (ICT115), reinforcing professional competencies through project-based assignments, group work, and real-case scenarios. With this addition, the program achieves a more balanced integration of technical “hard” skills (e.g., networking, operating systems, programming, security) and professional “soft” skills (e.g., communication, collaboration, leadership, and adaptability). The overall ECTS structure remains unchanged at 120 ECTS, with adjustments ensuring a consistent and coherent study plan as it can be seen in the program's Course Distribution per Semester Table in Annex 2 (changes are highlighted).	Choose level of compliance:

	This adjustment directly addresses the Committee's recommendation, ensuring graduates are not only technically proficient but also capable of managing tasks, leading teams, and communicating effectively in professional ICT environments.	
1.3. The International and English language plans for the course were not developed fully, and there should be further consideration of the challenges of teaching a diverse international study body.	According to the admission criteria, students who apply for the ICT programme taught in English must demonstrate adequate English proficiency prior to admission. Specifically, applicants are required to provide proof of one of the following: • IGCSE with grade D or above, • IELTS with a minimum overall band score of 5.0, • TOEFL iBT with a score of 71 or above. These criteria are fully in line with the decision of the Council of Ministers, dated 19/7/2023, which sets the recognised standards for English language proficiency in higher education. This ensures compliance with national policy and guarantees that students possess the necessary skills to engage successfully with the program. However, students who have difficulty meeting the above criteria regarding the English language qualifications, Frederick Institute of Technology with collaboration with Frederick University offer an English Language Foundation Course accredited by CYQAA, following the Council's decision of 31 March 2025 (Ref. No. 07.14.674.012 – English Language Foundation Program, 1 year). Upon the completion of the above students are eligible to apply for the ICT program. In addition, the Student Welfare Office provides services to help overseas students with administrative, academic,	Choose level of compliance:

	and cultural integration, including orientation sessions and ongoing academic advising. Moreover, there is an ICT105 English for ICT students which enhances the course with Content and Language Integrated Learning and embedding CLIL practices and intercultural skills across ICT courses and the Internship. This enhances the program Intended Learning Outcomes (ILO) to "communicate effectively with clients, users and technical teams," already stated in the Application, and keeps the program bilingual (Greek/English) as declared.	
1.4. All the courses currently have 6 ECTS. Flexibility in the ECTS offered for different courses would better fit the resulting workload. It appears that some courses have higher workload (e.g. 3+1* periods per week) compared to others with less workload (e.g. 2 periods per week). It is not clear why these courses should have the same number of ECTS.	We acknowledge the Committee's recommendation to re-examine the load allocation for each subject with the corresponding number of ECTS. The Diploma in ICT was designed with a uniform allocation of 6 ECTS per course in order to ensure clarity, balance, and consistency across semesters, while embedding a hands-on pedagogical model in every subject. Although contact periods may differ, the workload calculation underlying ECTS includes not only classroom hours but also laboratory activities, independent assignments, and project-based learning. Our curriculum is structured so that each course, whether weighted more toward lectures or toward labs. Every subject in the program is designed to be practice-based rather than purely theoretical. Even courses with fewer scheduled lecture hours are reinforced through laboratory exercises, guided practice, group projects, and structured assignments. This ensures that learning outcomes are achieved through active engagement, not just classroom time.	Choose level of compliance:

	Courses showing "2 periods per week" typically indicate lecture contact, but are paired with laboratory or assignment components that demand equivalent effort outside of scheduled periods. Conversely, courses with "3+1" formats show their laboratory commitment more explicitly. In both cases, the total workload (contact + independent study + assessment tasks) is designed to converge on the same 6 ECT, where in some cases the 3+1 has been re-evaluated to 2+2 as it can be seen in the program's Course Distribution per Semester Table in Annex 2 (changes are highlighted).	
1.5. Consider more carefully the involvement of the stakeholders by implementing a more clear or formal process of the gathering of stakeholders' interests and requirements during the review of the program. Consider also keeping a log of these requirements to be able to refer back to them in the future.	We acknowledge the Committee's recommendation to implement a more formal process for gathering feedback from stakeholders. To keep procedures straightforward while still addressing this recommendation, we have implemented the following measures: • Regular meetings with stakeholders: The Program Coordinator have scheduled annual meetings with selected employers and industrial partners ensuring that the program remains relevant to the evolving needs of the ICT sector. The objective of the meetings is to gather data on latest trends, required academic qualifications and skills and to discuss program content. • Maintain a Stakeholder Feedback Form: The Program Coordinator, keeps a Stakeholder's feedback form, recording the main points raised and the actions taken in response. This allows the Institute to track the stakeholder's input and demonstrate how feedback is implemented in the	Choose level of compliance:

	program's development. The form can be seen in Annex 3	

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment

(ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations**by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official UseONLY
2.1. The EEC would like to see a more direct connection on how research informs the design and number of topics of courses.	The Diploma in ICT is designed primarily as a practice-oriented, technical qualification aimed at preparing graduates for immediate employment in ICT technician roles. While it does not have the academic research intensity of a bachelor's degree, our teaching is nonetheless strongly informed by the research activity and professional engagement of our faculty. Staff members engaged in research, conference participation, and publication ensure that course content is up to date with technological advances. This is especially visible in subject areas where the ICT field evolves rapidly (e.g., computer architecture, cloud computing, mobile computing, networks, and cybersecurity). Their research activity feeds into the selection of topics, the updating of curricula, and the provision of high-quality reading materials such as research articles, case studies, and white papers that complement textbooks and hands-on assignments. (Please refer to the response to EEC's comment 3.2. for the teaching staff involved in research and publications)	Choose level of compliance:
2.2. The EEC would also like to see a higher presence of skills development in professional practical contexts.	We acknowledge the importance of strengthening transversal and soft skills in the context of a technical diploma. The professional skills development include communication, teamwork, adaptability, problem-solving, project leadership, and critical thinking across advanced technology industries. Employability in ICT depends not only on technical expertise but also on the ability to operate effectively in diverse, collaborative, and dynamic workplaces. The Diploma in ICT responds to this need by embedding soft-skills development within professional, practice-based	Choose level of compliance:

	learning contexts through coursework, laboratories, group assignments, and especially the Industrial Placement. At Course Level: • ICT114 Technical Communication Skills (3 ECTS): Students practice professional documentation, technical reporting, and workplace communication in both English and Greek. • ICT116 Project Management for ICT Technicians (3 ECTS, newly introduced): Teamwork, planning, stakeholder communication, and leadership are directly assessed through a group mini-project. • Networks, Cloud Computing, Mobile Computing, and Security courses: Group-based labs and troubleshooting exercises foster collaboration, adaptability, and shared decision-making. • Professional Internship (ICT211, 6 ECTS): Students work in real workplaces for six weeks, where supervisors explicitly evaluate professionalism, communication, adaptability, and teamwork alongside technical performance. Reflection reports and presentations further reinforce soft skills development in professional contexts. • Laboratories and Hands-On Projects: Lab exercises require students to work in pairs or small teams to configure systems, solve network or security issues, and document their results. This encourages peer learning, collaboration, and critical evaluation. Assignments often simulate real ICT tasks (e.g., creating user manuals, documenting configurations, presenting solutions to “clients”). • Reinforcing Skills Through Professional	

	Contexts: Guest lectures and case studies from faculty research (e.g., cloud, mobile, security) may also help expose students to cutting-edge practice and ethical challenges, encouraging critical thinking. • Case study analysis (based on published research and industry reports) helps students apply theory to realistic scenarios. • Team-based projects across semesters ensure repeated practice of communication, leadership, and collaboration under varied conditions.	
2.3. Evidence of where students would spend their internships should have been provided.	Frederick's Industry Liaison Office actively maintains partnerships with major telecom and ICT firms in Cyprus. Many of these organizations already view Frederick students as preferred candidates for hiring, owing to past positive internship and graduate outcomes. Indicative Partners that can host students for practical placement / internships during the program implementation are: 1. CYTA (the leading integrated communications provider), a major telecom players/leader in Cyprus. 2. Epic Ltd (mobile, fixed, broadband services). 3. Cablenet (fixed / broadband / IPTV). 4. Primetel (voice, data, IP services). 5. EAC (electricity company), among others, are natural and existing partners for hosting ICT internships. 6. Amdocs (digital network transformation communications company). 7. AA AceNetworks Cyprus (hotel and casino infrastructure). 8. Bionic (computer hardware). 9. NewCYTech (server infrastructure) are already part of our host companies for internships.	Choose level of compliance:

3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations**by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official UseONLY
3.1. There is a lack of support and clear motivation to actively encourage promotion within the institution.	The Institute already has a comprehensive and merit based promotion procedure, which is included as Annex 4, as defined in its internal rules. The promotion process evaluates staff on a broad set of criteria, including: • Teaching effectiveness • Scholarly and professional activities • Administrative abilities • Public service Promotion from one rank to the next is based on merit and overall contribution, rather than simply on years of service or qualifications. In addition, Frederick actively supports and motivates staff promotion through a structured framework of professional development initiatives, including the Personal & Professional Development Framework (P^2DF) and the Center for Innovation and Excellence in Teaching (CIET), which provide mentoring, pedagogical training, workshops, and resources to strengthen teaching, research, and leadership capacity. Staff also have access to extensive lifelong learning opportunities and vocational programs, with many already participating in diverse trainings such as Academic Advising, Digital Pedagogies, Leadership and Management, as well as the Use of AI in Higher Education. This active engagement in continuous upskilling, combined with institutional mechanisms that align training outcomes with promotion criteria, demonstrates that Frederick not only provides clear pathways	Choose level of compliance:

	for professional growth but also fosters a culture of motivation and recognition that directly supports career advancement.	
3.2. It was unclear what research is conducted that is directly related to this programme. More teaching staff should be involved in research and publications related in order to assure the actualization of knowledge that the sector needs.	The members of the teaching team include active researchers whose outputs map directly onto Diploma courses in Architecture, Cloud, Mobile, Networks and Security. Approximately 67% of teaching staff involved in research and publication are PhD holders. For example, 1. Dr Chrysostomos Chrysostomou leads the Networks Research Laboratory (NETLAB) with recent work in 5G/IIoT radio-resource optimization and cybersecurity; these findings feed the Networks I/II and Network & System Security syllabi and lab scenarios. 2. Dr Konstantinos Tata's publications on computer architecture, embedded/IoT systems and NoC design inform Architecture and Embedded/IoT labs (e.g., energy-aware hardware and FPGA-backed prototypes). 3. Dr Andreas Konstantinidi's recent projects on blockchain datastores for massive IoT, smart-building IoT firewalls, indoor localization, AR/VR platformsare used as case studies and mini-projects across Cloud, Mobile, and Data-centric labs (students read short papers, replicate components, and stress-test APIs). In addition, 4. Dr Christos Markides (big data/analytics, IoT devices) has published in the areas of big data analytics, IoT device integration, and cloud-based architectures for e-health. 5. Dr Giorgos A. Demetriou publications on Mobile Robotic Systems, Marine Robotic Systems, Intelligent Systems, Robotic Systems, Control Systems and Embedded Systems. 6. Dr Andreas Dionysiou publications in	Choose level of compliance:

	leading venues such as IEEE European Security & Privacy (EuroS&P), ACM Asia Conference on Computer and Communications Security (AsiaCCS), Privacy Enhancing Technologies Symposium (PETS), and Elsevier Computers & Security. Newer members of staff co-publish applied papers with senior staff, for instance: 7. Victoras Kassianides co-authored 2024 IoT prototypes used in our device-to-cloud labs—ensuring research currency is diffused across the teaching team. 8. Christoforos Kronis publications focus on Mobile Computing and Artificial Intelligence. Publication on IFIP Artificial Intelligence Applications & Innovations (AIAI'13) with title Human-Like Agents for a Smartphone First Person Shooter Game using Crowdsourced Data). 9. Iasonas Iasonos Co-authored on the development of a Green-Holistic IoT Platform for Forest Management and Monitoring: Reforestation and Deforestation Modules. Making social media applications inclusive for deaf end-users with access to sign language. Accessible System and Social Media Mobile Application for Deaf Users. Smart Out-of-Home Advertising Using Artificial Intelligence and GIS Data A Multi-Objective Optimization Algorithm for Out-of-Home Advertising.	

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
(ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations**by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official UseONLY
4.1. Advertising the diploma (with its certification) and publishing the criteria of admission sometime ahead of the start of the application period would have improved the exposure and attractiveness of the programme to potential students. We understand this was not possible, but we expect this to be available at the earliest date. This EEC expects to make a full assessment of this at a later date.	We acknowledge the Committee's observation regarding the importance of advertising in time the diploma and the early publication of the admission criteria. We would like to clarify that advertising is not legally possible prior to the accreditation of the proposed program of study, as new programs must first obtain official certification before they can be promoted. This creates a very short time frame between certification and the start of the semester. Nevertheless, the Institute has taken proactive steps to ensure immediate readiness for advertising once certification is granted. Promotional materials, including the program leaflet (attached in Annex 5), have already been prepared, and the admissions criteria are ready to be published on the Institute's website and other communication channels. In future semesters, promotion will begin well in advance of the application period. The program details and career opportunities will be published through the Institute's website, social media, and outreach activities to schools and career advisor, following the established practices used for all programs of study at Frederick Institute of Technology.	Choose level of compliance:
4.2. Given the provisional nature of the subareas dealt here, which makes them impossible to evaluate, the appropriateness of the subareas has been evaluated	We acknowledge the Committee's remark that certain subareas could not be fully evaluated as the program has not yet commenced. The Institute is confident that the established processes already applied successfully in other program of	Choose level of compliance:

based on the information provided only and on evidence coming for other similar programmes run by the Frederick Institute of Technology.	study in the Technical Division of Frederick Institute of Technology will ensure full alignment with CYQAA requirements.	

5. Learning resources and student support
(ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations**by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official UseONLY
5.1. It may be beneficial to further explore the use of AI in the learning process.	Frederick Institute of Technology, recognizing that AI offers important opportunities to enhance teaching and learning, has already adopted the "Policy for the Use of Generative AI in the Teaching, Learning and Assessment Process" (attached in Annex 6). This policy provides a clear guidance for academic staff and students on the responsible and ethical integration of AI in education. Through this framework, we ensure that students acquire valuable skills in using AI tools while safeguarding academic integrity and quality.	Choose level of compliance:
5.2. Big data topics could be more specifically addressed in the courses.	We acknowledge the Committee's valuable observation regarding the inclusion of Big Data topics. We note that this reflects a wider skills gap in data analytics and large-scale data handling that has also been identified in our own desk research for European projects on digital skills. While the Diploma in ICT remains a technician-level, hands-on program (2 years / 120 ECTS), we agree that graduates will benefit from a practical introduction to Big Data concepts, particularly as they apply to ICT operations, networks, and cloud infrastructures. To address this, we integrated Big Data awareness and skills across selected subjects in the following ways: Database Management: • Introduce modules on handling large datasets, optimisation of queries, and exposure to NoSQL paradigms (e.g., MongoDB). • Use case studies where students compare traditional relational	Choose level of compliance:

	databases with large-volume data handling techniques. Cloud Computing: • Include an introduction to cloud-based data services (e.g., AWS S3, Azure Data Lake) and their role in storing and managing large datasets. • Practical labs may demonstrate how technicians support scalable data storage and retrieval solutions. Networks & Security: • Integrate topics on data traffic monitoring and analysis, using packet-capture tools and simple analytics for security/log data.	
5.3. Skills in project management and teamwork could be explicitly integrated into the programme.	We acknowledge the Committee's observation and have explicitly strengthened the program in this area. A new compulsory course, ICT116 – Project Management for ICT (3 ECTS), has been introduced in Semester 2 to develop practical skills in planning, teamwork, and stakeholder communication. In addition, teamwork is embedded across laboratories, troubleshooting exercises, and the Industrial Placement (ICT211), where collaboration and communication are formally assessed. This ensures that project management and teamwork skills are systematically developed and evaluated throughout the Diploma, complementing the strong technical foundation.	Choose level of compliance:

6. Additional for doctoral programmes

(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations**by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official UseONLY
N/A	N/A	Choose level of compliance:

7. Eligibility (Joint programme)

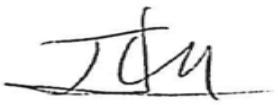
(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations**by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official UseONLY
N/A	N/A	Choose level of compliance:

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks**by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official UseONLY
Overall, this is **a strong program**, with a potential for **good connections with industry**, high employability of students, and meeting a well-established need in the market. **The program is well formulated and described,** and the evidence from other programs taught at the institute bodes well for the success of this program. The EEC has outlined areas for revision of the proposed program. Most immediately, this covers the number of ECTS per course and the provision of a list of organisations in which internships will be found for students. The EEC has also outlined longer term issues with formalising the connections with stakeholders, potentially through a stakeholders advisory committee, and increasing research involvement of staff. **This EEC looks forward to this being a strong and impactful teaching program**.	We sincerely thank the External Evaluation Committee for its positive assessment of the proposed Diploma in ICT and for recognising its strong design, employability focus, and alignment with industry needs. We are grateful for the Committee's valuable insights, suggestions, and recommendations, which have guided us in refining the program. All suggestions made by the EEC have been adopted and implemented as seen by the answers throughout sessions 1-5.	Choose level of compliance:

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	*Position*	*Signature*
Dr Pavlos Mavromatidis	Academic Director	

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