Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: 29/05/2025

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  Neapolis University/ University of Western Macedonia
- **Town:** Pafos, Cyprus / Kozani, Greece
- **Programme of study**
  Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

  In Greek:

  Πτυχίο & Μεταπτυχιακό στην Μηχανική Σχεδιασμού Προϊόντων σε συνεργασία με το Πανεπιστήμιο Δυτικής Μακεδονίας

  In English:

  Bachelor & Integrated Master in Product Design Engineering in Collaboration with the University of Western Macedonia
- **Language(s) of instruction: English** Language(s)
- **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.300.1.1 or 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 respond to the 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 Use ONLY
It is recommended to facilitate involvement of students and other stakeholders in the program design.	We fully acknowledge the importance of stakeholder engagement in curriculum development. In response, we have already initiated structured consultations with current students, alumni, industry professionals, and faculty members. Their input has already been incorporated through surveys, focus groups, and advisory panels. Moving forward, we have established a permanent Stakeholder Advisory Committee to ensure continuous involvement in programme evaluation and development.	Choose level of compliance:
It is recommended to design the program so that it enables smooth student progression, especially during the transition phase from Paphos to Western Macedonia.	Done. Both Universities already have similar experiences from already running Joint academic programs between the two institutions in the framework of a strategic partnership. So, such issues have already been dealt with successfully and the programs operate without any complication. We have developed a detailed progression pathway and student transition plan, which includes joint academic advising, pre-transition orientation sessions, and coordinated administrative support from both institutions. Course sequencing and workload have been harmonized to ensure academic continuity and minimize disruption during the transition.	Choose level of compliance:
It is recommended to assure regularly monitoring of the latest research in the given discipline. Teachers must be given time to do this monitoring ensuring that the programme is up-to-date, and ensuring that all subjects are equally updated in recent research	We are committed to integrating current research into our curriculum. Faculty workloads are being adjusted to include dedicated research time, and both institutions are aligning their research support policies to facilitate access to journals, conferences, and collaborative projects. A bi-annual curriculum review will ensure course content reflects emerging developments in the field.	Choose level of compliance:
It is recommended to periodically reviewed not only the current changing needs of society but more importantly the emerging needs as the students will be graduated in 4-to-5-year time. This proactive approach is a key factor in ensuring that the programme remains consistent with developments in society aligning the content and objectives of the study programme accordingly.	We recognize that anticipating future trends is critical. A foresight strategy is being developed, involving regular reviews of industry and societal trends through collaboration with innovation hubs, design councils, and labour market observatories. These insights will inform periodic curriculum updates and ensure long-term relevance of the programme.	Choose level of compliance:

It is recommended to involve students and staff in providing and analyzing information and planning follow-up activities. This is especially important when running the programme for the first time.	We are implementing a participatory quality assurance model where students and staff contribute to course evaluations, programme reviews, and feedback analysis. A Programme Launch Working Group, comprising faculty and student representatives from both universities, will oversee early-stage implementation, including follow-up action planning based on collected data.	Choose level of compliance:
It is recommended to involve teachers and students in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation).	Done. Faculty and student participation have been a cornerstone of the programme's joint development process. Curriculum committees include representatives from both groups, and mechanisms for ongoing participation in programme amendments and internal evaluations are being institutionalized across both universities.	
It is recommended that programme teachers ensure logical sequence and coherence of courses avoiding overlaps between courses	Done. All the curricula have been carefully mapped using a matrix approach to ensure course coherence, progression, and absence of content duplication. Each course outline includes clear prerequisites and learning outcomes aligned to the programme's overall competencies. Periodic curriculum audits will further help prevent overlaps and ensure consistency.	
It is recommended to enhance support in development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills).	The programme includes embedded modules and activities to develop transversal skills. For example: • Digital tools and prototyping technologies are integrated into design studio courses. (See **ANNEX 5** - Syllabi **CS111 – Computer Science and CS112 – Programming for Engineers, PDE0604 – Computer Aided Manufacturing (CAM) and PDE0701 – Computer Aided Engineering (CAE)**) • Foreign language support is available through our language centres. • Entrepreneurship and innovation are taught via a dedicated module with input from local startups. (See **ANNEX 5** - syllabi **PDE0805 – Branding and Commercialization, BUSN104 Principles of Marketing, BUSN405 Project Management**. Also the programme offers the elective course **Entrepreneurship and Innovation** that focuses on business creation and innovation processes, integrating input from industry and local startups.) • Communication and teamwork are fostered through project-based learning and collaborative assignments. (e.g **ANNEX 5** - syllabi **ARCHAS101 – The Fundamentals of Architectural Design includes group exercises (exercise 3, "Using Space" – group analysis of a public venue) or PDE0801 – Industrial Design)** We will continuously strengthen these competencies in response to student feedback and industry input.	

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment
(ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
It is recommended to enhance the process of teaching and learning to be more flexible, integrating different modes of delivery, and a variety of pedagogical methods to facilitate the achievement of planned learning outcomes. Also sharing knowledge, practices, methods among teachers.	Done. A number of different teaching methods are used aiming to support the modern, effective educational technologies. As per the module's description (indicatively), (see below): -Interactive face-to-face lectures -Group activities/discussions -In class activities -Multimedia activities -Guest Lectures **PDE0501 -CAD-Solid Modeling** Interactive lectures and multimedia activities are used in order to offer a variety of knowledges supported by CAD laboratory exercises using advanced CAD/CAM systems i.e. Autodesk Inventor, Solidworks etc. **PDE0504 Introduction to Manufacturing Processes** Triggering the students' interest for participation with the lectures and group discussions, while supporting the technology skills via guest lecturers and in class activities using ***CNC machining and manufacturing measuring equipment.*** **PDE0702 Computational design and biomimetics in product design** In class activities and lectures can attract the attention of the students for modern topics like computational design and biomimetics. Then high-end CAD systems and visual languages are attractive via group and in class activities. Finally, The CAD lab capacity is a strong asset for the program.	Choose level of compliance:
It is recommended that the students take an active role in creating the learning process. For example, project-based learning.	Done. Please See syllabi (**ANNEX 5**): ***ARCH AS101- The module*** culminates in a semester-long design studio project ("Seaside Café") where students synthesize skills and present publicly, integrating critical thinking and peer feedback. ***PDE0502 – Design Thinking*** **and** ***PDE0704 – Product Design I*** – Both courses are rooted in iterative, student-led design processes that require active problem-solving and creativity.	Choose level of compliance:

	PDE0801 – Industrial Design Project **and** ***PDE0904 – Project in Product Design*** - Modules involve students taking initiative to define problems, propose solutions, and manage the development cycle.	
It is recommended to further and regularly enhance teaching methods, tools and material to assure that they are modern, effective, and support the use of modern educational technologies	The Joint BEng in Product Design Engineering is committed to continuously updating and enhancing its teaching methods and educational tools to align with contemporary pedagogical practices and technological advancements. The program ensures a dynamic and engaging learning environment through the following approaches: - **Use of Moodle** The programme makes active use of Moodle as its main digital platform, offering students easy and consistent access to course materials, assignment submissions, feedback, announcements, and discussion spaces. It's a central part of how we organise teaching and keep communication flowing. Through Moodle, students engage with a rich mix of learning resources – from videos and lecture slides to 3D models and supporting documents – allowing each learner to study in a way that best suits their individual style. - **Interactive and Multimodal Teaching Materials** • Many courses (e.g**., ANNEX 5 -** ***CS111 – Computer Science***, ***CS112 – Programming for Engineers***, ***BUSN405 – Project Management***) include multimedia presentations, recorded lectures, and instructional videos, ensuring accessibility and reinforcing key concepts. • Modules such as *Freehand Drawing (See* **ANNEX 5** - ***Syllabus*** **ARCH SV102)** and *Technical Drawing (**See** **ANNEX 5** - **Syllabus** **ARCH SV101**) integrate physical sketching with digital representations to bridge traditional and modern visualization techniques. - **Interactive Activities and Active Learning** • Teaching emphasizes interactive and student-centered activities, including:	Choose level of compliance:

	○ Forums, debates and online discussions to foster peer engagement and collaborative thinking. ○ Case studies and role plays in modules like *Principles of Marketing* and *Project Management (**See** **ANNEX 5** - ***Syllabus BUSN104 and BUSN405)*** to simulate real-world decision-making. ○ Problem-solving exercises in *Mathematics (**See** **ANNEX 5** - ***Syllabus MATH120**)*, *Programming (**See syllabus** **CS112**)*, and *Material Science (**see syllabus** **PDE122**)*, cultivating critical and analytical skills. ○ Peer review and group critiques embedded in studio courses (**See ANNEX 5** - **Syllabi *ARCH AS101*, *ARCH SV102***) promote reflective learning and collaborative development. - **Use of Industry-Relevant Tools and Technologies** • Engineering modules integrate professional digital tools such as: ○ CAD, CAM, and CAE software in ***PDE0501*, *PDE0604*, and *PDE0701*** **(ANNEX 5)**. ○ Prototyping and simulation platforms in ***PDE0705 (ANNEX 5)***– *Prototyping for Design Engineers* and ***PDE0803*** **(ANNEX 5)–** *Reverse Engineering and 3D Printing*. ○ **Arduino** and embedded system tools are used in foundational computing modules to introduce hardware-software integration (See **ANNEX 5** - ***CS111***). - **Continuous Feedback and Adaptive Teaching** • The program uses formative assessments, frequent feedback, and student input to adapt teaching strategies and ensure learning effectiveness.	

	• Studio courses (e.g., ***ARCH AS101***) and project modules (***PDE0801, PDE1001***) follow an iterative model, incorporating weekly critiques, presentations, and dynamic peer-instructor dialogue.	

3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Teaching staff should be more supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills towards project-based learning.	Done. The teaching staff has a great deal of experience in project-based learning methods. This happens, because both Institutions support Programmes/ courses in the area **of product design, architecture design and computer science. Students-centered** Projects and feedback from the teaching staff is a well-established teaching culture. Nevertheless, at the beginning of each semester the Coordinators have at least a meeting with the teaching staff for guidance and support with respect to the project-based learning principles. Additionally, the NUP Pedagogical and Learning Process Unit already provides regular staff trainings, including project-based learning techniques and methodologies. More precisely the below is a clear indication of a Project Based Learning (PBL) training scheme) This scheme supports students through the lifecycle of project development while enabling tutors to effectively guide and assess their progress, please, ***see ANNEX 4_Faculty Workshops***	Choose level of compliance:

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Ensure and regular verify that both Universities support the programme in a similar way.	The Programme's Joint Academic Committee ensures and regularly verifies that both Universities support the program in a similar way. KPIs are clearly set and their fulfillment is closely monitored by learning analytics system already applied in both universities.	Choose level of compliance:

5. Learning resources and student support

(ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
It is recommended to improve support for project-based learning, program planning and operation in two locationsand student mobility.	Done. Please, see relevant answer 3.1. At the beginning of each semester the Coordinators have at least a meeting with the teaching staff for guidance and support with respect to the project-based learning program planning and operation. Additionally, the NUP Pedagogical and Learning Process Unit already provides regular staff trainings, including project-based learning techniques and methodologies	Choose level of compliance:
It is recommended to improve the work with assessment of the resource-related trends and future risks to have a clear plan for considering these trends and mitigating the associated risks	Done. Both Universities already have similar experiences from already Joint academic programs between the two institutions. Such issues have already been dealt with successfully and the programs operate without any complication. In any case, we acknowledge the importance of proactively identifying and addressing resource-related trends and risks to ensure the long-term sustainability and resilience of the Joint BSc in Product Design Engineering. To this end, we are undertaking the following measures by having already envisaged a very specific Risk Mitigation Strategy: • **Resource Risk Assessment Framework:** We developed a formal risk management framework that includes regular environmental scanning, financial forecasting, human resource planning, and technological infrastructure reviews. This will enable early identification of potential risks related to funding, staffing, facilities, and digital infrastructure. See attachment for the basic features of this Framework. • **Joint Risk Management Planning:** The joint Academic Committee between Neapolis University Pafos and the University of Western Macedonia **oversees strategic planning, including shared resource allocation and contingency measures to address potential disruptions (e.g., staff turnover, inflation, energy costs, or cross-border mobility constraints).** • **Scenario Planning:** We are initiating scenario planning exercises to prepare for different future conditions that could affect	Choose level of compliance:

	programme delivery, including shifts in student demand, changes in government policy or regulations, and technological advancements. • **Infrastructure Monitoring and Investment:** Regular reviews of lab equipment, software licenses, workshop facilities, and digital learning platforms are regularly conducted to ensure alignment with emerging needs and that necessary upgrades or replacements are budgeted for in advance. • **Sustainability and Resilience Indicators:** A set of key performance indicators (KPIs) is being established to monitor areas such as staff-to-student ratios, digital capacity, funding levels, and international mobility logistics. These KPIs will inform annual strategic reviews and decision-making processes. By implementing this already envisaged proactive approach, we aim to future-proof the programme and ensure consistent quality and availability of learning resources under a variety of conditions.	

6. Additional for doctoral programmes

(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme)

(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
The progression of the program needs to be made clear to all courses and teachers involved. The progression between the different courses is not so clear declared, means what knowledge does the students bring with them from one course to another. An illustration of the progression of the different subjects from one course to another, over the different study periods might help to clarify this. This will also ensure and clarify the responsibilities for the quality of the program. This might be of specific importance, since the program is given at two different Universities	Done. Please **see *Annex 2_ Courses Progression Illustration*** mapping the progression and the interconnection of all Programme courses, structured around clear and logical learning thematics.	Choose level of compliance:
Our recommendation is to conduct a joint workshop where the courses are reviewed in detail and that eachsemester's courses correlate with each other under, for example, a theme. The first semester could, for example, be the students' understanding of space, dimensions, the individual's ability to understand. The second semester's theme could be human factors and the integration of the human being with the product, space. The exercises in the different courses can thus be adapted to the theme.	The proposed roadmap and the recommended joint workshop are a very good idea, which we happily adopt. This will be communicated at the beginning of each semester, where the Coordinators meet all the teaching staff. A common strategy will be beneficial for both the students and the teaching staff., please, see relevant answer 7.1 above.	Choose level of compliance:
It could be good to assign the program director in each University (not programme coordinators only) for the joint program	The program directors have been assigned and they are: **Associate Professor John Bellos for the NUP and Professor Panagiotis Kyratsis for the UWM.**	Choose level of compliance:
The Vision and USP can be strengthen. For example, if one of the identified USP at Faculty of Engineering of theUniversity of Western Macedonia, is" The holistic design of products and systems, starting with the conception of the idea and ending with the	We happily agree with the recommendation.	Choose level of compliance:

completion of the final product", it could also be agreed part of the USP for the new joint program		
Mobility for students and staff needs to be clarified in more details. Will staff for example be given the opportunity for mobility through visits to the respective universities? In what way will mobility for students be supported?	Mobility for students and staff is already envisaged throughout the program. Both Universities are already linked with ERASMUS+ mobility schemes as well as joint projects. This also includes the administrative staff.	Choose level of compliance:

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
A clear role of a dedicated Program Director with appropriate responsibility and authority is needed to effectively organize planning, execution of the program. There is a urgent need for this role in both organizing Universities.	We fully agree with this recommendation. The role of Coordinators is already assigned by both Universities. These two Coordinators are in full contact for planning and solving possible issues. They also lead the teaching staff strategically and operationally in order to provide high quality services to the students and high-quality publications of research result. The research results produced will be used to further enhance the teaching and research activities. Both institutions are in the process of appointing a Joint Programme Director, supported by local Programme Coordinators at each university. This individual will have defined authority over curriculum planning, coordination, quality assurance, and communication between the two institutions. This structure ensures centralized leadership with local responsiveness.	Choose level of compliance:
There is also a necessity for collaborative curricula development and practical planning, structured in two distinct phases, involving active participation from both responsible institutions. Teaching staff as well as support services staff should collaborate closely in this planning process. Furthermore, these collaborative plans should be validated together with relevant stakeholders.	We have implemented a structured collaborative curriculum development process through regular joint academic board meetings. Teaching and support staff from both universities are included in dedicated curriculum and operations working groups. Additionally, curriculum drafts are being shared with key stakeholders—such as industry partners, alumni, and student representatives—for review and validation.	Choose level of compliance:
Realising the collaborative planning and program execution, the staff mobility principles and rules should be defined more clearly.	We have finalized a **Staff Mobility Framework** that outlines the frequency, duration, purpose, and funding mechanisms for academic and administrative staff exchanges. This framework ensures coordinated mobility that supports joint delivery, team-teaching, project supervision, and cross-institutional collaboration.	Choose level of compliance:
Pedagogical training, particularly focused on project-based learning methodologies, should be provided to all staff members, not limited to teachers.	A joint professional development programme has been introduced that includes **pedagogical training in project-based and student-centered learning methodologies**. This training will be available not only to existent and new academic staff, but also to administrative and technical personnel, who support	Choose level of compliance:

	learning activities, ensuring alignment in educational philosophy and implementation.	
Additionally, visualization tools or methods should be implemented to clearly demonstrate the curriculum structure in content and student skill development.	We already use the Targit business intelligence software, which is directly linked to the CRM and Moodle systems, to collect data. By using TARGIT, as a learning analytics visual tool, we are able to monitor student progress on the said performance related KPIs.	Choose level of compliance:
Also, it is of important to further facilitate engagement of industry in the programme is substantial and continuous.	We are formalizing partnerships with industry through Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) and establishing an **Industry Advisory Board**. This will ensure continuous engagement through guest lectures, internships, design challenges, joint project supervision, and input on curriculum relevance. Long-term collaboration models are being prioritized to ensure sustained involvement.	
Application of IDEx Model: The IDEx (Interdisciplinary Design Engineering) model, successfully implemented at the University of Western Macedonia, should be applied to students at Neapolis University Pafos as well. This model is highly influential as it includes presentations of work from older students, which can inspire and guide newer students in their projects.	We are committed to adopting the **IDEx model** at Neapolis University Pafos, recognizing its proven impact at the University of Western Macedonia. This includes peer learning sessions, where advanced students present their work to junior cohorts, as well as structured interdisciplinary project cycles that are shared across academic years. Implementation will begin from the programme's first year.	
Program Alignment & Consistency: Professors and organizers need to align their understanding of the program's aims and objectives to ensure consistency in course delivery and learning outcomes.	We are conducting alignment workshops for faculty from both institutions to harmonize their understanding of programme goals, course learning outcomes, and teaching strategies. This will ensure **consistency in delivery**, grading, and student experience, regardless of location.	
Group Projects & Collaboration: The program should integrate group projects throughout its duration to enhance students' communication, teamwork and problem-solving skills.	Group-based, collaborative projects are embedded across multiple semesters. These projects will be **assessed based on communication, teamwork, leadership, and problem-solving**, in addition to technical deliverables. Indicatively see syllabi **(ANNEX 5):** - **ARCH AS101** and **ARCH SV102**- both courses include group-based observational and analytical exercises, encouraging communication and critique. - **PDE0502 – Design Thinking and PDE0804 – Furniture and Wooden Product Design** incorporate team-based problem solving and prototyping. - **BUSN405 – Project Management** equips students with tools for effective team coordination, leadership, and collaborative planning.	

Interdisciplinary Projects: Collaboration with other departments, such as Economics and Marketing, should be encouraged to expose students to different perspectives and interdisciplinary teamwork.	We are actively pursuing **interdepartmental collaboration**, particularly with the Schools of Economics and Marketing. Joint modules and capstone projects include elements such as market analysis, business planning, and user research to broaden student perspectives and encourage interdisciplinary thinking.	
11. Workload of Professors: The workload of professors at Neapolis University Pafos should be minimized to enhance productivity, teaching effectiveness and student engagement.	The total workload of teaching staff is completely compatible with the relative guidelines of CYQAA and the relevant NUP TEACHING STAFF WORKLOAD POLICY, see ***ANNEX 3_ Workload Policy for Academic Staff*.** **The average no. of courses taught by the staff involved in the program is 5,5 courses per academic year (two semesters). This is also proven by the fact of the significant research outlet of the NUP staff.**	

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	*Position*	*Signature*
Prof. Pantelis skliaa	Rector	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
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