

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 12/06/2024

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Faculty of Engineering
- **Department/ Sector:** Department of Architecture
- **Programme of study:**
1st Cycle (Bachelor's Degree) [10 Semesters]
300 ECTS
In Greek:
Ενοποιημένος Τίτλος Σπουδών Μεταπτυχιακού
Επιπέδου (M.Arch.) Αρχιτεκτονικής
In English:
Integrated Master in Architecture
- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **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
<p>The EEC recommends the department consider ways to expand students' opportunities to engage with placements and with the profession as part of student learning and development. (Study programme and study programme's design and development: p. 9)</p>	<p>The Department is committed to building a network of collaborations with practices in Cyprus through (a) Teaching and (b) Networking.</p> <p>The majority of the design studios are run in collaboration with faculty and practitioners, providing the students with the opportunity to learn through various stages of design the prerequisites of a design project. Moreover, each 5th-year diploma committee is comprised of two faculty members and one practitioner.</p> <p>In enhancing networking opportunities, the Department organizes a series of lectures (SUCY), inviting practitioners to give various talks and exhibit their work, familiarizing students with local and international architectural firms, and their people. In return, various practitioners have the opportunity to see students' works during final reviews (as invited critics) or the Annual Exhibition of the Department.</p>	<p>Replied to recommendation</p>
<p>The EEC suggests that the department reviews the curriculum delivered with respect to the core provision of contents related to carbon literacy and the wider climate crisis. The EEC recognizes that in the final year project work students are able to engage with these complex issues. However, we would encourage the department to review how all aspects of sustainability are delivered as a core component throughout all years of the programme. (Study programme</p>	<p>The department continuously reviews the content of its course programme and encourages updates in its curriculum in response to current issues, including carbon literacy, sustainability, and the wider climate crisis. The broader effort is to touch upon these issues in a comprehensive manner, equipping students with technical skills regarding environmental studies and architecture, critical skills in approaching issues of sustainability (environmental and social) in architectural practice, as</p>	<p>Complied with the recommendations</p>

<p>and study programme's design and development: p. 9)</p>	<p>well as analytical, visual, design, and methodological skills, relevant with environmental literacy, ecological transformations, and climate emergency. These courses are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Architectural Design II (ARH 101), concerns the social sustainability and transcultural cohabitation of a neighborhood in the old town of Nicosia, through the development of design methodologies that involve the participation of communities including migrants, refugees and children. - Construction I (ARH 230), introduces students to the area of building tectonics with a particular focus on timber structures, taking into consideration sustainable principles of such structural systems. - Construction II (ARH 233), focuses on the construction design of reinforced concrete buildings, taking into consideration the environmental impact and features, bioclimatic and energy related aspects of reinforced concrete buildings. - Construction III (ARH330), focuses on the construction design of steel buildings. Aspects of sustainability, bioclimatic and energy design, including minimization of the structural self-weight and footprint play a significant role in the design process. - Technical Development Systems (ARH 332), focuses on the general principles of technical systems development as it derives from the key areas of building, building construction and energy efficiency of buildings. - Architectural Design V— Urban Design (ARH 300) focuses on the entanglement of scales and territories. It involves formulating 	
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	<p>strategic design thinking with political connotations supporting the commons and degrowth of fractured territories. The studio focuses on the sustainability of a potential re-unified island.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Architectural Design VI - Architectural Technology (ARH 301), focuses on integrated architectural design of a building with advanced technological requirements. The design methodology is based on the development of the respective areas of building morphology, structure and construction, and environmental design. - Building Technology (ARH 331.1), focuses on the role of building construction in architectural composition. Aspects of sustainability, environmental impact and life-cycle analysis are also included. - Environmental – Bioclimatic Design (ARH 431-538), focuses on introducing students to the methodologies of environmental design-based research, the optimisation of indoor comfort, and energy performance of the building’s envelope. - Landscape Architecture (ARH 340), focuses on the relationship between architecture and nature, introducing students to design methods related to current challenges, such as the more-than-human environmental and climatic crisis (called Anthropocene), the multispecies turn, and critical posthumanism. - Vernacular Architecture and Contemporary Issues (ARH 311), focuses on introducing students to sensitive conservation methods regarding local architectural heritage, discussing both issues of materiality and bioclimatic advantages of the Cyprus vernacular architecture. 	
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	<p>The department also offers a series of elective courses on the theme, which are offered in alternate years:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Architecture and Critical History of Ecology (ARH 412), focuses on the development of ecological awareness, debate, and practice in architecture within the larger historical and contemporary theoretical context of architecture. - Specialised Topics in Architecture and Technology: Efficient Building Envelopes (ARH 539.1), focuses on energy improvement, integration of technical systems and RES technologies (e.g., BAPV /BIPV). - Architecture’s Social Practices and their Political Agencies (ARH 440 / 528) gives the students the opportunity, through a round table format seminar, to revisit architecture beyond building and to claim architecture’s role as a critical urban practice for a just and equitable urban environment. Critical play is the medium for the students to design actions in physical or imaginary spaces. - Contemporary Territorial Transformations and Urban Design (ARH 441) introduces students to methods of quantifying affordability and energy poverty with respect to the development of new built and/or regeneration of adaptively reused building stock, for the purpose of providing socially-minded housing. <p>Moreover, the department is an active agent in the University’s participation in the YUFE Bachelor’s degree programme under the theme “Urban Sustainability,” offering students the opportunity to attend courses that focus on the subject. The course “Contemporary Territorial Transformations and Urban Design (ARH 441)” is offered</p>	
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	as part of this course by the department.	
The EEC recommends the department consider introducing a graduate tracking system to systematically monitor and present data related to graduate employment and destinations. (Study programme and study programme's design and development: p. 9)	Even though this is centrally organized by the Academic Affairs and Student Welfare Service of the University of Cyprus, as well as the UCY Alumni Community and the University Development and Alumni Relations, the department also tracks its graduates through periodical phone surveys to gather contact information and work status. This has been occurring on a four-year cycle, but an effort could be made to augment its frequency. In addition, the Department aims to be contacting its alumni students with a follow-up questionnaire a year after graduation with the help of phd students and the secretaries of the department.	Replied to recommendation

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
<p>The EEC noted that there would be an advantage in providing clearer information to students on the availability of elective courses, given not all electives can be offered every year. (Student – centred learning, teaching, and assessment p. 12)</p>	<p>Our Departmental website has been updated making clear which elective modules are offered next year.</p>	<p>Complied to recommendation</p>
<p>The EEC recommends the department explores other means of engaging students with practice during the course of the programme which may include expanding the opportunity for placements. (Student – centred learning, teaching, and assessment p. 12)</p>	<p>The Department is committed to building a network of potential placements for students in Cyprus and the European Union:</p> <p>The Department is part of the Erasmus Placement programme, which facilitates the hosting of 5th-year students during summer or during one of their final terms in offices across the European Union.</p> <p>Also, 4th year students undertake the course ARH 410: Architectural Practice, that is taught by a local practitioner, introducing students to the practical, technical, legal, and other aspects of the profession in the Cyprus context.</p> <p>Related to the above, the Department has initiated a collaboration with the Technical Chamber of Cyprus, suggesting students practices for summer internships, which is yet to be determined.</p>	<p>Replied to recommendations</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

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<p>5. The EEC noted there are currently 2 vacant posts and the existing academic staff are working at full capacity. In recruiting additional staff to fill the vacant posts we recommend consideration is given to increase staff capacity in the areas of the curriculum which are likely to grow in importance in the foreseeable future. To ensure the high quality of the programmes the EEC recommends the existing staff resources are maintained. The EEC also recommends that the existing balance between full academic staff and adjunct professors is maintained. (Teaching staff p. 16)</p>	<p>The description of the vacant posts has been drafted and will be advertised in due course.</p>	<p>They have not provided additional proof</p>

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

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5. Learning resources and student support
 (ESG 1.6)

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<p>The strong and vibrant studio culture that depends on these resources produces numerous learning and teaching benefits and it is, therefore, a valuable strength of the department. We recommend resources continue to be made available to support this vibrant studio culture. (Learning resources and student support p. 23)</p>	<p>In agreement with the EEC conclusions, the Department will continue to provide opportunities and resources to support the Department's already well-established studio culture.</p>	<p>Complied with recommendations</p>

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)





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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by ΕΕC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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C.

D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Maria Philokyprou	Associate Professor Chairperson of the Department	
Andreas Savvides	Associate Professor Vice Chairperson of the Department	
Christos Hadjichristos	Associate Professor, Head and Coordinator of the Departmental Undergraduate Studies Committee	
Marios C. Phocas	Professor, Head and Coordinator of the Departmental Postgraduate Studies Committee	

Date: 12/06/2024

