

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: Date.

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:** 3rd Cycle (Doctoral's Degree) [8 Semesters] 240 ECTS

In Greek:

Διδακτορικό Πρόγραμμα στην Αρχιτεκτονική

In English:

Ph.D. Program 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 that the department may consider refreshing its public information about the PhD offer and outcomes to help raise the profile of the programme to a broader audience. We suggest populating the research webpages with more information about research strands and active research projects.</p>	<p>Following the recommendation by EEC, the website of the PhD program in Architecture has been revised in its profile, mission and learning outcomes (in both languages, Greek and English), in order to further promote the program publicly. In addition, the PhD candidates with the titles of approved doctoral dissertation proposal are linked on the websites with an abstract of their PhD research, a list of recent related publications and a representative image. The doctoral dissertations that have already been completed successfully at the Department are linked to UCY library websites, which are widely accessible. Links to websites of representative, recent research projects coordinated by the faculty are included in the Research Profiles of the faculty members, and brief descriptions of related research projects are accessible from the research collaborators websites.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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 suggests the department and the university consider the possibility of also allowing the development of PhD thesis by publications, as is starting to be recognized in other international PhD courses. This would be for the benefit of the candidates' career progression and the research track record of the department.</p> <p>The EEC also suggests adopting English as the main language for the PhD thesis, to potentially attract international students, but also and foremost, to increase the international mobility and employability of graduates.</p>	<p>The Postgraduate Studies Rules at the University of Cyprus, including among others, the structure and contents, the duration of the program of study, the doctoral thesis research stages and assessment criteria are set by the Faculty of Graduate Studies and approved for all programs of studies by the Senate of the University of Cyprus. Already, the PhD in Architecture refers to design and interdisciplinary research projects developed that deal with research by design processes analysis, design projects and activities reviews in broader architectural, social, historical and technological interdisciplinary context and design, manufacturing processes and development of prototypes in various interdisciplinary environments. In this framework, a number of publications in international refereed scientific journals and Conference proceedings is required and expected to be achieved within the frame of the PhD research development, prior to conclusion of the program. In this way, the University of Cyprus actively supports the dissemination of related intermediate research results within corresponding scientific circles, that is also perceived as a quality assurance mechanism of the PhD research conducted.</p> <p>The PhD dissertation is usually written in English, unless the specific topic of the PhD research is related to local parameters and/or the Greek language.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>We recommend continuing to develop the lecturing series with a broad range of international contributors to continue enriching the breadth of research topics and methodologies within the PhD programme.</p>	<p>We agree with the EEC recommendation and we will do our best given our resources to develop the lecturing series with a broad range of international contributors in research and practice. We consider the lecturing series to contribute substantially to the enrichment of the PhD program in Architecture with regard to the diversity, extent and depth of the research conducted by the PhD students.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

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<p>The EEC recommends that consideration is given to the potential benefit of offering PhD programme in both Greek and English (see Section D)</p>	<p>In principle, we agree with the EEC recommendation. In short term (with the existing number of faculty members at the Department) most postgraduate courses are planned to be offered in English upon request in Fall Semester 2024/25. This applies for the following courses: ARH 502 Design Based Research ARH 504 Independent Study ARH 511 Architecture and Ecology: Critical Perspectives ARH 522 Advanced Computer Aided Design Topics ARH 528 Architectural Social Practices and Their Political Dimension ARH 529 Advanced Topics in Architectural Communication Media ARH 534 Structural Building Design ARH 540 Mediterranean Cities and Social Issues</p> <p>In the long term (with an increase of the number of faculty members at the Department), we shall consider the possibility of offering the PhD program in both languages, in Greek and English.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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
<p>The EEC strongly recommends that the department explore any additional mechanisms whereby additional financial support might be made available for the benefit of the students. This would help ensure that the department can continue to grow its PhD student cohort.</p>	<p>Following the EEC recommendation, the Department will further explore additional mechanisms for securing additional financial support of the PhD research in Architecture. Such mechanisms may refer to collaborations in research and developments with industrial, professional and civil partners and institutions.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

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<p>The EEC suggests considering the possibility of adding international supervisors to the supervisory teams to increase the international outlook of the PhD candidates and his/her research, and to increase international research collaborations.</p>	<p>We have accommodated this suggestion, within the Postgraduate Studies Rules of the University of Cyprus. According to these rules, the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal is evaluated by a three-member committee composed of the student’s Research Supervisor (Chairperson), a member of the Department’s faculty and a member of the faculty of the Department or from another University Department with a similar subject or from another university or research centre. The Defense of the Dissertation takes place before a five-member Examining Committee composed of the members of the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Evaluation Committee and another two members, namely three members of the Department’s faculty, one of whom is always the Student’s Research Supervisor, one member from another University or university level Research Centre and a member of the faculty of the Department or from another University Department with a similar subject or from another university or university level research centre. In this framework, at least one member of the Doctoral Dissertation Proposal Evaluation Committee (supervisory team) and two members of the Dissertation Examining Committee are from outside the Department, and they can certainly be from international institutions. Already, the supervisory teams of the students have included international supervisors for the same reasons indicated by the EEC.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)





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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The EEC was impressed by the quality of the PhD programme and by the large variety of research topics. We encourage the department to continue exploring opportunities for increasing the international profiles of the candidates, by supporting them financially, through participation in international conferences, and by having also international supervisors.</p> <p>...Nevertheless, the EEC suggests that the option of offering the elective courses in both English and Greek could usefully be explored as this would enable to MSc and PhD programmes to be advertised to attract English-speaking students.</p>	<p>In agreement with the EEC conclusions, the Department will continue exploring opportunities for increasing the international profiles of the candidates, by supporting them financially, through participation in international conferences, and by having also international supervisors.</p> <p>While in the short term, most postgraduate courses are planned to be offered in English, in the long term, we shall consider the possibility of offering the PhD program in both languages, in Greek and English, to further attract foreign, english speaking students.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

