

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:**
In Greek:
Μάστερ σε Προχωρημένες Σπουδές στη
Αρχιτεκτονική
In English:
MSc in Advanced Architectural Studies
- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**
In Greek: i) Ιστορία, Θεωρία και Κριτική της Αρχιτεκτονικής, ii) Ψηφιακές Τεχνολογίες και Μέσα Επικοινωνίας στη Αρχιτεκτονική, iii) Τεχνολογία κατασκευών και αειφόρος σχεδιασμός, iv) Πολεοδομικός και Αστικός Σχεδιασμός
In English: i) History, Theory and Criticism in Architecture, ii) Digital Technologies and Communication Media in Architecture, iii) Construction Technology and Sustainable Design, and iv) Urban Design and Planning.



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 further consideration is given to a succinct and articulate statement of the programme's distinctive quality and attributes. This should provide a clear statement to potential applicants of the student offer that the programme provides and should be written in a way that is mindful of similar statements provided by competitor international courses. The EEC recommends that the department consider whether the programme might benefit from being designed as a 90 ECTS credit programme, rather than a 120 ECTS programme. We noted that the PhD programme and the proposed MSc have a similar component structure for the first 60 credits. Should a 90-credit structure be adopted, the EEC noted that there may be the opportunity to establish a common first two semesters for both programmes. This would enable MSc students, after 2 semesters, who wish to, and were able to transfer to the PhD programme. Students who chose to take this route would effectively be able to complete their PhD typically after a further 3 years of full-time academic study. This might prove attractive to a variety of potential applicants to the new MSc programme and it may also act as an effective pathway to a PhD qualification. The EEC recommends that the elective courses further explore research-based teaching activities, that will further reflect on the current and future climate and societal crises.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their recommendations, which we have embraced and have restructured our programme as seen in the table below (three semesters long, 30 ECTS per semester for a total of 90 ECTS, with the possibility of transferring into the doctoral programme, after successfully applying and having completed the first two semester requirements of the MSc programme).</p> <p>This change would allow candidates to indeed make a decision by the end of the second semester as to whether they would like to enroll in a third semester and gain their degree after submission of a graduate master's thesis or to transition (given a successful application) to the doctoral program with advance standing given their work in their first year of the MS programme.</p> <p>We have amended the constrained electives structure in such a way that candidates coming from the department's integrated Master's of Architecture programme would have to take a specialization-oriented constrained elective each in their first and second semester of the programme and a general constrained elective each in their second and third semester of the programme, so as account for prior specialization-oriented constrained electives they may have transferred in from their prior integrated master's programme work in the department.</p>	<p>Replied to all recommendations</p>

	<p>Candidates from other five-year professional integrated Master’s of Architecture programmes would need to take all four constrained electives from their specialization-oriented area of concentration.</p> <p>*See the table at the end this section</p> <p>With regard to re-articulating the programme’s statement in a way in which its distinctiveness is communicated to potential candidates, said statement has been revised in the spirit suggested by the EEC.</p> <p>The distinctiveness of this post-graduate programme in architecture is in its ability to provide a flexible research and design experimentation platform, beyond the professional degree in architecture.</p> <p>Students will be able to gain deeper knowledge in a specific direction and area of research or design experimentation and to develop the necessary skills needed for the profile of a well-informed designer and researcher in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i) Architectural History, Theory and Criticism ii) Digital Technologies and Communication Media in Architecture iii) Construction Technology and Sustainable Design iv) Urban Planning <p>The programme is structured in such a way that would allow for a very diverse cohort of students by making it possible for candidates coming from other fields – related</p>	
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	<p>to architecture – to engage in relevant research in the concentrations of their choice.</p> <p>Students are expected and enable to participate in design-oriented research in an academic environment, with the contribution of their advisors, as the classes that are offered each semester are directly related to the research interests of the academic members of the department.</p> <p>The possibility of enriching the synthesis of a three-member advising committee by including members from other disciplines from within the university and also from experts in the field, aims to strengthen the culture of inter-and-trans-disciplinary academic research.</p> <p>Moreover, the possibility of transitioning to the doctoral program after the first two (out of a total of three) semesters of study and earning advanced credit towards that degree, makes this an attractive choice for candidates who wish to engage further and deeper in their thematic concentrations.</p> <p>Given the above, the department’s expectations and ambition is to produce critically thinking individuals who can successfully perform worldwide, but who also have the knowledge and sensitivity to respond constructively and to influence positively the built environment of their specific locals.</p>	
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A/A	Course Type	Course Name	Course Code	Periods per week	Period duration	Number of weeks/ Academic semester	Total hours/ Academic semester	Number of ECTS
First Semester								
1.	Compulsory	Research Methodologies	ARH 500	1	3 hrs	13	39	8
1.	Compulsory	Graduate Colloquium	ARH 505	1	3 hrs	13	39	8
1.	Sp. Course	Constrained Elective	ARH 5XX	1	3 hrs	13	39	8
1.	Compulsory	Postgraduate Research I	ARH 801			13	39	6
Second Semester								
1.	Compulsory	Design Research Methodologies	ARH 502	1	3 hrs	14	42	8
1.	Sp. Course	Constrained Elective	ARH 5XX	1	3 hrs	14	42	8
1.	Sp. Course	Constrained Elective	ARH 5XX	1	3 hrs	14	42	8
1.	Compulsory	Postgraduate Research II	ARH 802			14	42	6
Third Semester								
		Constrained Elective	ARH 5XX	1	3 hrs	13	39	8
		Postgraduate Research III	ARH 803			13	39	6
		Postgraduate Writing I	ARH 805			13	39	16

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 recommends that the choice of electives that will be available each year to MSc students is reviewed to ensure that students who have completed the integrated master's programme have an adequate choice of electives to support their chosen specialism within the programme. The EEC recommends further consideration is given to the induction of new students and that various means are explored so that incoming students can be informed of the nature and content of the elective courses prior to their arrival at the university so that their initial choice of the electives can be fully informed.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their recommendations. The restructuring of the programme as evidenced above – and as it may be juxtaposed to the structure and requirements of the integrated Maste’s of Architecture programme – ensures that students who have completed the integrated master's programme have an adequate choice of electives to support their chosen specialism within the proposed MS programme. The structure of the proposed MS programme and all relevant available coursework will be made available under this programme’s link in the departmental website so that incoming students can be informed of the nature and content of the elective courses prior to their arrival at the university so that their initial choice of the electives may be fully informed.</p>	<p>Replied to recommendations</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>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 proposed new programme the EEC recommends that staff resources should be increased in alignment with any increase in student numbers, over and above the projected targets.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their recommendations. The department – in line with the EEC’s recommendations – has decided to rigorously pursue the recruitment of additional staff to fill the vacant posts at its disposal. The department is also in agreement that consideration is to be given to increasing staff capacity in the areas of the curriculum which are likely to grow in importance in the foreseeable future and that staff resources should be increased in alignment with any increase in student numbers, over and above the projected targets.</p>	<p>Not provided any proof</p>

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

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<p>The EEC recommends that the public information available in relation to the programme is reviewed to provide clear information and a statement of distinctiveness for potential applicants. The EEC recommends that consideration is given to the potential benefit of offering the MSc programme in both Greek and English (see Section D).</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their recommendations. Please see response to section “2” above. The department agrees with the EEC as to the potential benefit of offering the MSc programme in both Greek and English, which would also put it in line with the broader policy in this matter pursued by the School of Engineering.</p>	<p>Replied to recommendation</p>

5. Learning resources and student support
 (ESG 1.6)

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<p>The EEC are aware that the laboratory and the workshops are often working at full capacity given the likely demand for these resources from MSc students. The EEC recommends that the adequacy of these resources should be kept under review.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their recommendations and commits to keep under review the adequacy of all departmental resources concerning instructional and research laboratories and workshops.</p>	<p>Replied to recommendation</p>

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)



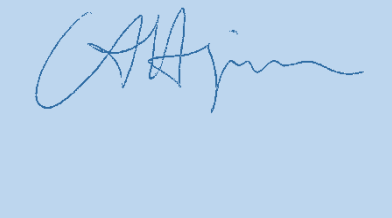
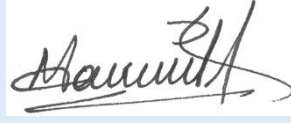
Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p><u>MSc in Advanced Architectural Studies</u></p> <p>For the proposed MSc in Advanced Architectural Studies, the EEC strongly recommend strengthening its statement, in a succinct way, to articulate the programme's distinctive quality and attributes. To allow the department to grow its aspirations, we recommend growing its academic staff cohort, where possible, to be able to develop more research oriented elected courses, tailored to the new proposed programme. The EEC is aware that there is a statutory requirement to deliver programmes in the Greek language. We are also aware of advantages that result from the delivery of all of the programmes in Greek. However, the EEC is also aware that in relation to making the programmes easily accessible to non-Greek speakers there may be advantages to introducing the option for English language delivery. This particularly applies to the master's level and PhD programme, given the common language of exchange internationally is often English. We appreciate the complex issues arising from any change to the current delivery in Greek, and that the comparative benefits and disadvantages of any change in the language of delivery will need to be carefully weighed. 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>We would like to thank the EEC for their recommendations. Please see response to sections "1, 2 & 4" above for the MS specific responses and the common departmental position with regard to its graduate offerings as this has been stated for the PhD programme.</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

