

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 20/01/2026

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**

Cyprus University of Technology

- **Town:** Limassol

- **Programme of study
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Μάστερ στα Ναυτιλιακά

In English:

MSc in Shipping

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek/English

- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating

- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: 1. Βιώσιμες Λειτουργίες, 2. Αναλυτική Διαχείριση Εφοδιαστικής Αλυσίδας, 3. Ναυτιλιακές Επενδύσεις

In English: 1. Sustainable Operations, 2. Supply Chain Management Analytics, 3. Shipping Investments



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>Important information about the programme, its content and structure, admission criteria, fees etc. is not publicly available on the University's website at the moment.</p>	<p>At the time of the external review, the programme was under accreditation and, in line with University practice, had not yet been publicly advertised as an active offering.</p> <p>Following official accreditation, the University will publish a dedicated programme webpage and a downloadable Programme Handbook containing the full set of programme information: aims and learning outcomes, structure and concentrations, admissions criteria and fees, mode of delivery, assessment framework, dissertation and internship options, and student support services.</p> <p>The draft Programme Handbook (Appendix B) has been prepared and will be finalised before the programme launches in September 2026. The webpage and handbook will be reviewed annually to maintain accuracy.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The EEC asked for clarifications in respect of plagiarism in the assessment process. The relevant text in the submitted application was reviewed and while there is a policy in place on how an assessor can detect what amounts to plagiarism, there are no specific rules in ascertaining the type and gravity of an act of plagiarism and how it will be sanctioned (i.e. the percentage of mark deduction according to the committed act). The same should be introduced in the Rules on Studies and Academic Affairs.</p>	<p>We have developed the draft Academic Policies and Procedures Handbook (see Appendix A), which contains the complete framework for academic integrity, plagiarism sanctions, and appeals. This document will be finalised and approved by the Department Council, and posted on the Department's webpage, before the programme launches in September 2026.</p> <p>The programme uses Turnitin as its primary software tool. Instructors review the full similarity report to distinguish acceptable, correctly attributed overlap from problematic unattributed copying. Decisions regarding the classification and gravity of misconduct are based on intent, extent, and context, not the similarity percentage alone.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>The draft policy includes a detailed sanctions matrix with severity levels, investigation procedures, and all required forms.</p>	
<p>As regards the appeal process, especially the grounds for rectification of mistakes and re-evaluation, it is not clear and comprehensible, especially the grounds for appeal. More importantly the wording in Regulation 2.11 has to be amended according to a proper policy.</p>	<p>The draft Academic Policies and Procedures Handbook establishes a three-stage formal appeals process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Stage 1: Informal Resolution with the Course Instructor - Stage 2: Departmental Review by the Programme Coordinator - Stage 3: Faculty Appeals Committee (final and binding) <p>The policy defines acceptable grounds for appeal: procedural error, arithmetic or administrative error, marking inconsistency, extenuating circumstances, disproportionate sanction, and new evidence.</p> <p>Regulation 2.11 is applied through a structured framework. The Programme Handbook clarifies that the three-stage departmental appeals process constitutes the mandatory 'discussion with instructor' and 'mediation' phases required by Regulation 2.11.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Regarding feedback, with the exception of quiz exercises, it must be stated that it was not clear from our discussion what form of feedback the students receive in the assessment methods engaged (e.g. hand-written exam etc.) during the Core Courses period but, in our opinion, that process should be properly accommodated and reflected in the Rules. Feedback is inextricably linked to appeals for grades received.</p>	<p>The draft Programme Handbook (Appendix B) establishes clear feedback turnaround standards:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Assignments and coursework: 15 working days - Examinations: 20 working days <p>For examinations, instructors are required to provide: model answers, summary of common errors and expectations, and grade distribution information (all published on Moodle).</p> <p>Students have the right to request individual feedback sessions for examinations. Students unable to attend campus may request a secure digital copy of their marked examination script for feedback or appeal purposes.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Student final feedback about the course will actively be sought through online anonymous survey at the end of the programme. However, evidence of the effectiveness of this information in terms of specific measures for improvement and action plans taken by the University,</p>	<p>The draft policies include a standardised feedback analysis template for each course evaluation, ensuring consistent review across all modules. Key elements include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Student Feedback Summary Report aggregating all course evaluations 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>need to be seen, when implemented.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Threshold triggers: items scoring below 3.0/5.0 require a documented response - Action Plan Template with fields for issue, proposed action, responsible person, timeline, and status - Dedicated accreditation evidence file demonstrating the closed-loop process <p>This ensures that student feedback leads to documented improvements and can be evidenced in future accreditation cycles.</p>	
<p>The Department must place a specific and comprehensive policy, clearly also reflected in the handbooks, about the conduct of research according to protocols, especially the management and destruction of data collected after the completion of research. For that purpose, the Research Ethics and Deontology Committee is recommended to deal with the above matters.</p>	<p>The draft Programme Handbook establishes a formal protocol for student research ethics and data management, under the oversight of the Research Ethics and Deontology Committee.</p> <p>Key requirements include: ethics approval required before any primary data collection begins; all research data stored on university-approved servers only; encryption required for personal or sensitive information; anonymised research data retained for ten years; identifiable data destroyed within twelve months of thesis completion.</p> <p>Each dissertation proposal must include a Data Management Plan. A mandatory online training module will be created for all dissertation students.</p>	
<p>Any criterion (e.g. interview) for the participation in the internship positions should be clearly stated in the programme handbook, so that students are privy to it and motivated to perform better, should they wish to secure an internship position.</p>	<p>The draft Programme Handbook includes clear internship eligibility and participation criteria (Appendix B, Section 8).</p> <p>Eligibility requirements: good academic standing (minimum GPA of 6.5); completion of at least one semester; no failed courses pending re-examination; compliance with academic integrity and disciplinary rules.</p> <p>Selection criteria (when positions are limited): Academic performance (GPA): 40%; Relevant professional experience: 30%; Statement of interest and career goals: 30%.</p> <p>Shortlisted candidates must attend an interview with the Internship</p>	

	<p>Coordinator and/or host organisation before final placement confirmation.</p>	
<p>The EEC was not provided with past exam papers, as the programme to be accredited is new and exam papers from the previous MSc programme, which will be discontinued, were not submitted. Therefore, the EEC cannot make comments about the possible feedback to students.</p>	<p>As the programme is new, no historical exam papers were available at the time of review. To ensure robust ongoing quality assurance and full evidence availability in future accreditation cycles, the Department will implement a systematic assessment evidence archiving procedure.</p> <p>The Department will establish an MSc Programme Assessment Committee (MSc-PAC) responsible for overseeing collection and archiving of assessment materials at the end of each semester.</p> <p>The repository will contain: final examinations, midterm assessments, major assignments, rubrics and marking schemes, and representative anonymised marked samples. All materials retained for minimum five years or two accreditation cycles.</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>While the existing hybrid model is pedagogically robust, the Faculty could examine whether the programme could further enhance the online learning experience by incorporating structured asynchronous activities. These additions, in the opinion of the Committee, could strengthen student engagement between synchronous sessions and widen opportunities for flexible learning.</p>	<p>The Department has designed a weekly structure incorporating structured asynchronous activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Pre-session activities: readings, videos, orientation quizzes - Synchronous session - Post-session activities: discussion forums, reflection exercises <p>Discussion forums are established with clear prompts and minimum word requirements. Collaborative document activities are incorporated using Google Docs or Microsoft Teams to facilitate group work across attendance modes.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The Committee also recommends expanding staff development opportunities in hybrid pedagogy to ensure sustained consistency as the programme grows. It is great that they start with an induction course by the Learning Development Network but ongoing professional development opportunities are necessary for successful implementation of the demanding hybrid delivery model.</p>	<p>The Department has established a structured programme of ongoing professional development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - September kick-off workshop: Annual briefing on teaching updates and new tools - Monthly lunch-and-learn sessions: Rotating topics including assessment design, AI in teaching, feedback techniques - Annual teaching retreat (June): Collective reflection and planning - Conference funding: One teaching-focused conference every two years per faculty member - Online learning subscriptions for self-directed development - Professional development log required as part of annual faculty review 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The Committee suggests integrating more explicit references to online-based interaction within the study guides. For example, indicating where online breakout activities, collaborative document tools or short asynchronous tasks will be used, in order to strengthen alignment between hybrid modality and instructional design.</p>	<p>Study guides will be enhanced to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Delivery mode field for each session (face-to-face, online, or hybrid) - Pre-session preparation requirements with estimated time commitments - Online activities to be used (breakout rooms, polling, collaborative documents) - Explicit connections between each session and assessments 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>A consistent template will be developed and used across all courses to ensure students can navigate expectations easily.</p>	
<p>The programme could consider expanding low-stakes digital formative assessments (e.g. quiz banks, automated feedback tasks) to support continuous learning and give students more frequent indicators of their progress. The e-learning experts team cited FeedbackFruits in their theoretical foundation and it would be great to continue working on such assessment and feedback frameworks.</p>	<p>The Department has developed a comprehensive formative assessment strategy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Quiz banks: Minimum 50 questions per course covering all major topics - Weekly knowledge checks: Moodle quizzes with automatic grading and unlimited attempts - Self-assessment prompts: Reflection after each major topic - Peer feedback activities: Moodle Workshop for peer review <p>The Department is exploring FeedbackFruits tools (Comprehension, Peer Review, Self-Assessment modules). Formative activities carry 0-5% grade weight to encourage engagement without undue pressure.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>During the discussions, some students highlighted the added value they accumulate from networking opportunities and the physical presence in the classroom, noting that these elements significantly enrich their learning experience. To ensure that all students, including those joining synchronously online, benefit from an equally productive environment, the Committee recommends strengthening support mechanisms that enhance online participation. This could include more structured facilitation of online engagement, intentional integration of remote students into group activities, and clear strategies to ensure that networking and peer interaction are accessible to all participants regardless of mode of attendance.</p>	<p>Students may attend a maximum of 4 sessions online per course; all other sessions require in-person attendance. All midterm and final examinations must be completed in person on campus.</p> <p>For permitted online sessions, the programme implements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Structured hybrid facilitation standards with clear participation routes (voice, chat, polls) - Intentional group-work integration through mixed-mode group design and collaborative tools - Programme-level networking activities including hybrid networking sessions and guest-speaker events <p>Technical requirements: camera-on policy, headset use, computer access. Instructors trained on hybrid facilitation techniques including acknowledging online students explicitly and alternating between room and online participants for Q&A.</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>In the continuous pedagogical development for the program, the department could consider organizing collegial supervision sessions, perhaps every 3 or 4 years. Here a teacher could observe a colleague's lecturing for an hour or two. Subsequently the two colleagues could meet and discuss their teaching experiences, while providing constructive peer-to-peer feedback to each other. Such a set-up would ensure knowledge sharing of best practices for teaching across faculty, without imposing large resource commitments on faculty.</p>	<p>A peer observation scheme has been established:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observations scheduled once every three years for each faculty member - Rotating pairs ensuring every faculty member both observes and is observed - Pre-observation meeting to share lesson plan and identify feedback areas <p>Structured observation form covering: learning environment, teaching methods, hybrid facilitation techniques, student interaction.</p> <p>Post-observation discussion within one week. All observations confidential and developmental (separate from performance review). Training provided to all faculty on giving constructive, collegial feedback.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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
<p>The students are required to select one of the three concentrations when they apply for the programme. However, due to low student numbers, sometimes if insufficient students select one concentration, then those courses may not be feasible to run, which means that some students will not be able to follow their preferred concentration. The EEC believes that as course numbers increase this should not pose a problem in future. In the meantime, however, the Department may consider whether it is ideal to offer all three concentrations.</p>	<p>The draft Programme Handbook establishes minimum enrolment thresholds and a clear decision timeline (Appendix B, Section 2.3).</p> <p>Viability framework: Minimum threshold of 5 students per concentration. July 15: Students submit concentration preferences. July 31: Department assesses viability. August 7: Students notified of concentration status.</p> <p>If a concentration does not reach minimum enrolment, students may: transfer to an alternative concentration (based on stated preferences); defer to next intake with priority placement; or withdraw with full refund (subject to University financial deadlines).</p> <p>This approach ensures applicants understand viability conditions in advance and are protected by clearly defined contingency arrangements.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</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>To strengthen the pedagogical value of the online components, the programme may consider incorporating curated digital learning objects. For example, short interactive modules, data visualisation tutorials or micro-lectures aligned with the databases used in the programme.</p>	<p>The following digital learning resources will be developed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Interactive H5P modules: Shipping market cycles, charter party types, bill of lading documentation - Data visualisation tutorials: Excel for shipping data, introduction to Python for analytics - Micro-lectures: Core concepts with embedded quizzes <p>All materials will be piloted with a student focus group before full deployment and hosted in a dedicated Moodle section accessible to all students.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Additionally, developing brief orientation videos or guides on how to use specialised databases would support students who enter the programme without prior exposure to such tools and would promote more effective use of resources in hybrid learning tasks.</p>	<p>Quick start guides (2-4 pages) will be created for each specialised database: Clarksons Research, Bloomberg Terminal, Lloyd's List Intelligence.</p> <p>Each guide includes: access instructions, key features overview, step-by-step instructions for five common tasks, troubleshooting information.</p> <p>Video tutorials (15-25 minutes) will be recorded for each database demonstrating navigation and analysis. A two-hour hands-on orientation workshop will be scheduled during the first two weeks of the programme. A self-assessment checklist will be provided for students to confirm competency with each database.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The Committee recommends formalising additional pedagogical support tools targeted at hybrid learners, such as optional online drop-in sessions, structured peer-support groups or digital guides on effective study strategies in a hybrid programme.</p>	<p>The following support resources are available to hybrid learners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Online drop-in sessions: Regular faculty office hours for informal questions - Digital study guide: Effective strategies for hybrid learning, balancing synchronous and asynchronous work - Time management resources: Specifically designed for working professionals combining graduate study with employment 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>Peer support mechanisms include: buddy system pairing new students with continuing students; peer-support groups for collaborative learning; monthly coffee sessions for informal networking.</p>	
<p>The EEC encourages the Department to continue strengthening awareness and visibility of student support and wellness services, particularly among working professionals and part-time students who may have limited time on campus.</p>	<p>The Department has adopted a proactive approach to wellness services visibility:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Orientation: Prominent wellness information with dedicated session time - Periodic reminders: Timed to coincide with stressful periods (deadlines, exams) - Dedicated webpage: All support services with clear access information - Advisor training: Recognising signs of student difficulty and making referrals - Targeted communications: Specific messaging for part-time and working students - Remote access information: Telehealth and virtual counselling options for online students 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The Committee recommends that the programme explore strategies to ensure both sustainability and equitable student experience across the three concentrations. This may include establishing a minimum enrolment threshold for opening a concentration, adopting a rotational offering model, or ensuring that, during recruitment, there is a balanced cohort across concentrations. Such measures would preserve the quality of peer interaction, collaboration and networking opportunities, while also ensuring that staff workload remains manageable and pedagogically sound.</p>	<p>As addressed in Section 4, the draft Programme Handbook establishes minimum enrolment thresholds (5 students per concentration) and a clear decision timeline.</p> <p>The viability framework includes clear dates for preference submission, assessment, and notification. Contingency options protect students if their preferred concentration does not run.</p> <p>The application form will be updated to collect first and second concentration preferences, allowing for balanced recruitment across concentrations.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:



7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The EEC report highlights the committee's key findings, the strengths of the new programme and the Department and recommendations for ensuring a high-quality delivery by the University. Overall, the EEC found the Department's new programme along the expected national standards. The nature of the programme is compatible with hybrid delivery and the methodology provided is appropriate for the particular programme of study, including some strong elements that reinforce the Department's teaching and learning model.</p>	<p>The Department thanks the EEC for its thorough evaluation and constructive recommendations. We have prepared comprehensive responses to all areas of improvement identified, as documented in this response and the attached appendices.</p> <p>Key actions taken:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Draft Academic Policies and Procedures Handbook (Appendix A) addressing plagiarism sanctions, appeals process, and academic integrity - Draft Programme Handbook (Appendix B) addressing programme information, research data management, internship criteria, and concentration viability - Course-by-course implementation checklist (Appendix C) <p>All documents will be finalised and approved by the Department Council before the programme accepts its first cohort in September 2026.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The EEC believes that once delivery is performed, revisions based on the feedback provided would strengthen and improve the programme, especially fine tuning, which is invariably expected when a new programme is delivered. We advise the faculty of the Department of Shipping to take into consideration our recommendations and address all the suggestions.</p>	<p>The Department commits to continuous improvement based on EEC recommendations and ongoing student feedback.</p> <p>Implementation timeline:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Before Programme Launch (September 2026): Academic policies, assessment archiving, feedback mechanisms, programme handbook - Year 1 Quality Enhancement: Hybrid learning content, online participant support, staff development - Continuous Improvement: Low-stakes formative assessments, wellness services visibility <p>Regular review cycles will be established to monitor implementation and make adjustments as needed.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



--	--	--

C.



D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Photis Panayides	Professor	
Michalis Golias	Professor	
Thalis Zis	Assistant Professor	
Christoforos Andreou	Lecturer	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

Date: 20/01/2026

