

Higher Education Institution's Response

Conventional-face-to-face programme of study

Date: 10/10/2021

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Frederick University
- **Campus:** Nicosia - Limassol
- **School:** Arts, Communication and Cultural Studies
- **Department / Sector:** Arts and Communication
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme

In Greek:

Πρακτικές Τέχνης και Σχεδιασμού (3 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό (PhD))

In English:

Art and Design Practices (3 academic years, 180 ECTS, Doctorate (PhD))

Language(s) of instruction: English

Programme's Status: Currently Operating

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 2019" [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].



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.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the department in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.3.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*



1. Study programme and study programme's design and development

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

All areas marked as compliant.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

none

Department's Response:

The EEC raises no points for improvement. The Department accepts and adopts all points raised in the report and has no further comments

2. Student – centered learning, teaching and assessment

(ESG 1.3)

All areas marked as compliant.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- a. Consideration might fruitfully be addressed to developing an exit point at MPhil level in the future. Given that many students are part-time and also often have substantial experience, a diversity of plannable outcomes might be appropriate. We saw no indication that this was necessary at present, but such a provision may well strengthen the programme in due course.

Department's Response:

The Department is in favour of the concept of exit points within the PhD programme. We are uncertain whether such a mechanism is allowed and if so in through what process under the current CYQAA regulatory framework.

This is not in accordance with the current regulations of the CYQAA. We will investigate the matter and should it be possible we will adopt an MPhil exit point.

3. Teaching staff

(ESG 1.5)

All areas marked as compliant.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- a. Support for staff research is relatively modest. In order to sustain and develop the programme faculty members need to maintain their position as researchers advancing the field. It is recommended that strategic thought is given to means of maintaining the high level of expertise and enthusiasm shown by the dedicated faculty.

Department's Response:

The suggestion for further support of staff research is noted. It is noted that the PhD programme is only in its second year of operation. However, the Department gives particular emphasis on supporting staff research and this point was raised in the Departmental strategic plan. In communications with the university management several initiatives have been agreed broadly addressing two goals (a) the reduction of load of academic staff in order to enable further engagement in research (b) increase of funds available for research.

Significant steps have been taken in both directions whilst we will be expecting further steps in the future. Indicatively, we provide a few examples of such supportive actions: - teaching load reduction scheme for members of the Department that engage in PhD supervision, - use of faculty research account to 'purchase' further load reduction for engagement in research activity, - launching of internal funding scheme that provides financial support for novel research activities (it is noted that the Department has already obtained one such grant), - 20% increase of departmental research account for participation in conferences



4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

(ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations

none

Department's Response:

The EEC raises no points for improvement. The Department accepts and adopts all points raised in the report and has no further comments

5. Learning resources and student support

(ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations

There are no evident areas for specific improvement in the area of resources and support for this programme.

Department's Response:

The EEC raises no points for improvement. The Department accepts and adopts all points raised in the report and has no further comments

6. Additional for doctoral programmes

(ALL ESG)

All areas marked as compliant.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- a. The small number of potential areas of improvement for the programme are largely listed above. In addition, the criteria for the achievement of doctoral level research could be reviewed for potential refinement in two ways:
 - i. Firstly, the inclusion of the word “scientific” in sections 4.4 and 4.5 of the PhD in Art and Design Practices Programme Regulations document may be open to misinterpretation. A possible option would be to remove this word. (This would also clarify that researchers make contribution to knowledge of all kinds through the use of art and design methods.)
 - ii. Secondly, there is opportunity for a more developed articulation of the outcomes for originality and of a significant contribution to knowledge in practice-based research than that given in the present documentation. At present, practice-based research is defined in a footnote on page 12 of the PhD in Art and Design Practices Programme Regulations document. The programme shows evidence of very strong practice-based research and it would be good to incorporate this more fully in the regulations.
- b. As an additional note, as time progresses, it is to be envisaged that measures for archiving the thesis and accompanying documentation to make it publicly available in electronic form will be adopted and developed.

Department’s Response:

- a. The use the word ‘scientific’ in sections 4.4 and 4.5 may have come across to the EEC as misinterpreting and strange and this is a pure matter of a lost in translation effect. Since we operate in Cyprus and the official language of the University’s regulations and rules are predominantly expressed in Greek the word scientific (in Greek επιστημονικό) is usually misunderstood since it does not refer to science but rather to academic discipline. Therefore, it does not come as a misinterpretation to any Greek speaker, but nevertheless the word is changed to academic discipline. The second suggestion to archive all PhD



theses will definitely be implemented. Again, this was not made obvious since the programme is in its 2nd year of operation but the archiving of all research work and the availability of all these to the public will be made a requirement for completion and graduation. However, the University maintains a digital archive where all PhD theses are uploaded and are also available externally.

7. Conclusions and final remarks

- a. A comparison of the numbers of male and female staff suggests a slight disparity in the latter reaching the higher levels of rank and leadership in the department and university level. We understand that the university is reviewing its policy in this regard and encourage and would expect positive developments in this area.
- b. We note a high degree of correspondence, in each programme of study concerned, with the EQF and are satisfied that the department positively meets all of the requirements made.

We would like to congratulate all members of administrative, support and teaching staff, and all of those students with whom we met, on the achievement of a fine set of programmes. We are grateful for the chance to review and to learn from the vibrant, sincere and impressive learning and research in art and design at Frederick University

All members of the Department who had taken part in the 2-day visit of the EEC would also like to extend their gratitude to all the members of the Committee for their input as well as support.

We are thankful for the very positive report and we are looking forward to further improving our Department. We are particularly thankful for the interesting and thought-provoking discussions held with the EEC during the visit and the fruitful debates held in relation to the future of Art and Design education.

The remark on Gender Equality is well taken and as already explained during the visit it is a matter that is seriously examined by the University with the implementation of ENAF – a newly set up committee which is putting down all the regulations for gender equality, LGTBQ inclusions, ethics, verbal/sexual abuse etc.

In fact, the Department since its initial set up has had a stance not only for gender equality but also for gender fluidity. It is recognized that there are challenges to be achieved but we are confident that especially with the progression and eligibility of younger female staff for higher ranks, these issues will be addressed.



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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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B. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
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Prof. George Demosthenous Rector

