

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 21/09/2023

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Nicosia

- **Town:** Nicosia

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

In Greek:

Μηχανική Πετρελαίου, Φυσικού Αερίου και
Ενέργειας (1.5 Έτη, 90 ECTS, Μεταπτυχιακό (MSc))

In English:

Oil, Gas and Energy Engineering (1.5 years, 90 ECTS,
Master of Science (MSc))

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

We would like to thank the members of the ECC for their positive comments regarding the MSc study programme, design and development. Please see below for point-to-point response.

| Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC | Actions Taken by the Institution | For Official Use ONLY |
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| <p>For the Master level courses, care should be taken, that the course description reflects the actual course content. The curriculum could also be broader with respect to related environmental techniques, e.g. CO₂ storage.</p> | <p>(a) We have carefully checked one by one all course descriptions in the Master program, and we ensure that they reflect the actual content.</p> <p>(b) We have fully adopted the suggestion by the ECC and we have included a new course OGEE-568 Carbon Dioxide Storage (7.5 ECTS) to supplement the electives list. (Annex 1A Revised Program Pathway & 1B Revised Semester Breakdown)</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |
| <p>To differentiate master's level courses from undergraduate courses effectively, it is crucial to include a well-defined advanced component in the curriculum. This advanced component goes beyond the complexity and depth of undergraduate courses, allowing students to delve deeper into their subjects, explore complex theories, and gain a comprehensive understanding of their field. It also promotes critical thinking, analytical skills, and independent research, preparing students for professional advancement. Defining this advanced component helps employers and academic institutions distinguish between candidates with undergraduate and graduate education, maintaining the value and integrity of graduate program.</p> | <p>To differentiate the master level courses from the undergraduate we have clear and well-defined components in the course syllabi to support the fact that the courses are advanced and of postgraduate level. Furthermore, the courses' material ensures critical thinking, analytical skills, and independent research through homework, projects and simulations with industrial tools (e.g. SLB software)</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

We would like to thank the members of the ECC for their comments on the student's centred learning, teaching and assessment. Please see below for point-to-point response.

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| <p>External examiners for grading of students in order to ensure good and international level of graduates and of teaching.</p> | <p>According to university regulations, there is currently no provision for external examiners. Therefore, an allocated budget is not currently in place for the suggested procedure of the utilization of external examiners. Nonetheless, the Department of Engineering is willing to adopt such a process if the university regulations change. The Dean of our School will bring the issue to the University Senate and Council. Until the materialization of this policy, we believe that the Quality Assurance Committee of the Department of Engineering, as discussed during the EEC visit, has well established procedures, which can ensure to a great extent the quality of the assessment methodology as well as the consistency across the various courses offered in the Department.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |
| <p>Would it be possible for class attendance at Master level not to be compulsory? The purpose would be to train self-discipline in students.</p> | <p>According to the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education and the University of Nicosia regulations, class attendance is compulsory for all students across all degree levels (BSc & MSc). In practice, the vast majority of our current and past MSc students are usually self-disciplined and regularly attend their classes. In case of an absence, the lecturer provides the course material that the student missed.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

We would like to thank the members of the ECC for their comments regarding the teaching staff. Please see below for point-to-point response

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| <p>In order to maintain the academic level of the teaching staff, too many face to face teaching hours a week should be avoided.</p> | <p>The Department of Engineering will adopt the following strategy for reducing the teaching load at the MSc of Oil, Gas and Energy Engineering program.</p> <p>(a) Reduce the teaching load of the faculty members (with the limit of the minimum teaching hours required by their contracts and the collective agreement in force) by keeping open calls around the year for part-time lecturers holding a PhD to assist in both teaching and research.</p> <p>(b) Take advantage of the recently established university policy for paid Teaching Assistantships by PhD candidates.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |
| <p>Also, a program for sabbaticals can be helpful.</p> | <p>The University already has in place a well-established procedure for sabbaticals in order to help faculty members with research time and international collaborations.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

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

We would like to thank the members of the ECC for their comment regarding students' admission, progression, recognition and certification. Please see below for point-to-point response.

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| <p>A strategy for attracting female students could be considered.</p> | <p>In order to address this suggestion first we will have to ask for budget allocation from the Department of Engineering, following approvals from the School of Sciences and Engineering and by the University Senate and Council.</p> <p>Our proposal will be for two (2) scholarships explicitly for female applicants for each admission period. Having in mind that the MSc in Oil, Gas and Energy Engineering program accepts applications in both Fall and Spring semesters this sums up to a total of four (4) scholarships for MSc studies annually to be granted explicitly to female applicants.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

We would like to thank the members of the ECC for their comment regarding the learning resources and student support. Please see below for point-to-point response.

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| <p>International norms with respect to laboratory safety should be adhered to.</p> | <p>We have reconsidered and updated our current Laboratory Health and Safety regulations manual to adhere with international norms.</p> <p>In order to address the EEC's recommendation:</p> <p>(a) The updated Lab Safety Manual (Annex 2) will be provided to all students in their first laboratory course followed by the equipment induction.</p> <p>(b) In consultation with the university's Health and Safety Officer, we have added all required signs to our Oil and Gas Engineering laboratories. (Annex 3)</p> <p>(c) We have removed any incompatible equipment from the laboratories (e.g. microwave oven & coffee machine). (Annex 3)</p> <p>(d) We have created storage located outside the building for safety reasons for all materials and expendables. (Annex 3)</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
 (ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

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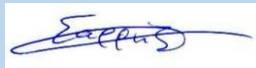
B. Conclusions and final remarks

We would like to thank the members of the ECC for their overall comments on the assessment of the MSc programme in oil, gas and Energy Engineering. Please see below for point-to-point response.

| Conclusions and final remarks by EEC | Actions Taken by the Institution | For Official Use ONLY |
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| <p>Teaching staff appears well educated and well selected, although with low diversity with respect to gender and ethnicity.</p> | <p>The University has a clear policy for ethnicity and gender equality. For all new positions either for full- or part-time teaching, applicants of different ethnicity and gender are encouraged to apply.</p> <p>However, the Department of Engineering is willing to revise its policy by following specific practices in all future faculty recruitment calls in order to improve diversity, gender and nationality among the permanent staff. Few of these steps include:</p> <p>(a) Add a footnote with the following: <i>“The University adopts an equal opportunity policy at recruitment and encourages both genders to apply for all levels of Academic and Administrative Staff. The University does not discriminate in any way based on gender, religion or belief, ethnicity, national or social origin, age, physical ability, marital status, or sexual orientation.”</i></p> <p>(b) Explicitly announce in international venues such as academic sites, conferences, research communities, as well as female-oriented communities such as Society of Women Engineers (SWE).</p> <p>(c) Include in search committees for full- and part-time lecturers a female member. The member can</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

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| | be from a related field either from another department of the university (if such faculty member exists) | |
| It is a concern that teaching load is high and could counteract up to date research-based instruction. | Please see response in section 3. | Choose level of compliance: |
| A program of sabbaticals could provide more focused research time and facilitate international collaboration. | Please see response in section 3. | Choose level of compliance: |
| Safety instructions are given in the laboratories, but a stricter adherence to international space and safety norms is recommended. | Please see response in section 5. | Choose level of compliance: |

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| Name | Position | Signature |
|------------------------------|---|---|
| Dr. George Gregoriou | Dean, School of Sciences and Engineering |  |
| Dr. Stelios Neophytou | Head, Department of Engineering |  |
| Dr. Ernestos Sarris | Coordinator, MSc in Oil, Gas and Energy Engineering program |  |

Date: 21/09/2023

