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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 14/05/2024

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**

  University of Central Lancashire Cyprus (UCLan Cyprus)

- **Town:** Larnaca

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

  In Greek:

  Μεταπτυχιακό Γραφικών Τεχνών (1 ακαδημαϊκό έτος, 90 ECTS, $2^{ος}$ κύκλος)

  In English:

  MA Graphic Design (1 academic year, 90 ECTS, 2nd Cycle)

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

- **Programme's status:** New

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: N/A
  In English: N/A

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
In the MA programme, **the EEC recommends implementing a clearer distinction between the teaching of theory, research findings (by staff to be shared with students), research skills and methods, and within research skills and methods, being clear about the programme's take on practice-based research.**	The MA Programme team will make sure that there is a clear distinction between the teaching of theory, research findings (that will be shared with students), research skills and methods. Moreover, the programme's take on practice-based research approach will be made clear from the very beginning of the MA journey through the semester 1 modules as explained in our breakdown of the MA response further below this document (see Section B, pages 17-22).	Choose level of compliance:

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
The term 'innovative' is being mentioned multiply towards the curriculum, the teaching methods, giving feedback, and practice. How such innovation will be achieved remains unclear and seems to be left to the teaching staff. **The EEC recommends a clear definition of what innovation means in those various contexts, how it is going to be implemented, and how tutors can implement it in their teaching in order to yield change towards novel approaches.**	From our perspective, innovative curriculum development refers to the utilisation of innovative educational methods and approaches across different aspects of the curriculum. All programmes of the Department encompass the continuous exploration, adaptation, and application of cutting-edge techniques, technologies, and methodologies, which are reflected within each programme's curriculum design, curriculum delivery, feedback mechanisms, and learning/practice environments. In what follows, we provide information on how we view such innovative approaches and provide examples of how they are implemented across the curriculum. **Curriculum Design**: The programme's curriculum design integrates emerging trends (research and industry informed curriculum), interdisciplinary approaches, and real-world challenges. With regards to the BA and MA in Graphic Design, their curriculum was designed so that during their studies, students have the opportunity to design graphics for digital applications and platforms (such as websites, web apps and mobile apps), for emerging technologies (such as augmented and virtual reality), and more, as well as be exposed to the latest research findings in their area. A good example is the BA Graphic Design module "Introduction to Visual Media Technologies" which brings such innovations in the curriculum and introduces students to the latest	Choose level of compliance:

technologies in their field. This knowledge is further enhanced and applied through other modules within the programme, especially the "On-Screen Graphics and Typography". Moreover, as indicated in the respective Module Descriptors, the curriculum of various modules (e.g. GR1002, DD2000, MK1006, DD1000, GC2000) incorporates elements of professional practice, entrepreneurship, sustainability, and social impact to prepare students for the evolving needs of the design industry. Additionally, as with all our programmes, the academic team of both the BA and MA programmes will be regularly reviewing industry trends, conduct meetings with professionals, and collaborate with industry partners to ensure that the curriculum remains relevant and forward-thinking.

Curriculum Delivery: Programme curriculum delivery should include innovative teaching and learning methods that promote active learning, critical thinking, reflection, collaboration, and experimentation. As indicated in various Module Descriptors of the Department's programmes, such teaching and learning methods include project-based learning, flipped classrooms, design thinking workshops, and peer-to-peer learning experiences. With regards to the BA and MA in Graphic Design, similarly to the rest of the Department's programmes, both programmes embrace a growth mindset and foster a culture of curiosity and exploration. Multimedia and media production resources (such as the Media Studio, DSLR cameras, 3D printers, VR headsets, computers etc.), gamified learning activities, and interactive presentations are incorporated in

teaching and learning. During their studies, students are encouraged to explore diverse perspectives, experiment with unconventional approaches, while also having several opportunities for self-directed learning. Additionally, the programmes leverage digital tools and platforms for remote collaboration and feedback exchange such as MS Teams, Slack and Blackboard.

Feedback Mechanisms: In all programmes innovative feedback mechanisms go beyond traditional critiques and grades. They focus on constructive, timely, and personalised feedback that empowers students to reflect on their work, iterate on their designs, and develop their unique voice as designers. Feedback should emphasise the process rather than just the final outcome. With regards to BA and MA Graphic design, as indicated across the programmes' Module Descriptors, tutors adopt a feedback loop approach where students receive feedback at various stages of the design process, not just at the end. This involves peer reviews, one-on-one feedback sessions, video critiques, and asynchronous feedback exchange through MS Teams. Programme Modules also utilise rubrics and assessment tools that emphasise holistic evaluation criteria such as creativity, problem-solving, and communication skills.

Learning/Practice Environment: Innovative learning/practice environments should provide students with opportunities to apply their knowledge and skills in real-world scenarios, collaborate with industry professionals, and contribute to meaningful projects. In

	our Department's programmes (BA and MA Graphic Design), this is achieved through internships, design studios, community engagement initiatives, and interdisciplinary collaborations (e.g. with Media Production, Fashion Design and Web Design students). Additionally, tutors facilitate project-based learning experiences that simulate real-world design challenges. During their studies, students have the opportunity to work on cross-disciplinary teams, participate in design competitions, and engage with local businesses and nonprofits to address authentic design assessment briefs. For example, in BA in Graphic Design such activities are implemented in a number of modules, especially DD3000 and GR3333. Additionally, throughout all programmes, tutors provide mentorship and networking opportunities to help students build their professional portfolio and establish connections within the industry. Overall, innovation in the Department of Arts, Media and Communication is defined as a holistic approach that encompasses the curriculum, teaching and learning methods, feedback mechanisms, and learning/practice environments. By embracing change, experimenting with new approaches, and staying connected to industry trends, the academic team of all programmes can inspire students to become versatile, forward-thinking graduates who drive positive change through their work.	
As the programmes expand, the EEC recommends the introduction of graphic design workshops such as type, bookmaking, printing to continue fostering a culture of	We would like to thank the EEC for the excellent recommendation. Although such workshops are already part of the curriculum of some modules (such as DE4404),	Choose level of compliance:

creativity and making with physical outputs.	introducing additional workshops as extra-curricular activities can indeed be very helpful for our students. Such additional workshops will be organised as supplementary to the existing curriculum delivery.	

3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Although there are useful procedures to assess the teaching quality of Lecturers and Modules in the new Programs, the quality of the teaching and development of teaching skills are not reflected in the promotion scheme. Also during the site visit, the EEC gained the impression that quality in teaching is highly valued by the Program Leader and the staff. **Therefore the EEC recommends implementing additional factors in the promotion scheme that recognise the importance of teaching, meet the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.**	We are in agreement with the EEC and we would like to reassure the Committee that the Teaching and Learning is an integral part of our academic promotion scheme and one of the required areas that academics need to fulfil so that they are qualified to be promoted to the next academic rank. Activities that are considered under Teaching and Learning include, but are not limited to student feedback received, diversity in teaching skills, teaching methods employed during curriculum delivery, student learning engagement, research and industry engagement with curriculum delivery, teaching material development, student supervision, programme leadership/ coordination, engagement with programme accreditation (including professional body accreditation), and alignment of curriculum with industry certifications. Besides the academic promotion, it is worth mentioning that Teaching is also part of the annual appraisal of the academics, where their annual performance related to teaching is evaluated and discussed with their appraiser.	Choose level of compliance:
The academics who will form this Department are for the most part research active. However, all of the research outputs are in areas adjacent to graphic design and fashion design; none of them address it head on. **It is hoped that in the near future the academics will conduct research into topics that relate more directly to graphic design and share its outcomes in the journals and conferences and via other means of dissemination dedicated to fostering graphic design discourse.**	We agree with the recommendation and this is something that is also embedded in the Department's strategy (i.e. to strengthen its research output, especially in the area of graphic design). Currently, two of the Department's academics' (Rafaella Maria Lakeridou, Christos Karpasitis) recent research and peer-reviewed publications is focused on social design, signage design for behavioural change, design for social change and graphic design for out-of-home social cause advertising. We will ensure that this is continued and enhanced in the years to come.	Choose level of compliance:

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Academics on the programs demonstrate an impressive body of research, however the subject area of graphic design remains underrepresented. Staff membership of professional organisations is mostly on a local rather than internationally recognised level, and there are very few in the realm of graphic design, including closely related disciplines such as typography, illustration, editorial design, etc. **The EEC recommends fostering links to graphic design professional bodies, institutions, industry, practitioners, and other HEIs (also beyond Cyprus) offering the subject. When hiring further academics in the near future, the Programmes should recruit staff with a distinct background in graphic design in order to gain those connections, and to foster a culture of graphic design in the new Programmes and the Department.** This will likely result in better understanding for the subject area, its disciplines and requirements. Currently, graphic design-specific backgrounds, memberships, industry links and research profiles are underrepresented in the body of staff.	We appreciate the feedback provided by the EEC regarding the synergies between teaching and research within our department. Strengthening our research output, particularly in the area of graphic design, is indeed a key aspect of our Department's strategy. We are committed to enhancing our research efforts in graphic design and related disciplines such as typography, illustration, information and editorial design. In line with this commitment, two of our academics, Rafaella Maria Lakeridou and Christos Karpasitis, have recently published research on topics including social design, signage design for behavioural change, and graphic design for out-of-home social cause advertising. We will continue to support and expand upon these research initiatives in the years to come, with a specific focus on involving more staff members related to our BA and MA Graphic Design courses. Additionally, we recognise the importance of staff involvement in international professional associations directly related to graphic design. Currently, four of our academics - Lambros Ioannou, Eftyhia Toumazides-Katchis, Rafaella-Maria Lakeridou, and Christos Karpasitis - actively participate in local events and associations related to graphic design, such as the Cyprus Association of Graphic Designers and Illustrators and the ILOVEGRAPHIC festival. We are committed to ensuring that this involvement is continued and enhanced in the years to come by encouraging more members of staff related to the BA and MA Graphic Design courses to participate not only to local but also in international professional associations and events. This involvement not only enriches our staff's professional development but also enhances our Department's connection to the global graphic design community, fostering collaboration, innovation, and knowledge exchange.	

	Furthermore, we have taken proactive steps to address staffing needs in this area. An academic vacancy advertisement for an additional member of staff with expertise in graphic design has been published, and we are currently in the process of scheduling interviews with potential candidates. Research experience in graphic design is one of the qualifications we are seeking for this vacancy, as we aim to further strengthen our research capacity in this field. We are confident that these efforts will contribute to the advancement of our Department's research profile and enhance the synergies between teaching and research, ultimately benefiting our students and the broader academic community.	
The synergy between teaching and research is even more important at MA level, where a student is expected to be developing their own research practice, to be deepening their theoretical and critical thinking either alongside or conducted through their design practice. It certainly benefits students to be immersed in a culture of inquiry. The research interests of the staff comprise the following topics, roughly in order of prevalence: ● user experience research; ● social media and networks and social media user behaviour; ● cultural preservation through creative practice; ● viral videos, advertising, and marketing; ● media literacy; ● epistemic cognition and informal learning; ● misinformation; ● digital journalism; ● digital media design and web design; ● graphic design; ● audiovisual design.	There is already an advertisement for an additional academic with expertise in Graphic Design and Typography to join the department in September 2024. This new hiring in addition to the current research background and interests of some of the members of the team such as Rafaella-Maria Lakeridou, Eftyhia Toumazides-Katchis, Christos Karpasitis and Lambros Ioannou are aligned with intended learning outcomes. Rafaella-Maria Lakeridou is a research active PhD candidate with an expected date of PhD completion in 2024. She has experience with practice-based research and applied design research (through her PhD) which are both strong elements of our BA and MA programmes in Graphic Design. Her research focus and expertise are in Graphic Design and specifically in Social Design. Rafaella already published work related to Signage Design, Social Design, Design for Social Change and Out-Of-Home Social Cause Advertisement Design. Eftyhia Toumazides-Katchis and Lambros Ioannou on the other hand have expertise and interests in areas including Graphic Design, Illustration, Digital Design and Packaging Design which are all areas that are aligned with intended learning outcomes of several modules and in which they can	Choose level of compliance:

While it is rarely the case that an entire staff's research interests find direct equivalents in the subjects to be taught, the situation in the UCLan Cyprus is notable in that almost none of them correspond. **The EEC recommends that the programme be more explicit about this fact, explaining that the expertise of this programme is geared towards digital media design, user experience design etc. (with growing attention to, and understanding of graphic design as one of its aims). Alternatively, the programme can hire staff whose research interests and practices are more aligned with its intended learning outcomes.**	conduct potential research in the upcoming years. This aligns with the strategic planning of the Department. Moreover, Christos Karpasitis has experience with practice-based research and practice-based PhD supervision in areas including Graphic Design and Social Design.	
The member of academic staff who requires additional mentoring and time to develop his research practice has one of the largest teaching workloads (11 periods per week across four different programmes, which will likely require significant extra hours of preparation and assessment). The ratio of teaching : research : administration should be closely monitored here.	Research is at the core of the Department's and the University's strategy and we consider it vital for our academics to be productive in research. To ensure and support this, the Department (and the University) operates an academic workload model, which follows an interactive process of defining the academics' yearly workload and considers each academic's individual plans. As a result, the workload model provides the necessary foundations and processes to be able to adjust the distribution of academics' time between teaching, research and administrative duties. In summary, the workload model is prepared by all academics before the commencement of the academic year, and it is reviewed and discussed with the Chair of the Department. The standard target distribution of the academics' workload hours is 40% teaching, 40% research and 20% administration, but during the annual review, other adjustments can be made according to the academic's research output and engagement. The workload model considers several aspects of the responsibilities of the academics on the aforementioned three areas, along with the time allocated to each. As a result, once the model is prepared, academics who are	

	above the allocated 40% research active, can request a teaching reduction and increase in research allocation hours. It is the responsibility of the academic and the Chair of the Department to ensure during the annual review meeting that academics are allocated the needed time to conduct research and be productive in this area. The workload model has been in operation for the last 8 years and it has proven very effective in assisting the Departments and the academics to keep a good balance between research, teaching and administrative work. It is a process we consider important for the sustainability and strengthening of our research environment, as well as for ensuring that teaching material is enhanced with the latest research developments, and as such, we are committed in continuing. We are also in agreement with the EEC that academic workload should be closely monitored and adjusted (e.g. reduce teaching workload) to allow academics, especially early career researchers, to further develop their careers. Through the years, a number of support mechanisms were established, such as mentoring of early career researchers by experienced researchers, and organization of general as well as discipline-specific research related seminars, conferences and trainings (e.g., proposal writing trainings, research networking). In addition to the overall university support staff for research and academic purposes, the University also has dedicated Research and Innovation Officer, who has been shown to be extremely beneficial for early career researchers and newly appointed staff. Of course, the Department is committed to continue supporting and strengthening its research environment and provide further opportunities for the academics to conduct research.	

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
The EEC recommends that the interview committee request a written statement of intent and/or proposed research inquiry at the MA level. The EEC also recommends that interviews be conducted by more than one person.	We would like to thank the EEC for the constructive recommendation, which we will implement. The interview committee will request a written statement of intent and/or proposed research inquiry and interviews will be conducted by two members of academic staff (course leader and one additional academic) and a portfolio will be requested.	Choose level of compliance:
In most other MA level programmes, and as mentioned in the list of Learning Outcomes for Exit Awards, D6, students are expected to have produced a body of written work to an appropriate professional standard. If the Advanced Practice project is the 'degree' project, then the staff could specify with more clarity when and how a body of written work will be produced and in relation to what.	As explained in a following section (see section B pages 17-22) and indicated in the Module Descriptors, students start producing a body of written work from the very beginning of their MA journey, in semester one, during the Research Methodologies module. This written work begins as a Literature and Contextual Review that slowly evolves throughout the year and throughout the rest of the modules to a body of work that effectively and professionally communicates their research and practice. By semester 3, students have a concrete body of written work related to their research and practice that they need to review and finalise during their Graphic Design Advance Practice (DE4409) module for inclusion in their Poster project. For more information regarding the MA programme and its structure please refer to section B of this response (see page 22).	Choose level of compliance:

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
The area which needs most immediate attention is the library which currently contains only a handful of books related to fashion design and graphic design, and almost none pertaining to fashion or graphic design research, graphic design history, or typography. The Department is keen to provide adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' creative research activities. The EEC is pleased to note that the Department has made arrangements with other institutions (University of Cyprus and Cyprus University of Technology) so that researchers with specialised equipment needs will be able to access it.	It came to our attention that during the EEC visit, the committee only visited one section of the Library that had some books related to Graphic Design and Fashion Design. There were additional sections in the Library containing Graphic Design and Fashion Design books that unfortunately, the EEC was not able to see. Currently, the library has all the required books for MA Graphic Design, and the first two years of BA Graphic Design and BA Fashion Design (a list is provided in Appendix I). Additional books will be acquired after the programmes are accredited and commence their delivery. For the full list of physical titles currently available in our Library and additional titles that we are expecting to receive by September 2024 please refer to Appendix I.	Choose level of compliance:
The Design Studio is yet to be activated as a research lab and is currently staged with some 'placeholder' materials which the EEC is concerned might be misleading to potential students, since they are not indicative of current graphic design practice nor of graphic design research.	It is worth mentioning that the construction of the Design Studio has been recently completed and it is not currently in use by any students or academics. We are confident that soon this will change and there will be more realistic representation of the work that is conducted at the University, by both, students and academics	Choose level of compliance:
About the library, the EEC recommends splitting responsibility for the acquisition of printed and digital publications by broad domains, such as Business, Management and Law and Visual Arts and Media, possibly hiring a second librarian.	The University already employs two fulltime Librarians as well as two part-time library assistants. The members of the team are assigned to respective Departments of the University, and therefore their responsibilities are split by subject areas in order for them to get familiarised with the needs of each	Choose level of compliance:

	domain and to ensure that appropriate Library resources are available to the students and academic staff. Our colleague Vicky Pantazakou will be dedicated to ensure the Library needs of the new Department of Arts, Media and Communication.	

6. Additional for doctoral programmes N/A
(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) N/A
(ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
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Conclusions and final remarks **by EEC**	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
UCLan Cyprus expects a relatively high number of students (11) in the first year of the MA. It was explained to the EEC that there are not many PG design programmes in the region and furthermore the programme will be likely to attract graduating BA students from other departments within the university. Regarding this last point, **the EEC recommends that students without a BA in graphic design should attend, at the very least, an intensive foundation course before being admitted to the MA.** Ideally, they would have a BA in Graphic Design, and/or some years of design experience under their belt. There are MA programmes (such as the one at Yale School of Art in the US, for example) who encourage applicants from non-design backgrounds. However they must attend an additional 'preliminary year' of study to bring their skills and basic understanding of the practice up to speed. This is something the Arts Department might consider going forward.	Although we are in agreement with the EEC that there should be a preparatory course for students entering an MA in Graphic Design with no Graphic Design background, this is not the intention of our programme. To be admitted to our MA Graphic Design programme, students must have a BA in Graphic Design or Design related programme. Additionally, it is required for prospects to submit a Graphic Design related portfolio for review, as part of their admission process.	Choose level of compliance:
All of the MA module descriptions are clearly works in progress. Most of them need to be entirely re-written with more precision and clarity. There is too much repetition among them (especially between 'Reflective Practice', 'Research in Context', 'Experimental Practice' and 'Specialist Practice' which are extremely difficult to tell apart). All of them are missing details of assignment requirements and assessment criteria, week-by-week breakdowns of which activities and	We would like to thank the EEC for the feedback on our submitted module descriptors. For clarification purposes, we would like to note that the format in which we submitted our module descriptors is the one required by the CYQAA. Following the CYQAA template, it is not required for the module descriptors to include detailed information such as assignment requirements, assessment criteria, week-by-week breakdowns of activities, reading material, equipment needed, field trip locations, etc. The module descriptors are intended to provide high level information. As a standard practice, the information the EEC was looking for is usually included in each module information package that is prepared and	Choose level of compliance:

readings and other forms of self-study are required, lists of equipment and materials needed, locations of field trips and so on. But even when they are complete, each programme leader will need to conduct an overview analysis to reduce the amount of overlap among modules, to ensure that the MA learning outcomes are proportionately distributed, to ensure the use of terminology is clearly defined and consistent, and that there is a logical progression across the three semesters. For example, currently the Research Methods course devotes a third of its content to conducting a literature review, but it is not yet evident if that is required in the final project which the three-part Graphic Design Advanced Practice module builds toward. One recommendation would be to reduce the number of these overlapping modules, and to increase the number of electives available**.**

shared with the students at the beginning of the academic year. Upon the accreditation of the programme, these module information packages will be prepared and be ready before the commencement of the programme.

Regarding potential repetition of teaching and learning material between modules, we apologise if the content of some modules was not clearly communicated to the EEC during the validation event. To better clarify things, in what follows, we provide descriptions of all the MA Graphic Design modules, explanations of how the modules inform each other without overlapping, and explanation of the progression within the programme across the three semesters of delivery.

Semester 1

Research Methodologies (DE4401): As this is a Semester 1 module, at the beginning students are becoming familiar with vocabulary and terminology of research, academic writing and ethics. Additionally, they start investigating literature and collecting evidence through which they need to build a literature and contextual review on a chosen subject/specialisation as part of their assessment. Through this module students will be introduced to critical inquiry and basic principles of research at postgraduate level. They will be introduced to basic practice-based research methods and applications (e.g. case studies, surveys, observations, interviews, visual ethnography, netnography, visual analysis, content analysis, design history and theory analysis), in order to understand how research informs practice and how qualitative and quantitative methods inform and drive research. Identification of research methods will underpin their individual line of enquiry that they will start considering in parallel and in more depth during the Reflective Practice module.

Reflective Practice (DE4403): This module runs in Semester 1 too and in parallel with the Research Methodologies module. Through reflection to the literature and contextual review that students are developing through the Research Methodologies module, students will start running initial practical investigations. During the module students will need to start considering some design choices based on research arguments that should inform their

individual line of enquiry. After developing several enquiries based on the literature that they reviewed in the Research Methodologies module and after consultation with their tutors, students need to choose one as their main (and initial) line of enquiry. Throughout the module students will write a Reflective Journal regarding their journey while also putting together an initial Learning Agreement that will be used as a framework to that enquiry. These two documents together with some initial investigative practical work will be the assessed components of this module. In this way, their enquiry will start taking the form of a practice-based enquiry that will be enhanced and upgraded during semester 2 as explained in detail below.

Semester 2

Experimental Practice (DE4404): In this module which runs in Semester 2, students will be experimenting with materials relevant to their chosen area of research and they will be working on live projects or focus on one significant component that was identified in the Reflective Practice module. Through enquiry students will need to build a portfolio. Students need to demonstrate an understanding of where their work sits culturally within their own chosen discipline. The line of enquiry should be the theme through all their projects and experiments, in order to show how research drives their practice. Students will be able to work on one large project or several short projects depending on the discipline, the goals, the research and practice-based outcomes, which should be based on the Learning Agreement that they started putting together in the Reflective Practice module during semester one. While experimenting with the materials available, during this module, students continue working on the Reflective Journal and Learning Agreement that could be slightly amended at this point, which evidences the considered changes throughout their MA journey. This module gives more emphasis on experimentation in the studio and on the body of work that students will start putting together. Assessed components for this module are the portfolio, the updated Learning Agreement and the updated Reflective Journal, both informed by this module.

Specialist Practice (DE4405): In this module, which also runs in Semester 2 and in parallel to the

Experimental Practice module, students need to decide on whether they will be 1) exploring through live investigations the constraints of accepted creative industrial practice or if through their inquiry they will be 2) exploring and developing innovative ideas and practices that challenge accepted creative norms within the chosen discipline. Based on their decision, students will be upgrading (by focusing more on) selected work that they are working on and experimenting with through the Experimental Practice module, with the goal of improving it and making it more appropriate and connected to their line of enquiry, while considering its impact in key topics including diversity, equality as well as social and cultural practice. These topics should start becoming more connected to their work during this module and a clear theme that runs through all their projects. During this module students will continue working on their Learning Agreement that will start taking the form of a Research Proposal at this point and on their Reflective Journal where they will be reflecting on the work completed during this module and on how this impacts their MA journey so far. Assessed components for this module are the selected (from the Experimental Practice module) and upgraded body of work (pieces of the portfolio on which students have put more work during this module within the context of diversity, equality as well as social and cultural practice), the updated Learning Agreement and the updated Reflective Journal.

Research in context (DE4402): This is the only theoretical module of Semester 2. During this module more investigation of work, research and literature is required since this module directly informs the two practical modules of this semester (Experimental Practice and Specialist Practice). This module involves deeper investigation than the theoretical modules of Semester 1, since students at this point need to make sure that appropriate research methods are used and that they understand exactly where their work sits within their chosen discipline. Through this module, students will also recognise the potential implications of their work to both theory and practice. They will be looking at more methodologies (such as design experiments, design prototyping, design interventions and more), while comparing them with (or applying them to) the ones that they are currently using. During this module students will identify potential limitations of their work compared to other similar works. This

will articulate critical thinking. Moreover, more advanced reflective techniques will be applied through critically questioning the work of others. Additionally, during this module students are expected to interact with relevant people (artists, practitioners, researchers etc) who can help them improve their work. Through this module students will be required to visit companies, exhibitions, museums and events relevant to their chosen research area, in order to network in their chosen discipline and get useful insights. All these culminates in a position of practice report which will be the main outcome and assessed component of this module.

Semester 3

Graphic Design Advanced Practice (DE4409): This is a Semester 3 module. For this final module, students need to put everything that they have been working on during Semesters 1 and 2 together and finalise it. They need to plan, organise and finalise their body of work (produced during the Specialist Practice module) and its dissemination by using all the knowledge, experience and network that they gathered during their studies.

The outcomes of this module are 1) the finalised body of design work as appropriate to the project's context and disseminated in an exhibition and/or portfolio, and 2) a poster that appropriately communicates their research to a professional, written and visual standard. The poster should be communicating their line of enquiry and their position through an improved, finalised version of the literature and contextual review developed during Semester 1 (Research Methodologies module), and through justifications on how this research informed their practice. Additionally, the poster should include in-depth description and justification of the research methods used throughout their journey as well as references and visually rich supporting imagery of their progress and/or findings.

The Reflective Diary and Proposal/Learning Agreement that students have put together throughout Semester 1 and 2 modules should be useful instruments for the development of this poster and their final body of work to be disseminated.

The research interests of the staff comprise the topics that do not exactly match the subjects covered in the modules. While it is rarely the case that an entire staff's research interests find direct equivalents in the subjects to be taught, the situation in the UCLan Cyprus is notable in that almost none of them seem to correspond. **The EEC recommends that the programme be more explicit about this fact, explaining that the expertise of this programme is geared towards digital media design, user experience design etc. (with growing attention to, and understanding of graphic design as one of its aims). Alternatively, the programme can hire staff whose research interests and practices are more aligned with its intended learning outcomes.**	This has been addressed above, in Section 3, pages 10-11. Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
It is hoped that in the near future the academics will conduct research into topics that relate more directly to graphic design and share its outcomes in the journals and conferences and via other means of dissemination dedicated to fostering graphic design discourse.	This has been addressed above, in Section 3, page 8.	Choose level of compliance:
The EEC recommends fostering links to graphic design professional bodies, institutions, industry, practitioners, and other HEIs (also beyond Cyprus) offering the subject. When hiring further academics in the near future, the Programmes should recruit staff with a distinct background in graphic design in order to gain those connections, and to foster a culture of graphic design in the new Programmes and the Department.	This has been addressed above, in Section 3, pages 9-10	Choose level of compliance:

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Dr Christos Karpasitis	Chair of the Department of Arts, Media and Communication Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee	
Dr Cosmina Theodoulou	Director of the Academic Quality and Compliance Office	
Mrs Eftyhia Toumazides-Katchis	Course Leader of MA Graphic Design	

Date: 14/05/2024