

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: Date.

## Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
The Cyprus University of Technology

- **Town:** Paphos

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

**In Greek:**

Διδακτορικό

**In English:**

Doctorate

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

- **Programme's status:** New

- **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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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>There is potentially space to go more into depth in the taught material. For example, Structural Equation Modeling is taught within one session, but this is hardly enough for students to even familiarize themselves with the tool. The EEC recommends that to overcome such shortcoming by adding 1 or 2 elective courses to meet specialized needs of some students be made available.</p>	<p>In response to your recommendation we are pleased to announce the introduction of three new elective courses to address the specialized needs of our students:</p> <p>Advanced Structural Equation Modeling (SEM): This course will delve deeper into SEM, covering both foundational concepts and advanced techniques. It will provide students with hands-on experience using SEM software and interpreting results. Please see the course outline in the Appendix.</p> <p>Multivariate Analysis/ Applied Multivariate Statistics: This advanced-level course is designed to provide PhD students with a comprehensive understanding of multivariate analysis techniques and their applications in business research. Emphasizing both theoretical foundations and practical applications, students will be equipped to design, implement, and interpret multivariate analyses in various business contexts. Please see the course outline in the Appendix.</p> <p>Text Analysis: this course will provide you with an understanding of common and emerging methods of analyzing large collections of textual data. In addition to the survey of text analytics methods, this course will teach you how to apply these text analytics methods in Python. In summary, the focus of this course is on concepts and methods of text analytics, their implementations in Python, and</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>applications to empirical research. Ph.D. students of all disciplines may benefit from this course. Please see the course outline in the Appendix.</p> <p>Collaboration with Other Departments and Universities: We are also in active discussions with other departments within our University and collaborating Universities to offer elective courses on specialized methodologies. This collaboration will ensure that our students have access to a diverse range of courses, catering to their specific research interests and needs.</p> <p>We believe these initiatives will significantly enhance the depth and breadth of our program's curriculum, ensuring our students are well-prepared to tackle complex research challenges in their future endeavors.</p>	
<p>The elective courses are offered on the MSc. programme and this can allow doctoral students to start filling gaps of topical knowledge; however, the EEC notes that such approach may not be sufficient for doctoral students as MSc courses tend to focus more on the applied side while topical doctoral courses often require a different level of abstraction. Therefore, the EEC encourages the department to design and offer topical courses (e.g., various multivariate methods of analysis) solely for doctoral students, given resource availability.</p>	<p>The master level courses are offered to PhD students who never had the opportunity to take a similar course at a masters level and when the Advising Committee feels that the course could benefit the student by providing some relevant background. These courses do not form part of the PhD programme. The PhD level courses include the technical courses (800 level) described in the application report plus the new courses, discussed earlier that we plan to offer.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The core courses are taught in English, but the electives are taught in Greek. This creates an issue not only in terms of consistency but also in terms of attracting students and training them. Non – Greek speaking potential students cannot enrol in elective courses and are considerably less likely to apply to</p>	<p>All courses at PhD level, both compulsory and electives will be offered in English. Non-Greek speaking students will not take master level courses since we will ensure that they have the appropriate background.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>the programme in the first place. For those reasons, the EEC recommends that all courses offered to PhD students are offered in English.</p>		
<p>The EEC recommends that funds available for PhD candidates can cover expenses beyond conferences; these may include access to databases not offered elsewhere, data collection, and additional training offered externally.</p>	<p>PhD student expenses that relate to access to databases, data collection etc. are approved and funded by the Department as they arise. To this point the Department has approved all requests related to the above expenses.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Funds should be made available for students to take elective specialized courses as required.</p>	<p>Such needs are funded by the Department as they arise. The Department is committed to providing PhD students with the resources they need to excel in their research endeavors.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Consider including standardised tests like GMAT as an additional input to the admission criteria and the decision-making process.</p>	<p>After careful consideration, we have decided not to incorporate the GMAT or similar tests into our admissions process for the following reasons:</p> <p>Potential for discouraging applications: Standardized tests, including the GMAT, are not currently being used in the context of Cyprus higher education. Thus, students are not familiar with these kinds of tests, and, this could create hesitation among students from Cyprus and Greece (which currently are the main source of PhD candidates which continue from Master programmes either at our University or from other Universities here and in Greece) to apply at the PhD programme.</p> <p>Holistic Evaluation: Our admissions process is designed to evaluate candidates holistically. We believe that a candidate's academic record, research proposal, letters of recommendation, and personal statement provide a comprehensive view of their potential. Introducing</p>	

	<p>a standardized test score might inadvertently shift the focus to a single numeric value, potentially overshadowing other significant aspects of an applicant's profile.</p> <p>Diversity and Inclusion: We are committed to promoting diversity and inclusion in our program. The introduction of standardized tests, which can be expensive (due to preparation courses taken by students for these tests, test fees, etc.) and less accessible for candidates from underprivileged backgrounds, might inadvertently create barriers for these candidates. We want to ensure that all potential students, regardless of their socioeconomic status, have an equal opportunity to join our program.</p> <p>In conclusion, while we recognize the potential benefits of standardized tests in some contexts, we believe that our current admissions criteria align more closely with our program's values and objectives. We remain committed to continuous improvement and will keep the committee's recommendation in mind for future reviews.</p>	
<p>There is a complete focus the CABs list of journals and on journals allow. It might be useful to consider other ranking such as Australian Deans Council journal rankings list, the importance of journals to the area of study, book chapters, and research monographs. This more inclusive approach has become more important given that leading research institutes are now signatories to the DORA accord (<a href="https://sfdora.org/">https://sfdora.org/</a>), including the University of Cyprus.</p>	<p>We will broaden the list of publications that are considered quality publications, by including additional ranking lists (e.g., ABDC ranking list), as well as other types of publications apart from journal articles (e.g., books, book chapters, research monographs).</p>	



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CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION





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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The program is not fully managed by the academics in charge since some optional modules are taught in partner universities, depending on the specific training needs of each PhD candidate. These modules are outside the control of the department. Thus, for quality control purposes, there is a need to become more self-sufficient and provide more such units (including the more methodological and analytical units) in-house, given resource availability. Otherwise there needs to be a quality assurance process which the modules taught outside of the Cyprus University of Technology are determined to be the standards required by the CUT.</p>	<p>The development of the additional 3 PhD level methodology-related elective courses, that will be conducted in-house, will cover to a large degree the needs for our PhD candidates.</p> <p>Second, we propose the following quality assurance process for evaluating courses the modules taught outside of the Cyprus University of Technology:</p> <p>1) Instructor and Course Documentation Evaluation: Obtain a detailed syllabi, course materials, and assessment methods from the partner university for the modules taught outside of Cyprus University of Technology, as well as a Curriculum Vitae of the Instructor teaching the module. A criterion for possible inclusion of a module from a partner University, is that the University delivering the module is an Accredited Institution of Higher Education and that the PhD programme of the partner University holds the Accreditation From the Agency of Quality Assurance And Accreditation in Higher Education of the respective Country in which the University is based on.</p> <p>Establishment of Evaluation Committee: Form a committee comprising the Director of the PhD programme and the supervisory Committee of the PhD candidate(s) in need for the specific module. This committee will be responsible for the evaluation process.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>Benchmarking: Compare the instructor’s knowledge and course content, teaching methods, and assessment criteria of the external module with similar modules taught in-house at CUT. This will help determine if the external module meets the standards set by CUT.</p> <p>Feedback from Students: Gather feedback from the PhD candidates that will take the module at the partner university. Their firsthand experience will provide valuable insights into the quality and relevance of the module for using or not the module in subsequent years.</p>	
The EEC recommends the school to show flexibility regarding the admission criteria (e.g., 7.5 average) to PhD program and evaluate each case holistically.	In general, we are flexible with the admission criteria as we try to take a holistic view of the candidate. Candidates may not meet certain numerical criteria (e.g., 7.5 average), but still are admitted into the programme because they possess the potential, drive, and unique perspectives that will enrich our PhD program and the broader academic community.	Choose level of compliance:
The school should also consider inviting over Visiting Professors to deliver classes, talks and training sessions to PhD candidates. This can be done even for English-speaking scholars when they focus on delivering guest lectures and serve as mentors to staff and students.	We already have a budget for this and we actively engage in inviting English speaking professors from abroad for these activities.	Choose level of compliance:
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Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:

### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
Improve gender balance of academic personnel.	Please see the response on page 7 of the Departmental Report	Choose level of compliance:
Establish a mandatory workshop for teaching developing skills to ensure that all personnel are updated with latest research in pedagogy.	Please see the response on page 8 of the Departmental Report	Choose level of compliance:
Participate and publish on topics of education and pedagogy on topics the staff lectures on. In other words, use teaching as an active research arena to improve teaching performance and identify best practices.	Please see the response on page 8 of the Departmental Report	Choose level of compliance:
Ensure that ongoing hires are finalized as they are important for future development of the program.	We are in the process of recruiting 3 faculty for this academic year and we will recruit 3 more faculty next year.	Choose level of compliance:
Introduce a guest lecturing colloquium that doctoral students can attend once every 1-2 months on different research topics or methods.	We are currently implementing a guest lecturing colloquium (bi-monthly) by inviting leading scholars in our PhD programme to make a guest lecture to our PhD students. Some of these presentations are made by external researchers and some by internal researchers.	Choose level of compliance:

#### 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 program can work on ways in which students can engage in more Erasmus exchange programs or other forms of mobility with foreign universities.	We encourage our students to travel abroad and visit collaborating institutions in the course of Erasmus exchange programmes. In addition, we encourage PhD students from collaborating universities to spend time with researchers at our Department.	Choose level of compliance:
An information day from local and national enterprises could benefit students in terms of finding sources of collecting data and conducting their research within public and private organizations.	We agree that an information day from local and national companies is very important for the PhD students and we assure the Committee that we will put this in place with the new PhD program.	Choose level of compliance:
Establishing research colloquia every 6-12 months for doctoral students so that they are informed about their peers research and can receive feedback and track their progress.	We are currently implementing research colloquia for PhD students on a frequent basis and we ensure the Committee that we will continue to do it with the new PhD programme.	Choose level of compliance:
Consider using standardized tests of English knowledge for admission criteria.	We currently apply the following standardized tests English knowledge for admission criteria: Accepted evidence of English language proficiency is: G.C.E /O-Level with a minimum score of C or ELTS / IELTS of at least 6.5 or TOEFL of at least 580 (paper-based test) / 82 (internet-based test). Graduates of an English-taught university curriculum are exempted from this requirement.	Choose level of compliance:
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## 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>The EEC is concerned about the courses that they have to be taught outside the school. Thus, it is recommended to establish rigorous quality control measures to ensure that the teaching of specialised units on multivariate-methods of analysis are of high standards. If outside sources are not knowledgeable or equipped to deliver these courses, then the school should consider hiring expert/specialised personnel to do so.</p>	<p>Please see the response on page 7.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Access to more databases should also be considered (e.g., Bloomberg). These can be possibly accessed on a fee basis, or through bilateral agreements with other Universities in Cyprus.</p>	<p>The University has access to Bloomberg. Moreover, we have access to databases such as CRISP, Compustat, Execucomp, Boardex etc. Finally, we are in discussions with the University of Cyprus to share other databases in need.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Access to more statistical software is also needed. The school provides licences to traditional statistical software such as SPSS, NVIVO, R, STATA; however, the students are also taught material on Structural Equation Modeling but they have no access to SEM software (e.g., LISREL or EQS).</p>	<p>Apart from the tools and licenses provided to the PhD students, for anything extra we also provide it via the Department's budget.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
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<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</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
<p>There is potentially space to go more into depth in the taught material. For example, Structural Equation Modeling is taught within one session but this is hardly enough for students to even familiarize themselves with the tool. The EEC recommends that to overcome such shortcoming by adding 1 or 2 additional compulsory courses so that students have the opportunity to go deeper into tools and techniques.</p>	<p>Please see the response on page 3.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The elective courses are offered in the MSc. programme and this can allow doctoral students to start filling gaps of topical knowledge; however, the EEC notes that such approach may not be sufficient for doctoral students as MSc. courses tend to focus more on the applied side while topical doctoral courses often require a different level of abstraction. Therefore, the EEC encourages the department to design and offer topical courses solely for doctoral students.</p>	<p>Please see the response on page 4.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The core courses are taught in English, but the electives are taught in Greek. This creates an issue not only in terms of consistency but also in terms of attracting students and training them. Non – Greek speaking potential students cannot enrol in elective courses and are considerably less likely to apply to the programme in the first place. For those reasons, the EEC recommends that all courses offered to PhD students are offered in English.</p>	<p>Please see the response on page 4.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The EEC recommends that funds available for PhD candidates can cover expenses beyond</p>	<p>Please see the response on page 5.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



conferences; these may include access to databases not offered elsewhere, data collection, and additional training offered externally.		
Consider including standardized tests such as GMAT as selection criteria and input to the decision-making process.	Please see the response on pages 5-6.	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
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## B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>There is potentially space to go more into depth in the taught material. For example, Structural Equation Modeling is taught within one session, but this is hardly enough for students to even familiarize themselves with the tool. The EEC recommends that to overcome such shortcoming by adding 1 or 2 elective courses to meet specialized needs of some students be made available.</p>	<p>The previous sections provide responses to these suggestions.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The elective courses are offered on the MSc. programme and this can allow doctoral students to start filling gaps of topical knowledge; however, the EEC notes that such approach may not be sufficient for doctoral students as MSc courses tend to focus more on the applied side while topical doctoral courses often require a different level of abstraction. Therefore, the EEC encourages the department to design and offer topical courses (e.g., various multivariate methods of analysis) solely for doctoral students, given resource availability.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The core courses are taught in English, but the electives are taught in Greek. This creates an issue not only in terms of consistency but also in terms of attracting students and training them. Non – Greek speaking potential students cannot enrol in elective courses and are considerably less likely to apply to the programme in the first place. For those reasons, the EEC recommends that all courses offered to PhD students are offered in English.</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The EEC recommends that funds available for PhD candidates can cover expenses beyond</p>	<p>Click or tap here to enter text.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

conferences; these may include access to databases not offered elsewhere, data collection, and additional training offered externally.		
Funds should be made available for students to take elective specialized courses as required.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose level of compliance:
Consider including standardised tests like GMAT as an additional input to the admission criteria and the decision-making process.		
There is a complete focus the CABs list of journals and on journals allow. It might be useful to consider other ranking such as Australian Deans Council journal rankings list, the importance of journals to the area of study, book chapters, and research monographs. This more inclusive approach has become more important given that leading research institutes are now signatories to the DORA accord ( <a href="https://sfdora.org/">https://sfdora.org/</a> ), including the University of Cyprus.		
The program is not fully managed by the academics in charge since some optional modules are taught in partner universities, depending on the specific training needs of each PhD candidate. These modules are outside the control of the department. Thus, for quality control purposes, there is a need to become more self-sufficient and provide more such units (including the more methodological and analytical units) in-house, given resource availability. Otherwise there needs to be a quality assurance process which the modules taught outside of the Cyprus University of Technology are determined to be the standards required by the CUT.		
The EEC recommends the school to show flexibility regarding the admission criteria (e.g., 7.5.		

average) to PhD program and evaluate each case holistically.		
The school should also consider inviting over Visiting Professors to deliver classes, talks and training sessions to PhD candidates. This can be done even for English-speaking scholars when they focus on delivering guest lectures and serve as mentors to staff and students.		
Revise the program such that students can engage in more Erasmus exchange programs or other forms of mobility with foreign universities.		
An information day from local and national enterprises could benefit students in terms of finding sources of collecting data and conducting their research within public and private organizations.		
Establishing research colloquia every 6-12 months for doctoral students so that they are informed about their peers' research and can receive feedback and track their progress.		
Consider using standardized tests of English knowledge for admission criteria.		
There is potentially space to go more into depth in the taught material. For example, Structural Equation Modeling is taught within one session but this is hardly enough for students to even familiarize themselves with the tool. The EEC recommends that to overcome such shortcoming by adding 1 or 2 additional compulsory courses so that students have the opportunity to go deeper into tools and techniques.		
The elective courses are offered in the MSc. programme and this can allow doctoral students to start filling gaps of topical knowledge; however, the EEC notes that such approach may not be sufficient for doctoral students as MSc. courses		

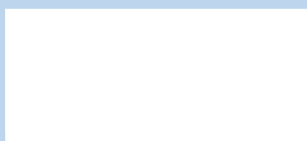
<p>tend to focus more on the applied side while topical doctoral courses often require a different level of abstraction. Therefore, the EEC encourages the department to design and offer topical courses solely for doctoral students.</p>		
<p>The core courses are taught in English, but the electives are taught in Greek. This creates an issue not only in terms of consistency but also in terms of attracting students and training them. Non – Greek speaking potential students cannot enrol in elective courses and are considerably less likely to apply to the programme in the first place. For those reasons, the EEC recommends that all courses offered to PhD students are offered in English.</p>		
<p>The EEC recommends that funds available for PhD candidates can cover expenses beyond conferences; these may include access to databases not offered elsewhere, data collection, and additional training offered externally.</p>		
<p>Consider including standardized tests such as GMAT as selection criteria and input to the decision-making process.</p>		
<p>The EEC is concerned about the courses that they have to be taught outside the school. Thus, it is recommended to establish rigorous quality control measures to ensure that the teaching of specialised units on multivariate-methods of analysis are of high standards. If outside sources are not knowledgeable or equipped to deliver these courses, then the school should consider hiring expert/specialised personnel to do so.</p>		
<p>Access to more databases should also be considered (e.g., Bloomberg). These can be possibly</p>		



accessed on a fee basis, or through bilateral agreements with other Universities in Cyprus.		
Access to more statistical software is also needed. The school provides licences to traditional statistical software such as SPSS, NVIVO, R, STATA; however, the students are also taught material on Structural Equation Modeling but they have no access to SEM software (e.g., LISREL or EQS).		

C.

#### D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Michail Christofi</b>	Coordinator of PhD programme	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
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**Date:** 20/10/2023

