

Doc. 300.1.1/2

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report (Hybrid)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Cyprus University of Technology
- **Town:** Limassol
 - **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Management and Economics
- **Department/ Sector:** Department of Shipping
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Ναυτιλιακά (1.5 Έτη, 90 ECTS, Μεταπτυχιακό, Υβριδικό)

In English:

Shipping (1.5 Years, 90 ECTS, Master of Science, Hybrid)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek or English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

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].

In Greek:

- 1. Αειφορία στη Ναυτιλία**
- 2. Αναλυτική Διαχείριση Εφοδιαστικής Αλυσίδας**
- 3. Ναυτιλιακές Επενδύσεις**

In English:

- 1. Sustainable Operations**
- 2. Supply Chain Management Analytics**
- 3. Shipping Investments**

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) comprised of 4 members, George Theocharidis, Jason Monios, Rene Taudal Poulsen, Dimitrios Vlachopoulos and Kyriaki Lazarou (student representative), was invited by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA) to assess the MSc in Shipping (Hybrid) proposed by the Technical University of Cyprus (hereafter “University”), Limassol. The evaluation took place at the premises of the University in Limassol on the 24th of November 2025.

The EEC met with the Vice-Rector, Prof. Nicolas Tsapatsoulis, the Coordinator of the Department, Prof. Photis Panayides and others as below. In addition, the EEC had the opportunity to have constructive discussions with the members of teaching staff and administrative personnel, as well as with graduate and current students (undergraduate, MSc students and MSc graduates) from the conventional programmes. The EEC also had a physical tour in the University’s infrastructure and facilities. To facilitate the process of evaluation the Faculty have provided the EEC with additional evidence upon request.

In this evaluation report we present the findings of the EEC, the strengths of the programme and the Faculty and areas that need further improvement. The EEC provides constructive feedback and makes several suggestions to the Faculty for improvement.

The EEC remains at the disposal of the CYQAA and Faculty for providing clarifications regarding this report. Finally, the EEC would like to thank the CYQAA for the invitation to evaluate this programme, the members of the Faculty, the Administrative Staff of the University, the External Stakeholders for their hospitality and cooperative spirit on the day of the evaluation.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
George Theocharidis	Professor	WMU
René Taudal Poulsen	Associate Professor	Copenhagen Business School, Denmark
Jason Monios	Professor	Kedge Business School, Marseille, France
Dimitrios Vlachopoulos	Associate Professor	Erasmus University, Rotterdam, the Netherlands
Kyriaki Lazarou	Student	University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
 - (a) sub-areas*
 - (b) standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - (c) some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance
- 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
- 1.3 Public information
- 1.4 Information management

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
 - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
 - *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
 - *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher*

Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area

- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The Master of Science (MSc) in Shipping is not an operating programme but it will start in September 2026, subject to accreditation. However, there is a currently operating MSc in Shipping programme, which attracts interest primarily from the Cypriot market and has 14 students for the cohort of 2025. The EEC believes that the qualification for MSc (Hybrid) to be awarded by the University meets the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education.

The EEC believes that the core content and structure of the programme is similar to other MSc programmes offered in other EU countries and the UK. The programme in its current format provides the necessary disciplinary knowledge and skills needed for professional development in the area of Shipping Business at Master level. The EEC enquired about the programme's intended learning outcomes, teaching approaches and assessment procedures. The programme coordinator (also Coordinator of the Department of Shipping) and teaching team provided sufficient evidence of such information.

With regard to the structure and design of the programme, the EEC applauds the Department and teaching staff for their efforts to develop a programme that is current and reflective of the recent shipping and business trends. At this point, it should be noted that the programme offers 3 Concentration Core Courses, accounting for 30 ECTS, and 3 elective options, accounting for 60 ECTS, namely, 8 Elective Courses, accounting for up to 52.5 ECTS, Elective Dissertation, accounting for 30 ECTS, and Elective Optional Internship, accounting for 7.50 ECTS.

Important information about the programme, its content and structure, admission criteria, fees etc. is not publicly available on the University's website at the moment, as it has not been accredited yet. The EEC has observed that the University, as a whole, has several policies in place to ensure quality assurance, which were duly presented by Prof. Nicolas Tsapatsoulis. Any new programmes or changes to existing programmes have to go through an internal process and they are subject to approval. Good practice recommendations can then be tailored to the programme as per necessary. However, we were not provided with a specific policy regarding protocols for research and data collection management.

While the Department in its application has included the Rules on Studies and Academic Affairs, the EEC has not seen a comprehensive policy on appeals and grievances. More importantly the wording in Regulation 2.11 "...If the instructor does not agree to discuss with the student, then the student has the right to request the mediation of the President in order to be given the relevant explanations..." has to be amended according to a proper policy.

The EEC was not provided with past exam papers, as the programme to be accredited is new and exam papers from the previous MSc programme, which will be discontinued, were not submitted. Therefore, the EEC cannot make comments about the possible feedback to students.

Student final feedback about the course will actively be sought through online anonymous survey at the end of the programme. Regarding the mandatory completion of the survey before grades are released, the EEC submits that as long as students are given freedom on the substance of the survey and anonymity, it is acceptable to link it to the release of the grades. However, evidence of the effectiveness of this information in terms of specific measures for improvement and action plans taken by the University, need to be seen, when implemented.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

When one looks at the structure of the programme, it can safely be drawn that the offered subjects will provide a solid foundation for the future career of the students in the relevant industry.

The programme under evaluation appears to have specific and realistic intended learning outcomes. It seems that it was designed with the vision of the industry in mind.

The elective courses provide significant added value to the programme, as was evidenced by the discussion that the EEC had with the External Stakeholders.

Information about the programme of study is clear, accurate, and readily accessible for prospective students.

The programme will offer internships, as an elective, to various companies and organizations, which seems to be linked with future career opportunities and this is commended. From the discussion, there does not seem to be a criterion of performance for the participation in the number of internship positions, however, an interview is required to be given by the student to the host institution, which seems solid for the acceptance of a student in the internship.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

The EEC asked for clarifications in respect of plagiarism in the assessment process. The relevant text in the submitted application was reviewed and while there is a policy in place on how an assessor can detect what amounts to plagiarism, there are no specific rules in ascertaining the type and gravity of an act of plagiarism and how it will be sanctioned (i.e. the percentage of mark deduction according to the committed act). The same should be introduced in the Rules on Studies and Academic Affairs.

Regarding feedback, with the exception of quiz exercises, it must be stated that it was not clear from our discussion what form of feedback the students receive in the assessment methods engaged (e.g. hand-written exam etc.) during the Core Courses period but, in our opinion, that process should be properly accommodated and reflected in the Rules. Feedback is inextricably linked to appeals for grades received.

The Department must place a specific and comprehensive policy, clearly also reflected in the handbooks, about the conduct of research according to protocols, especially the management and destruction of data collected after the completion of research. For that purpose, the Research Ethics and Deontology Committee is recommended to deal with the above matters.

As regards the appeal process, especially the grounds for rectification of mistakes and re-evaluation, it is not clear and comprehensible, especially the grounds for appeal.

Any criterion (e.g. interview) for the participation in the internship positions should be clearly stated in the programme handbook, so that students are privy to it and motivated to perform better, should they wish to secure an internship position.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The e-learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*
- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
 - *among students*
 - *between students and teaching staff*
 - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of e-learning delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the e-learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*
- *For distance learning programs, the number of students in both undergraduate and Master's level postgraduate programs does not exceed 30 students per class.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on e-learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the e-learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

2.4 Study guides structure, content and interactive activities

Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with e-learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
 - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
 - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
 - ***Weekly schedule of interactive activities and exercises (i.e. simulations, problem solving, scenarios, argumentation)***
 - *Clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
 - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
 - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*
 - *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
 - *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- Is the nature of the programme compatible with e-learning delivery?*
- How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The programme operates as a hybrid MSc, with up to 30% of teaching offered synchronously online, while the remainder is delivered through conventional face-to-face instruction. The figure of 30% derives from the premise which sessions are suitable for non-physical attendance according to the judgment of the teaching staff.

This pattern is clearly documented in both the programme presentation and application materials, which confirm that the hybrid format does not constitute a distance-learning programme according to the meaning of CYQAA standards. The University uses Moodle as its supported learning platform, ensuring that students have continuous access to uploaded lecture material, readings, announcements and learning activities.

The course outlines explicitly that each module is offered in a hybrid mode, integrating online sessions where appropriate and maintaining coherence with the intended learning outcomes and pedagogical design. The programme maintains a clear mechanism for interaction through teleconferences for lectures, discussion and guidance, ensuring that online components remain meaningful and pedagogically sound. Students receive continuous support through consultation hours, academic advising and direct communication channels embedded in Moodle. Course study guides are complete, clear and align with good practice for hybrid teaching. They include intended learning outcomes, weekly structure, assessment methods and expectations about student workload. The guides explicitly indicate the teaching modality (hybrid) and clearly state the number of sessions and their format. Each guide integrates interactive elements such as case studies, problem-solving exercises and applied activities, many of which can be effectively used in both face-to-face and synchronous online settings.

The documentation confirms that guides are provided at the beginning of each semester and are centrally available through Moodle. Extensive support mechanisms are provided to both students and teaching staff by the e-learning experts and IT experts.

Assessment policies are clear and compliant with institutional regulations. While the programme is predominantly conventional, the hybrid format allows certain coursework activities to be conducted digitally (submission of assignments, online presentations where appropriate). Final examinations are conducted in-person with hand-written exam, ensuring academic integrity and this accounts for the 50% of the overall grade of the students. Each course adheres to the University's (and CYQAA's) requirement for multiple assessment methods. Plagiarism detection is supported through Turnitin and all assessment criteria are communicated to students during the first week of teaching. There is an institutional policy on the use of AI and fruitful conversation took place during the visit on the future of assessment and the commitment by academic leadership of the programme to follow the research trends in this field and adjust the assessment methods accordingly.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

The hybrid design demonstrates a well-balanced integration of online and in-person learning, allowing flexibility for students while safeguarding academic rigor. The use of Moodle as a central online environment enables consistent access to resources and fosters active student engagement. The programme's teaching staff are trained by Learning Development Network team in hybrid delivery and demonstrate strong alignment between pedagogical strategies, learning outcomes, and assessment methods.

Organised and structured module outlines support transparency and predictability for students, while continuous supervision and feedback mechanisms contribute to a positive learning experience. Study guides are thorough, consistent across all courses, and pedagogically coherent. They provide a clear structure that helps students anticipate their workload and prepare for active participation. The multiple assessment modalities described (case studies, hand-written exams, presentations, group tasks) are appropriate for hybrid delivery and promote higher-order cognitive engagement. During the interviews with teaching staff and academic leadership of the programme, it was noted that minimum 3 different assessment modalities are implemented per module, which is great to

support different learning preferences but also support the achievement of the Intended Learning Outcomes. The assessment framework supports fairness, transparency, and alignment with learning outcomes. The inclusion of digital submission and monitoring tools strengthens academic integrity. Hybrid delivery does not compromise assessment quality, and coursework activities appropriately leverage online tools for communication and submission. During the visit discussions, the Committee observed that teaching staff are highly engaged and demonstrate a clear commitment to student-centred pedagogy. Faculty members articulated how they design learning activities to promote active participation, drawing on case studies, problem-based learning, and real-world shipping scenarios. Students and graduates confirmed that teaching approaches are interactive, supportive, and aligned with their professional development needs. The Committee was particularly impressed by the strong relationship between students and instructors, who make themselves readily available for academic guidance and feedback.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

While the existing hybrid model is pedagogically robust, the Faculty could examine whether the programme could further enhance the online learning experience by incorporating structured asynchronous activities. These additions, in the opinion of the Committee, could strengthen student engagement between synchronous sessions and widen opportunities for flexible learning. The Committee also recommends expanding staff development opportunities in hybrid pedagogy to ensure sustained consistency as the programme grows. It is great that they start with an induction course by the Learning Development Network but ongoing professional development opportunities are necessary for successful implementation of the demanding hybrid delivery model. The Committee suggests integrating more explicit references to online-based interaction within the study guides. For example, indicating where online breakout activities, collaborative document tools or short asynchronous tasks will be used, in order to strengthen alignment between hybrid modality and instructional design.

The programme could consider expanding low-stakes digital formative assessments (e.g. quiz banks, automated feedback tasks) to support continuous learning and give students more frequent indicators of their progress. The e-learning experts team cited FeedbackFruits in their theoretical foundation and it would be great to continue working on such assessment and feedback frameworks.

During the discussions, some students highlighted the added value they accumulate from networking opportunities and the physical presence in the classroom, noting that these elements significantly enrich their learning experience. To ensure that all students, including those joining synchronously online, benefit from an equally productive environment, the Committee recommends strengthening support mechanisms that enhance online participation. This could include more structured facilitation of online engagement, intentional integration of remote students into group activities, and clear strategies to ensure that networking and peer interaction are accessible to all participants regardless of mode of attendance.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant
2.4	Study guides structure, content and interactive activities	Compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of e-learning.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*

- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the teaching staff qualified to teach in the e-learning programme of study?*
- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

MSc in Shipping is managed and coordinated by the Department of Shipping. Established in 2022, the Department is led by Prof. Photis Panayides and has the mission to be “a leading center of educational and applied research excellence in shipping, maritime studies, supply chain management, logistics and transportation with a national and global impact”. The Department of Shipping employs two full professors, three assistant professors, a lecturer and special teaching staff member. All members of faculty hold PhD degrees related to international shipping and teach in the MSc in Shipping. The department is in the process of recruiting a new faculty member within the field of maritime law/economics, and the Department Coordinator expects that the Department of Shipping will become a fully autonomous department within the governance structure of the Cyprus University of Technology from 2026.

Faculty are very well published in leading international peer-reviewed journals, where they are frequent contributors, both as authors and peer reviewers. They have published numerous research articles in journals such as the International Journal of Logistics: Research and Applications, Maritime Economics and Logistics, Maritime Policy and Management, Ocean Engineering, Transport Geography, Transportation Research Parts A, D and E, and the Journal of Business Logistics. Serving on editorial boards of several leading maritime journals, staff are internationally recognized experts in their respective fields. Many of them also have extensive experience from consultancy work in the shipping industry.

The department has very high research quality, as reflected by faculty publication records and high citations. All of them are focused specifically on the maritime domain. Faculty have particularly

strong research expertise in the following fields: 1. Chartering and ship operations, 2. Sustainability in the maritime domain, 3. Supply Chain Management, 4. Ship finance and investment decisions, and 5. Application of advanced quantitative research methods in shipping studies. Their expertise corresponds closely with the *foci* of the three concentrations of the second and third semesters of the program (Sustainable Operations, Supply Chain Management Analytics and Shipping Investment).

This ensures strong synergies between research and teaching, where professors are using their research directly in teaching. When faculty teach in the program, they leverage their own research. This ensures that students have access to the most updated knowledge on current maritime research.

Before students start their MSc thesis work, the department hosts preparatory session, in which faculty share information on ongoing maritime research and invite students to consider such for their MSc thesis work. This helps students identify relevant MSc topics that connect directly to ongoing maritime research. The ratio of professors to students is a very favourable one, which enables teachers to provide individualized feedback to students. Students indicate that staff are generally very helpful and responsive to student requests. They explain that professors and external instructors meet them with a very supportive attitude.

The university provides pedagogical support by faculty to ensure continuous professional pedagogical development. It runs an annual course on pedagogical theory and practice, which is mandatory for new staff and optional for current staff. The course includes topics such as problem-based learning, learning through artefacts and social constructivist teaching theory, while promoting innovative and inclusive pedagogical methods.

Every three years, each faculty member is entitled to a 6-month sabbatical, where they can focus entirely on their research. This policy is an important aspect of staff development and retention and ensures that there is a strong research-basis for teaching in the program.

There are several senior shipping industry practitioners, who lecture in the courses in program. They are CEOs and entrepreneurs in a wide variety of maritime organizations, from technical ship managers, port authorities, shipping banks, ship-owning companies and logistics companies. Some of them deliver in courses in the program and contribute with real-life shipping cases. Some practitioners also teach whole courses in the program. The direct involvement of senior practitioners ensures a high degree of labour market relevance for the program and students rate shipping practitioners' contributions in teaching very highly.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

The program has a very strong foundation in finance, sustainability, operations and quantitative modelling. Faculty consists of internationally recognized scholars, who are based in the Department of Shipping. With the full autonomy of the Department of Shipping within the university governance structure, the program will enjoy a strong organizational set-up. It promises that faculty can engage in high quality research with high relevance for teaching in the MSc in Shipping program.

The program enjoys very high labour market relevance due to the direct involvement of several very senior shipping practitioners in teaching. The strong reputation of the program among senior shipping practitioners in Cyprus also represents a unique opportunity for program marketing and can pave the way for graduate employment.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

In the continuous pedagogical development for the program, the department could consider organizing collegial supervision sessions, perhaps every 3 or 4 years. Here a teacher could observe a colleague's lecturing for an hour or two. Subsequently the two colleagues could meet and discuss their teaching experiences, while providing constructive peer-to-peer feedback to each other. Such a set-up would ensure knowledge sharing of best practices for teaching across faculty, without imposing large resource commitments on faculty.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria
- 4.2 Student progression
- 4.3 Student recognition
- 4.4 Student certification

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*

- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The EEC is satisfied that pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission will be in place for the programme once accredited. The minimum criterion is clearly advertised to prospective students, which is a previous university degree (bachelor's) in a relevant subject (e.g. economics, engineering, mathematics, policy, business etc.) from a recognised institution.

This qualification must be confirmed in the student application with the transcript from the institution. The department also has an established link from its own bachelor programme so that prospective students can feed into the MSc programme. Student applications are evaluated by a dedicated committee chaired by the head of the department which ensures a consistent and transparent evaluation for all applicants. A process is in place to re-evaluate an application if an applicant appeals against the decision.

Student process is tracked through an online platform so both students and staff can monitor the progression of each student. This includes current and completed courses, timetables and attendance, fees, student evaluation of the courses, student advisor service and course grades. From the student side, they have all the information needed to understand their responsibilities and progress. From the staff side, they can monitor and identify any potential issues such as poor grades or lack of class attendance. Any inconsistencies are acted on in a timely manner by both academic and support staff, in order to ensure that students are supported and remain aware of any potential issues relating to their progression through the programme.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

During the site visit, the students highlighted the high level of engagement by the academic staff who provide regular feedback and the opportunity for students to understand the quality of their work

and their progression through the course. The EEC believes that such open and transparent communication reduces the likelihood of students falling behind or being unsure of requirements to proceed successfully through the programme. The close integration between academic and support staff is also a strength which provides a holistic approach to supporting and mentoring students inside and outside the classroom.

Another strength is the strong relationship between the programme and external stakeholders and employers, some of whom encourage (and fund) their employees to undertake this programme.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

The students are required to select one of the three concentrations when they apply for the programme. However, due to low student numbers, sometimes if insufficient students select one concentration, then those courses may not be feasible to run, which means that some students will not be able to follow their preferred concentration. The EEC believes that as course numbers increase this should not pose a problem in future. In the meantime, however, the Department may consider whether it is ideal to offer all three concentrations.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

5.2 Physical resources

5.3 Human support resources

5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The e-learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
 - *Simulations in virtual environments*
 - *Problem solving scenarios*
 - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
 - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
 - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
 - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for e-learning, which is responsible for the support of the e-learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of e-learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*

- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*

- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The programme provides extensive learning resources that fully support hybrid delivery and high-quality pedagogical practice. Students have access to Moodle, which serves as the central digital learning environment for all course materials, announcements, lecture uploads, and assignment submissions. The Programme Presentation demonstrates that the University offers access to a wide range of specialised shipping and logistics databases, including Lloyd's List, Clarksons, Marine Money, ISL Shipping Statistics, Shipping Intelligence Network, CRSP, Datastream and Bloomberg, ensuring that learning activities can incorporate authentic industry data and current market insights.

The library offers updated print and digital resources and a dedicated space for shipping and transportation studies which further enhances academic support. The combination of physical infrastructure (classrooms, meeting rooms, library spaces) and digital resources (Moodle, licensed databases) ensures an integrated environment suitable for both on-campus and synchronous online components.

Student support mechanisms are well established and compatible with hybrid pedagogical practices. The programme documentation confirms that students benefit from continuous supervision and academic advising, including direct communication with instructors via Moodle and institutional email. The hybrid format is supported by clear guidance on course expectations, workload, and assessment, which are communicated through detailed study guides and early-semester briefings. As online synchronous sessions are capped at 30%, all student support processes, including consultation hours, thesis supervision meetings and feedback on coursework, are adaptable to both in-person and online formats.

During the meeting session with administrative staff, the Committee noted that the University offers a comprehensive set of support and wellness services that contribute positively to the overall student experience. Students reported that they feel well supported by academic advisors and teaching staff, who remain approachable and responsive throughout the programme. Institutional services, such as counselling, financial support mechanics (including restructuring of financial schemes), academic skills assistance and disability services, are readily available and clearly communicated.

During the discussions with the programme leadership and teaching staff, the Committee noted the shared view that a cohort of approximately 15 students provides an optimal environment for personalised support and effective mentoring. At the same time, the division of this cohort across the three specialisations may result in groups that are too small to sustain meaningful networking, peer-to-peer learning and collaborative work, or may lead to situations where a specialisation cannot be offered because it attracts only two or three students. While the teaching staff expressed a strong will to accommodate student preference by offering all specialisations even for very small groups, the Committee recognises that this approach, although commendable, may not be sustainable on the long run.

Strengths

A list of strengths, e.g. examples of good practices, achievements, innovative solutions etc.

The range and relevance of the specialised databases are suitable for a master's programme in shipping, significantly enriching students' learning experience. Moodle is used effectively to support learning continuity, enabling students to access course material anytime and allowing instructors to maintain direct communication with the cohort.

The availability of a dedicated library section and well-equipped facilities reinforce both the pedagogical aims and the professional orientation of the programme. The presence of clearly structured course outlines uploaded to Moodle at the beginning of the semester further supports consistency across courses and enables students to prepare and engage more effectively with required activities. A notable strength is the structured and proactive academic advising system, which enables early identification of student needs and ensures consistent pedagogical support.

The programme coordinator and teaching staff maintain active engagement with students and the use of Moodle enhances visibility of deadlines, materials, and expectations. The hybrid model allows students flexibility in attending certain sessions online, which is particularly beneficial for working professionals, without compromising the availability or quality of academic support.

The integration of library services, digital resources and instructor guidance creates a supportive learning ecosystem aligned with ESG 1.6.

Student data is used ethically for retention and wellness purposes, with teaching staff collaborating effectively with administrative staff on a case-by-case basis (which is possible due to the small student numbers).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

A list of problem areas to be dealt with, followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.

To strengthen the pedagogical value of the online components, the programme may consider incorporating curated digital learning objects. For example, short interactive modules, data visualisation tutorials or micro-lectures aligned with the databases used in the programme. Additionally, developing brief orientation videos or guides on how to use specialised databases would support students who enter the programme without prior exposure to such tools and would promote more effective use of resources in hybrid learning tasks.

The Committee recommends formalising additional pedagogical support tools targeted at hybrid learners, such as optional online drop-in sessions, structured peer-support groups or digital guides on effective study strategies in a hybrid programme.

The EEC encourages the Department to continue strengthening awareness and visibility of student support and wellness services, particularly among working professionals and part-time students who may have limited time on campus.

The Committee recommends that the programme explore strategies to ensure both sustainability and equitable student experience across the three concentrations. This may include establishing a

minimum enrolment threshold for opening a concentration, adopting a rotational offering model, or ensuring that, during recruitment, there is a balanced cohort across concentrations. Such measures would preserve the quality of peer interaction, collaboration and networking opportunities, while also ensuring that staff workload remains manageable and pedagogically sound.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

D. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

Based on the findings and the recommendations as reflected in the performance per section we do not see the need to provide general remarks, subject to the conclusions below.

The EEC would like to take this opportunity and thank again the CYQAA for the invitation and the coordinator of CYQAA, Mr. Georgios Aletraris, for managing the evaluation of this programme both efficiently and effectively. Also, we, as EEC, would like to extend our thanks to all the colleagues at the University, the Students, the Administrative Staff and the External Stakeholders, for the dedication, professionalism and co-operation during the evaluation process.

The EEC report highlights the committee's key findings, the strengths of the new programme and the Department and recommendations for ensuring a high-quality delivery by the University.

Overall, the EEC found the Department's new programme along the expected national standards. The nature of the programme is compatible with hybrid delivery and the methodology provided is appropriate for the particular programme of study, including some strong elements that reinforce the Department's teaching and learning model.

The EEC believes that once delivery is performed, revisions based on the feedback provided would strengthen and improve the programme, especially fine tuning, which is invariably expected when a new programme is delivered.

We advise the faculty of the Department of Shipping to take into consideration our recommendations and address all the suggestions.

Once more, we remain at the disposal of CYQAA for any clarification required.



E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
George Theocharidis	Professor
René Taudal Poulsen	Associate Professor
Jason Monios	Professor
Dimitrios Vlachopoulos	Associate Professor
Kyriaki Lazarou	Student
Click to enter Name	

Date: 25 November 2025