

Doc. 300.1.3

# Feedback Report from EEC Experts

Date: 2025-10-03

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
European University Cyprus
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Sciences
- **Department:** Computer Science and Engineering
- **Programme of study under evaluation**  
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

## In Greek:

Επιστήμη Υπολογιστών (3 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό (PhD))

## In English:

Computer Science (3 academic years, 180 ECTS, Doctorate (PhD))

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

**In Greek:** Concentrations

**In English:** Concentrations

**The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].**

## A. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Professor Thomas Heide Clausen	Department of Computer Science	Ecole Polytechnique
Professor Nik Bessis	Professor of Computer Science, Senior Advisor (Research), Multi-institutional Alliance for Research on Global Challenges Project Lead, Institutional Lead for UKRN & OR4, Director of Data Science Research Centre	Edge Hill University, United Kingdom
Professor Damal K. Arvind	Full Professor and Chair in Distributed Wireless Computation, School of Informatics	University of Edinburgh, Scotland, UK
Mr. Yiannis Zapitis	Member(Professional Body)	University
Mr. Paraskevas Kyriakou	Student	University

## B. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

*The EEC based on the external evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) and the Higher Education Institution's response (Doc.300.1.2), must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*

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

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

### EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>1. The EEC recommends that, in alignment with international standards — the doctoral programme be presented as developing “deep, cutting-edge, specialist skills and knowledge”, and not “broad knowledge about CS”, which is the objective of the BSc and MSc programmes. The current presentation reads like the doctorate is “a second masters” — a doctoral graduate does not know how to “understand research” and “use existing tools and methods” but rather is trained to push the state of the art of human knowledge forward, and to develop new tools and methods.</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for their careful consideration of the programme and for their productive comments. Based on the EEC recommendation, we have amended the program's learning outcomes, general and specific ones, so that to be more focusing on advanced topics of computer science, as suggested by EEC. We attach the revised specific learning outcomes of the programme in Annex 1.</p>	<p>The EEC has reviewed the revised learning outcomes, and find them well aligned with expectations.</p> <p><u>Also having viewed the Department Faculty Handbook, the EEC considers the PhD programme to be fully compliant in the sub-area 1.3.</u></p>

<p>2. The EEC recommends to clarify the programme structure and orientation to avoid that it appears as an “US PhD Light”. For example by having less “coursework” during semester 1 and by getting rid of the “comprehensive exam” — and, in its place, have the students develop a document which contains: - A “for public consumption” introduction to the topic of their Thesis Proposal - A rigorous and exhaustive literature and methodology “state of the Art” - A refined “Problem Statement” positioning the topic of the thesis proposal with respect to the state of the art - This may result in publication of a “review article” — as is often the case in other institutions — thus contributing to the scientific output of the department, as well as be a strong first chapter for the PhD thesis.</p>	<p>In alignment with the EEC’s recommendation, we have restructured the program’s structure as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We removed the comprehensive examination;</li> <li>- We increased the ECTS of the stage “Ph.D. Research Proposal” to 30 (instead of 30). Please see the update structure of the programme in Table 1 and Table 2 in Annex 2.</li> </ul> <p>Also, for the successful finishing of this stage, we added the requirement of a review article or presentation on the problem where the Ph.D. is focused on. Please see updated Ph.D. Programme Guide appearing in Annex 4 (see section 9 there).</p>	<p>The EEC appreciates this restructuring, which allows the students to focus on advancing their (and, the department’s) research objectives — and in particular appreciates that this makes the programme closely aligned with other European doctoral programmes.</p> <p>The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to a single area of non-compliance or partial compliance.</p>
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<p>3. The EEC wonders if establishing a formal “training programme” for PhD supervisors might be beneficial: a lecturer completing it successfully might be an indicator of maturity for promotion to assistant professors. Such a programme could include formal requirements of having accompanied a successful PhD graduate as co-supervisor, as well as modules on conflict resolution, pedagogics, etc., to the benefit of also the PhD students.</p>	<p>The Department appreciates this feedback from the EEC. We have therefore decided to implement a yearly seminar delivered by the coordinator of the programme and faculty members that had successfully supervised Ph.D. students, where the important information about advising Ph.D. students will be presented to new Ph.D. advisors, including formal requirements of having accompanied a successful Ph.D. graduate, modules on conflict resolution, pedagogics, etc.</p> <p>A detailed program of the training appears in Annex 9.</p>	<p>The EEC commends the Department on this excellent initiative, and on the program proposed for training PhD advisors. By introducing this “PhD supervisor training course”, the Department aligns more closely with the leading universities in Europe in the professionalisation of doctoral education.</p> <p>The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance.</p>
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<p>4. The EEC therefore recommends that efforts be made to increase the number of qualified main PhD supervisors through both recruitment of senior faculty members, and efforts to accompany current lecturers towards promotion.</p>	<p>The Department appreciates this feedback from the EEC.</p> <p>Towards satisfying this recommendation of EEC, the following actions have been taken:</p> <p>-To address these pressures and strengthen both our teaching and research capacity, the Council of the Department of Computer Science and Engineering, in its meeting on 14/07/2025, reviewed the Department's academic staffing needs and decided to recommend the opening of the following full-time faculty positions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Faculty position in Artificial Intelligence (Any Rank) – to commence in Fall 2026</li> <li>• Faculty position in Computer Science (Any Rank) – to commence in Spring 2026</li> </ul> <p>Faculty position in Robotics and Rehabilitation (Lecturer or Assistant Professor) – to commence in Fall 2026.</p> <p>The positions were approved by the EUC 111th Senate Meeting which took place on the 23rd of July 2025 and have been announced in EUC website, <a href="#">here</a>. Please see our response in the Departmental Response document (Section 4, Item 1)</p> <p>-In addition, we are pleased to report that two new faculty members have already been appointed and will officially join the Department on 1st September 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dr. Constantinos Psomas, as Assistant Professor in Data Science /Big Data</li> <li>• Dr. Iacovos Ioannou, as Assistant Professor in Software Engineering.</li> </ul> <p>These recent appointments and upcoming new positions are expected to reduce the current teaching load per faculty, provide additional subject-matter expertise, and support the Department's ongoing efforts to balance teaching excellence with research productivity.</p> <p>-To support internal staff development and promotion, the University is committed to offering various professional development opportunities. This includes mentoring schemes, targeted support for grant applications, incentives for research productivity, and participation in national and international academic networks (as previously mentioned). Staff development is also guided by a formal Performance Appraisal process every two years (please see section 5 <i>Teaching Staff</i>, point 3, as well as <i>Annex IV</i> of the Departmental response), ensuring reflective professional growth aligned with University-wide objectives. These initiatives aim to build capacity within the existing staff and create clear pathways for internal promotion to senior academic ranks, fostering continuity, leadership stability, and succession within the Department.</p> <p>More details of our actions for internal staff development and promotion are explained in Annex 5 of this document.</p>	<p>This topic is partially relevant to area-1, partially to area-3.</p> <p>The EEC had found the program to be non-compliant in area 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 — specifically due to the lack of CS staff at a level qualified to be a main supervisor (assistant professor or above).</p> <p>The EEC recommended a concerted effort at recruitment of senior faculty members, as well as efforts to promote current faculty members to senior levels.</p> <p>The HEI has — institutionally — opened two positions at “any rank” within the department, which is a golden opportunity for the department to add one or two faculty members at Professorial level. The EEC applauds the institution for this effort — and strongly encourages the department to seize this opportunity.</p> <p>The HEI has also appointed two assistant professors from September 1, with one potential assistant professor position projected in 2026.</p> <p>With this in mind, the EEC considers that the PhD programme is on track to be <b>fully compliant in sub-areas 3.2 and 3.3</b>.</p> <p>The EEC also appreciates the departmental initiatives for supporting lecturers towards promotion, and the EEC therefore considers that the PhD programme is on track to be <b>fully compliant in sub-area 3.1</b>.</p>
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<p>5. On the topic of PhD juries, in view of the ambitions of the department to extend their internationalization and thus affirm their trajectory along European standards, the EEC wonders if the inclusion of international members in PhD juries could be a consideration? A side-benefit from inviting an international professor to be on a PhD jury is, that it's an occasion to expose (BSc, MSc, and PhD students) to an international guest lecture.</p>	<p>The Department appreciates this feedback from the EEC. In alignment with this, the Department Ph.D. regulations demand that all Ph.D. examination committees include at least one external international member. The Regulation allows a second external member as well. Therefore, efforts will be made for increasing the external members of the examination committees. Please see the specific regulation in section 6, page 9 in Annex 8.</p>	<p>The EEC appreciates that this suggestion resonated with the department — and notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance.</p>
<p>6. EEC would like to encourage that some formalized quality control safeguards be considered. This, especially, in view that each PhD student has a supervisory team with not all members being resident at the department. This could be as simple as to codify what the department has collectively adopted as "best practices" during the 5 years of existence of the doctoral programme. It could also be the introduction of a formal expectation to maintain of a "lab notebook" — recording progress, ideas, envisioned tasks and milestone between the student and the supervisors. Such a "lab notebook", shared among the student and the supervisory team, could also be a tool to use with an external review committee every 6 or 12 months.</p>	<p>We confirm that the Ph.D. in Computer Science Programme Guide (please see Annex 4, page 15) includes Annex I which is a sample of the "Six Month Progress" Form that needs to be completed and signed by the student, his/her supervisor and the Programme Coordinator.</p> <p>Regarding the recommendation for creating a supervision meeting record form for the purpose of keeping records on what was discussed and agreed at each supervision meeting, we would like to note that students receive written feedback on all drafts of their written work and further suggestions are also recorded either on the draft itself or via email. Furthermore, it is considered common practice that the student records suggestions and feedback during all oral meetings and then sends a written report to the supervisor to confirm the accuracy of this record.</p>	<p>The EEC takes note of the modus operandi of the department on this matter.</p> <p>In view of the "common practice" cited — that the student records all suggestions during oral meetings and sends a written report to their supervisor afterwards — this is indeed a good practice.</p> <p>As such, while this EEC is satisfied that <b>area 1.1 is <u>presently considered compliant</u></b>, it also suggests evolving the QA process for PhD students to formally include this "common practice".</p>

7. The department has an admirable ambition to grow the PhD programme — both for the sake of the PhD students, but also for faculty development and for increase of the scientific production to the benefit of the university, department, and programme international rankings. One of the identified obstacles to this is the low number of PhD fellowships available reducing the potential candidate pool. Thus, globally, the EEC encourages that the University helps the department be able to provide an increased number of PhD fellowships. Among the different options, the EEC would like to encourage: - Reflections on creation of PhD fellowships through TAships

We appreciate the EEC's recognition of the Department's ambition to sustain a Ph.D. total of approximately 30 active students and acknowledge the concern raised regarding funding. While there is no blanket funding model for all doctoral students, the Department supports doctoral education through multiple mechanisms.

A key institutional scheme is the annual award of competitive Ph.D. scholarships administered by the Office of the Vice Rector for Research and External Affairs (see Annex VIII of the Departmental response IR on Ph.D. Scholarships Award system). These scholarships are granted to faculty members who demonstrate outstanding research productivity — based on high-impact publications, external funding, and research leadership — and are intended to support top-tier Ph.D. candidates under their supervision. This scheme fully covers tuition fees for the duration of the students' studies and serves as both an incentive for research excellence and a driver of doctoral programme growth.

The University plans to expand the scheme of PhD scholarships. In parallel, the Department has previously engaged doctoral students as Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), providing them with opportunities to contribute to undergraduate instruction and assessment while receiving practical training. (please see item 6 of section 4 of the Departmental response (document 300.3.2), page 18).

In parallel, the Department has previously engaged doctoral students as Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs), providing them with opportunities to contribute to undergraduate instruction and assessment while receiving practical training. Several Ph.D. students in the past have received support from research projects carried out by members of the Department of Computer Science & Engineering.

As noted above, the University plans to expand the practice of TA positions as a sustainable way to support Ph.D. enrolment, enhance teaching delivery, and relieve faculty workload, particularly in laboratory and coursework-intensive modules.

In addition, faculty members are also encouraged to engage with European doctoral training initiatives, such as the Marie Skłodowska-Curie Doctoral Networks, which offer competitive external funding for structured PhD training across institutions. Funding for Ph.D. students can also be obtained from the 'Excellence Hubs' program funded by the Research & Innovation Foundation in Cyprus as well as by projects funded by the European Space Agency. The Department had recent success in all of these programs and is continuously seeking more funding. These opportunities, if implemented, would contribute to the long-term sustainability and internationalization of the Department's doctoral programme and further diversify the funding landscape for Ph.D. students.

The EEC fully agrees that there's no one-model-fits-all for funding PhD students — and is pleased to see that the Department is exploring multiple venues.

The Department's response states "*These opportunities, if implemented, would contribute to the long-term sustainability and internationalization of the Department's doctoral programme and further diversify the funding landscape for Ph.D. students.*" — and the EEC can only strongly encourage that the department makes it a priority to pursue these opportunities.

The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance.

**Additional comment by the EEC to Area-1:**

The department has made considerable effort in both responding to the EECs comments, as well as in developing a departmental “faculty handbook” capturing the QA considerations and processes, specific to the CS department — and made this information publicly available.

With this in mind, the EEC considers that the PhD programme is **on track to be fully compliant in sub-areas 1.1 and 1.3.**

## 2. Student - centred learning, teaching and assessment

(ESG 1.3)

*EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response*

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
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<p>1. The EEC finds that the “thesis proposal” as part of the entry requirements is incorrectly named. The EEC recommends that it be renamed as a “Statement of Purpose” or such like, so as not to be confused with the thesis proposal required at the end of Semester 2. -</p>	<p>The Department appreciates this feedback from the EEC. Indeed, there might be a confusion between the terms of these two distinct phases of the Ph.D. They admission criteria for admitting to the Ph.D. state the following:</p> <p>“Applicants need to submit a research proposal which outlines their proposed research topic and purpose, a brief literature review, their proposed methodology and possible implications/originality of their proposed research for their field”.</p> <p>As per the EEC’s recommendation we changed the term ‘Ph.D. Research Proposal’, part of the admission requirements, to ‘Statement of Ph.D. Dissertation Purpose’. We have made corresponding changes in the Ph.D. Programme Guide appeared in Annex 4 (section 3.2). Also corresponding changes have been made in the EUC website on the information for the program: <a href="https://euc.ac.cy/en/admissions/how-to-apply/phd/">https://euc.ac.cy/en/admissions/how-to-apply/phd/</a></p>	<p>The EEC believes that this modification clarifies matters.</p> <p>The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance — and that the PhD programme was, and remains, compliant in Area 2.</p>
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<p>2. The comprehensive examination is an unnecessary hurdle for progression to the research stage as this seems like an import from the North American system without the courses which need to be taken in lead up to the equivalent thereof (the “Quals”).</p>	<p>In agreement with the EEC, we have now removed the comprehensive examination and move the ECTS of it to the “Ph.D. Research Proposal” stage, as discussed also in Section 1, item 2 above. You may see the new structure of the programme in Table 1 and Table 2 in Annex 2.</p>	<p>The EEC appreciates this restructuring, which allows the students to focus on advancing their (and, the departments') research objectives — and in particular appreciates that this makes the programme well aligned with other European doctoral programmes.</p> <p>The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance — and that the PhD programme was, and remains, compliant in Area 2.</p>
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<p>3. The Department should consider specifying the recommended frequency of supervision meetings between doctoral candidate and supervisors during the period of research and writing of the dissertation. The department should consider creating a supervision meeting record form for the purposes of keeping records on what was discussed and agreed at each supervision meeting. This will help to ensure that students are fully appraised of their progress during the research and writing phases.</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for this suggestion which we find both useful and productive.</p> <p>Upon registration to the programme, the students receive the Ph.D. Programme Guide which includes guidelines for the implementation of the supervision of the PhD candidate, see Annex 4 (please see section 4.3).</p> <p>Furthermore, the Ph.D. Programme Guide (Annex 4) includes Annex I which is a sample of the “Six Month Progress” Form, that records progress carried out by the Ph.D. Candidate in cooperation with the Supervisor for each semester Semester and the progress scheduled for next semester. The form needs to be completed and signed by the student, his/her supervisor and the Programme Coordinator. Also, regarding the recommendation for creating a supervision meeting record form for the purposes of keeping records on what was discussed and agreed at each supervision meeting, we would like to note that students receive written feedback on all drafts of their written work and further suggestions are also recorded either on the draft itself or via email. Furthermore, it is considered common practice that the student records suggestions and feedback during all oral meetings and may then send a written report to the supervisor to confirm the accuracy of this record.</p>	<p>The EEC takes note of the modus operandi of the department on this matter.</p> <p>In view of the “common practice” sited — that the student records all suggestions during oral meetings and sends a written report to their supervisor afterwards — this is indeed a good practice.</p> <p>As such, while this EEC is satisfied that <u>area 1.1 is presently considered compliant</u>, it also suggests evolving the QA process for PhD students to formally include this “common practice”.</p>
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### 3. Teaching staff

(ESG 1.5)

#### EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
1. Reduce high workload in teaching	<p>We thank the EEC for this suggestion.</p> <p>We note that currently almost all faculty members teach at most 3 courses, due to the T H R (Teaching Hour Reduction) research policy of the university. Also, the average teaching load of faculty members of the department is currently 3 courses per semester. More detailed information and related statistical figures regarding our actions responding to this comment is provided in Annex 6 of this document. See also our response in Section 1.4.</p>	<p>The EEC is cognisant of the “Teaching Hour Reduction” scheme that allows instructors to average 9h/w of classroom time, in place of 12h/w.</p> <p>Nonetheless, the EEC maintains that in comparison to European standards, this remains a high teaching load.</p> <p>Further, the EEC noted that these 9h/w (or 12h/w) does not include setting up, delivering, labs, grading, etc.</p> <p>Indeed, the EEC recommended that “The Faculty members would benefit from support for marking, and demonstrating in the laboratory in the form of graduate Teaching Assistants.”</p> <p>The EEC notes with satisfaction that in the departmental response document, the Department writes “the University intends to broaden the use of Graduate Teaching Assistant (GTA) positions as a sustainable approach to support Ph.D. enrolment, improve the quality of teaching, and alleviate faculty workload”.</p> <p>The EEC also notes with satisfaction that the HEI has — institutionally — added 2 assistant professors as of September 1 2025, and is opening 3 further faculty lines (hereof 2 available for senior appointments) during 2026.</p> <p>With this in mind, the EEC considers that the PhD programme is on track to be <b>fully compliant in sub-areas 3.1 and 3.2</b>.</p>

<p>2. Increase research capacity, i.e., number of staff who maintain sustainable growth in research.</p>	<p>The University provides a strong intensive for faculty members to increase of research capacity, through the EUC research policy document which allows both decrease of teaching load as well as increase of monthly salary of faculty members which are active research wise and/or through research grants.</p> <p>The Department acknowledges the importance of fostering increased and high-quality scientific output published in reputable venues. The University's comprehensive Research Policy (Annex X EUC Research Policy of the Departmental response) provides a strong foundation for supporting research activities and staff development. Complementing this, the University administers some award schemes and performance recognition initiatives that serve as effective motivators, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Internal Funding for Research Activities scheme, which provides targeted financial support for faculty research projects (Annex V of Departmental response).</li> <li>• The Annual Awards for Excellence in Teaching (please see Annex XI of Departmental response) and Annual Awards for Excellence in Research (Annex XII of Departmental response), which recognize outstanding faculty achievements.</li> </ul>	<p>This topic is partially relevant to area-1, partially to area-3.</p> <p>The EEC had found the program to be non-compliant in area 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3 — specifically due to the lack of CS staff at a level qualified to be a main supervisor (assistant professor or above).</p> <p>The EEC recommended a concerted effort at recruitment of senior faculty members, as well as efforts to accompany current faculty members towards seniority.</p> <p>The HEI has — institutionally — opened two position at “any rank” within the department, which is a golden opportunity for the department to add one or two faculty members at Professorial level. The EEC applauds the institution for this effort — and strongly encourages the department to seize this opportunity.</p> <p>The HEI has also appointed two assistant professors from September 1, with one potential assistant professor position projected in 2026.</p> <p>With this in mind, the EEC considers that the PhD programme is on track to be <b>fully compliant in sub-areas 3.2 and 3.3</b>.</p> <p>The EEC also appreciates the department initiatives for accompanying lecturers towards promotion, and the EEC therefore considers that the PhD programme is on track to be <b>fully compliant in sub-area 3.1</b>.</p>
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**3. Produce effective staff development plans to support promotion based on the increased quality and quantity of publication and income generation track records**

We thank the EEC for this suggestion. Regarding faculty promotion, eligible faculty members may apply annually each October, following the criteria outlined in the [University Charter](#) (Annex 6, page 74-79 of the Charter). Faculty members are responsible for managing their own promotion processes, which can also be highlighted during the personal interviews with the departmental committee as part of the biennial self-assessment evaluation.

Additionally, the University is committed to support ongoing professional growth of its faculty, by providing different opportunities. For more details please see Section 1, item 3 of Departmental response.

In addition, the EUC's mentoring framework for new academic staff provides structured support through on-boarding, one-on-one senior mentorship (often focused on providing constructive student feedback), peer group collaboration, and reflective professional portfolios, all designed to foster professional growth and seamless integration into the University and local professional community (see details in Annex III of the Departmental response: EUC Framework on Mentoring Scheme for Newly Hired Full-Time Academic Staff and/or Part-Time Academic Staff).

It is also important to mention that the "Performance Appraisal of Faculty and Special Teaching Personnel" regulation at EUC mandates a biennial, developmental review process focused on professional growth through self-assessment and constructive feedback in teaching, research, and service. Appraisals are submitted online, reviewed by a preset departmental committee, and discussed individually with each staff member, culminating in agreed-upon goals and recommendations for further self-improvement, with reports shared across University leadership for ongoing development planning (see Annex IV of the Departmental response).

Also, the University provides faculty development seminars, webinars, and workshops to enhance skills and knowledge. Moreover, there is an approved budget for traveling and presenting to international conferences for each faculty member through the internal regulation for research activities (see Annex V of the Departmental response).

Please see Annex 6 explaining internal staff development and promotion of EUC, in more detail and Annex 7 explaining the Recruitment and career advancement planning for academic staff of EUC.

The EEC notes that this has been addressed in the Departmental report.

#### 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

(ESG 1.4)

##### EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>1. The EEC finds that the “thesis proposal” as part of the entry requirements is incorrectly named. The EEC recommends that it be renamed as a “Statement of Purpose” or such like, so as not to be confused with the thesis proposal required at the end of Semester</p>	<p>We agree with this recommendation. Please see how we have addressed this in Section 2, item 1 above.</p>	<p>The EEC agrees with the modifications proposed by the Department.</p> <p>The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance — and that the PhD programme was, and remains, compliant in Area 4.</p>
<p>2. The comprehensive examination is an unnecessary hurdle for progression to the research stage as this seems like an import from the North American system without the courses which need to be taken in lead up to the equivalent thereof (the “Quals”).</p>	<p>The Department appreciates the EEC’s viewpoint and agrees with this comment. We have hence removed the comprehensive examination and move the ECTS of it to the “Ph.D. Research proposal” stage. Please see how we have addressed this in Section 1, item 2 above.</p>	<p>The EEC agrees with the modifications proposed by the Department.</p> <p>The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance — and that the PhD programme was, and remains, compliant in Area 4.</p>

## 5. Learning resources and student support

(ESG 1.6)

*EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response*

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
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<p>1. The EEC recommends acquisition of GPU clusters for compute-intensive projects and courses, especially in view of the increased application of Machine Learning</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for this comment. We would like to note that all EUC students have access to the High-Performance Computing (HPC) facilities of the <a href="#">Cyprus Institute (Cyclone)</a> for up to 20,000 core hours and 5,000 GPU hours in its 'preparatory access' mode at no cost. It is possible to apply for this mode all-year round (see this link <a href="https://hpcf.cyi.ac.cy/apply.html">https://hpcf.cyi.ac.cy/apply.html</a>).</p> <p>In addition, it is possible to apply for the 'production mode' at the Cyprus Institute HPC facilities twice a year. The upper limit of this mode is 500,000 core hours and access is given on the Cyclone system.</p> <p>With respect to internal resources, obviously an in-house solution is the preferable option but the scale of the investment is considerable and difficult to be implemented in a single step.</p> <p>At present, we must note that members of the faculty have participated in a research project (GRATOS) in which a GPU server (HP Z6G4T X4114 with Nvidia Quadro P400) was purchased. Additionally, the CERIDES Excellence in Innovation and Technology, Center of Excellence has acquired, through its research projects 2 server machines with GPU capabilities. These machines offer some possibilities. However, with the new courses of the curriculum as well as possible usage for senior projects or research projects, needs are expected to increase. For this reason, the Department (during the Departmental <a href="#">20</a> Council meeting held</p>	<p>The EEC thanks the department for these additional details on compute ressource available to students and faculty. The EEC encourages the Department to continue to track and anticipate needs as they evolve.</p> <p>The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance and that all of Area 5 was — and remains — compliant.</p>
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## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes

(*ALL ESG*)

### EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
<p>1. Produce and execute a staff development strategy to increase the limited number of research active staff who act as supervisors/ examiners and maintain sustainable growth</p>	<p>Please see our response item 4 on section 1 (Study programme and study programme's design and development) of this document.</p>	<p>The EEC is pleased to see that the HEI has made a concerted effort to increase the number of faculty members qualified to act as "main supervisors".</p> <p>The EEC recommends that the department capitalise on this to also increase the number of junior (below assistant professor) faculty members who co-supervise PhD students — and, of course, continue to seek the ability to provide fully-funded PhD scholarships.</p> <p>With this in mind, the EEC considers that the PhD programme is on track to be <u>fully compliant in sub-area 6.3</u>.</p>

<p>2. Formalise recording options for feedback capturing and communication at supervisory meetings and progress</p>	<p>Please see our response item 6 of Section 1 of this document</p>	<p>The EEC takes note of the modus operandi of the department on this matter.</p> <p>In view of the “common practice” sited — that the student records all suggestions during oral meetings and sends a written report to their supervisor afterwards — this is indeed a good practice.</p> <p>As such, the EEC suggests evolving the QA process for PhD students to formally include this “common practice”.</p>
<p>3. Increase the limited number of PhD research studentships</p>	<p>Please see our response item 7 of Section 1 of this document.</p>	<p>The EEC notes that this recommendation was not directly linked to an area of non-compliance or partial compliance in Area 6.</p>
<p>4. Amend the examination form to reflect the inclusion of the primary and secondary subject fields of multi-disciplinary PhD theses</p>	<p>Finding this recommendation very helpful, we have now implemented the suggestion, which is shown in the updated Ph.D. in Computer Science Programme Guide, Annex 4 of this document, (page 22-23, Annex V of the Programme Guide).</p>	<p>The EEC appreciates this addendum to the examination form.</p>

## 7. Eligibility (Joint programmes)

(ALL ESG)

*EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response*

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
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## C. Conclusions and final remarks

*The EEC must provide final conclusions and remarks, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.*

### EEC's final conclusions and remarks

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	EEC's final recommendations and comments on the HEI's response
EEC has no recommendations to make here.	N/A	<p>The EEC appreciates that the Department has taken its recommendations to heart. This, both in aligning the programme structure with the common EU format, in formalising doctoral supervisor training, and in internationalisation.</p> <p>The EEC also commends the HEI for having added faculty lines, including senior faculty lines, to enable the department to better fulfil its ambitions for the PhD programme.</p> <p>The EEC is cognisant of the challenges in providing fully funded PhD scholarships — and is encouraged that the Department actively is investigating options through EU projects. The EEC strongly encourages the Department to aggressively pursue these.</p> <p>Overall, the EEC believes that the PhD programme is looking good, and wishes the Department the best of luck in attaining the success that it deserves.</p>



## D. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Thomas Heide Clausen	
Damal K. Arvind	D K Arvind
Nik Bessis	
Yiannis Zapitis	
Paraskevas Kyriacou	
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