Doc. 300.3.1

Date: 23/04/2026Date:

External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

  University of Cyprus
- **Town: Nicosia**
- **School/Faculty: Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences**
- **Department: Department of Chemistry**
- **Department's Status: Currently Operating**
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation:**
  Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1
In Greek:
Χημεία [4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο (BSc)]
In English:
Chemistry [4 academic years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Science (BSc)]

Programme 2
In Greek:
Χημεία [4-8 ακαδημαϊκά εξάμηνα, 120 ECTS, Μάστερ (MSc)]
In English:
Chemistry [4-8 academic semesters, 120 ECTS, Master of Science (MSc)]

Programme 3
In Greek:
Χημεία [4-8 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Διδακτορικό (PhD)]
In English:
Chemistry (4-8 academic years, 240 ECTS, PhD)

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].

Department's programmes (to be filled by the CYQAA officer and verified by the EEC):

DEPARTMENT	PROGRAMMES OF STUDY
Chemistry	Chemistry [4 academic years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Science (BSc)]
	Chemistry [4-8 academic semesters, 120 ECTS, Master of Science (MSc)]
	Chemistry (4-8 academic years, 240 ECTS, PhD)

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The EEC enjoyed the visit of the department and university. The program was well suited to discuss all aspects of the department and program within the university with a selection of the staff and students involved and we appreciated the openness in all conversations. Strengths and limitations were discussed openly, including the national and university framework they have to work in. All clearly care about the department, the students and the educational programs they are running. Overall, we had the impression of a transparent, well-organized and supportive process that has enabled us to understand and comment constructively on the program as we were asked to do.

We would also like to thank Emily Alexandridou of the CYQAA for all of her help in organizing our visit.

The program of our visit:

Day 1

09:00 – 09:10 A brief introduction of the members of the External Evaluation Committee [10 minutes]

09:10 – 09:40 A meeting with the Vice Rector for Academic Affairs, Professor Tatiana Eleni Synodinou, who is also the Chairwoman of the Internal QA Committee of the University

09:40 – 10:40 A meeting with the Dean of the School, the Head(s) of the relevant department and all faculty members for a short presentation and discussion of the School's / Department's structure.

10:40 – 10:55 Coffee Break

Programme 1: Bachelor in Chemistry

10:55 – 12:05 A meeting with the Head(s) of the relevant department and the Coordination Committee of the programme

12:05 – 12:25 Lab Observation CHE110 - Laboratory of Classic Methods of Chemical Analysis, Special Teaching Staff Dr. Elena Loizou, ΘΕΕ 02, Lab 005 (Ground Flour, Wing A)

12.25 - 13.00 Onsite tour to the facilities of the department (labs etc)

13:00 – 14:00 Lunch Break

14:00 – 14:30 A site visit to the library

14:30 – 15:00 A meeting exclusively with members from the Administrative Staff (QA session)

15:00 – 15:10 Coffee Break

15:10-16:10 A meeting ONLY with members of the teaching staff on each course of the Bachelor programme for all the years of study (QA session).

16:10 – 16:55 A meeting with ONLY students and graduates (4 participants, 1 ill) of the Bachelor programme.

Day 2

Programme 2: Master in Chemistry

09:00-10:00 A meeting with the Head(s) of the relevant department and the Coordination Committee of the programme

Programme 3: PhD in Chemistry

10:00-11:00 A meeting with the Head(s) of the relevant department and the Coordination Committee of the programme

11:00 - 11:15 Coffee Break

11:15 – 12:15 A meeting ONLY with members of the teaching staff on each course of the MSc and PhD programmes for all the years of study (QA session)

12:15 – 12:50 A meeting with ONLY students and graduates (4 participants, 1 ill) of the MSc and PhD programmes.

12:50 – 13:50 Lunch Break

13:50 – 14:35 A meeting with ONLY External Stakeholders for the programme(s)

14:35 – 15:00 Working Coffee Break - A meeting ONLY between the EEC members, to sum up and discuss for any additional clarifications needed, before the Exit Discussion

15:00 – 15:30 Exit Discussion with the Dean of the School, the Head(s) of the relevant department, the coordinator(s) of the programme(s) - and the Director(s) of Academic Quality and Compliance (questions, clarifications)

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Professor Sophia Yaliraki	Professor	Imperial College London
Professor Michael Pittelkow	Professor	University of Copenhagen
Professor Moniek Tromp	Professor	University of Groningen
Dr. Elena Ioannou Papayianni	Treasurer of the Chemists' Registration Council	Chemists Registration Council
Charalampos Christodoulou	Student	Cyprus University of Technology

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- The external evaluation report refers to the Department as a whole (programmes offered, teaching staff, administrative staff, infrastructure, resources, etc.).

- The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas and sub-areas.

- Under each assessment area there are quality indicators (criteria) to be scored by the EEC on a scale from one (1) to five (5), based on the degree of compliance for the above mentioned quality indicators (criteria). The scale used is explained below:

1 or 2:	Non-compliant
3:	Partially compliant
4 or 5:	Compliant

- The EEC must justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

- It is pointed out that, in the case of indicators (criteria) that cannot be applied due to the status of the Department, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the Department's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality indicator.

- In addition, for each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements. In particular, the following must be included:

  Findings

  A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - 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 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.**

- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

1. **Department's academic profile and orientation**
(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)
1.2 Connecting with society
1.3 Development processes

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
1. Department's academic profile and orientation		
1.1 Mission and strategic planning (including SWOT analysis)		**1 - 5**
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	3
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	4
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	3
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academi profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	5
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Department's development strategies.	4
1.1.6	Stakeholders such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Department's development strategy.	5
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Department's academic development is adequate and effective.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The mission and vision were clearly communicated to the ECC in the report and presentation, but cannot be found as such in the public domain. The goals and planning were also presented but were not prioritised clearly as short, medium and long term.

Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.
2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

The Chemistry programs are set up well, although the EEC has not delved into all details of each course.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

A regular check and update on alignment and coherence of the programs is recommended, to ensure all required learning outcomes are met. The Chemistry programmes are part of the Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences with programs in Physics, Biological Sciences, Computer Sciences and Mathematics. Although elective courses can be done in the other programs, it might be interesting, in view of the low number of students and the complex societal problems requiring inter/multidisciplinary approaches and people, to develop combined specialised tracks. These need to be well thought through and should fit (and highlight) to the strengths of the faculty and for example align with the requirements of Cyprus challenges and industry. Communicating these well, will likely bring in more students into the faculty and department.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.2 Connecting with society		**1 - 5**
1.2.1	The Department has effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities.	4
1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	5
1.2.3	The Department ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	4
1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

1.3 Development processes	**1 - 5**

1.3.1	Effective procedures and measures are in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure that they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach, carry out research and effectively carry out their work.	5
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	4
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	3
1.3.4	The funding processes for the operation of the Department and the continuous improvement of the quality of its programmes of study are adequate and transparent.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The department has a significant challenge with multiple retirements in the next few years (5 out of currently 13 staff members). Additionally, the university applies a university-wide staff load algorithm (resulting in a maximum of 14 staff members for the Chemistry Department), which does not appreciate the staff intensive Chemistry (and other STEM) programs (i.e. tutorials, laboratory courses, safety, etc).

The academic career development plan is not clear to many of the staff.

Additionally, write:

- Expected number of Cypriot and international students
- Countries of origin of international students and number from each country

The number of students in each program, incl. their origin, are given in the Table below.

Program of Study	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25
Bachelor in Chemistry	148	169	166
Master in Chemistry	16	11	4
PhD in Chemistry	29	28	31

Program of study	Citizenship	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Bachelor in Chemistry	Cyprus	126	138	137
	Greece	19	27	25
	Palestine	2	2	1
	Bulgaria	1	1	1
	Egypt			1
	Iran		1	1

Program of study	Citizenship	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
Master in Chemistry	Cyprus	16	11	4

Program of study	Citizenship	Sep-22	Sep-23	Sep-24
PhD in Chemistry	Cyprus	28	26	28
	Greece	1	1	2
	Romania			1

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The Department successfully runs their Chemistry Programmes. The staff is very engaged and cares for the program and the students. The facilities are excellent. It is impressive what the department achieves with the limited funds and staff available. The student numbers for all programs fluctuate significantly and are low overall (esp. MSc and PhD). We fully support the MSc and PhD programs in English, which should help to attract more international students.

Strengths

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

The staff is very engaged, students get a personalised program supervision experience which is highly appreciated by them. The facilities needed, incl. equipment required for chemistry research and education, is available and students are trained to use all.

The department has good connections and collaborations with stakeholders (governmental like the labour inspection , chemistry association and industry) and these are very happy with the quality and knowledge/expertise of the students coming out of the programmes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The mission and vision are communicated to the EEC in the report and presentation, but cannot be found as such in the public domain. Neither are short, medium and long term goals and planning. It would be good to clearly anchor this on for example the website so the public as well as important stakeholders are able to find this. This might help getting in touch with important stakeholders which can help achieve parts of the mission, e.g. on national and international collaboration, engagement with the local and national politics and industry.

A regular update of the mission, vision, and goals, esp. in the current fast-changing landscape, involving staff and students, as well as external stakeholders (who have confirmed they want to be engaged), and setting more actionable short, medium and long term goals is strongly recommended.

The accreditation at the RSC is mentioned as a strategic goal. The EEC advises the department to not go this route. The accreditation is very hard to get, even for institutes with an abundance of funding and staff, and sets requirements to the program which cannot be met by the department.

The EEC recommends to frequently look at the coherence and alignment of the program course. The academic career track should be transparent and clear for all. Moreover, the interaction with external stakeholders can be significantly improved to enable student internships, and collaborative research and education. Novel courses or tracks in collaboration with other departments in multidisciplinary areas might be worth exploring, as they might draw in (extra) students. Moreover, the EEC suggests targeting students in areas of the world with similar MSc/PhD systems (in contrast to paid PhDs in Europe) and actively advertise your program there.

The different external stakeholders can and want to be involved more, e.g. in collaborative research projects (applied research, either directly funded or via EU applications), providing (parts of) courses for students (also on transferable skills, policy developments etc) and to host students for (paid) internships. The department is advised to actively reach out to them and make use of these possibilities, which will help the student experience, and likely also department finances and research income.

The department has a significant challenge with multiple retirements in the next few years (5 out of currently 13 staff members). Additionally, the university handles a university-wide staff load algorithm (resulting in a maximum of 14 staff members for the Chemistry Department), which does not appreciate the staff intensive Chemistry (and other STEM) programs (i.e. tutorials, laboratory courses etc). The EEC urges the university to look at the model carefully, not only in terms of student supervision and teaching load, but also in terms of safety.

The academic career development plan is not clear to many of the staff. There seem university wide rules and regulations in place, but at a departmental level this is not transparent. The EEC recommends to ensure a transparent and clear career development plan is in place, agreed upon by all and communicated clearly.

Over the years, the student numbers have been highly fluctuating, making it difficult to provide multiple electives in the MSc/PhD with sufficient students per course. Recruitment of esp. PhD students are very hard, since they will have to pay significant fees and do not get an income (as university student-scholarships are no longer available), which is in contrast to other places in Europe, where PhDs get a full salary. The teaching assistant opportunities at the university for students are highly valuable as both a source of income and professional experience. The EEC therefore advises to target students from the Middle-East, USA (both complex geopolitically currently) and Asia instead, i.e. countries with equivalent systems - and actually go to these countries and advertise the program, and/or use social media effectively. The EEC fully supports English taught MSc and PhD programs which should attract more international students and make students more competitive.

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

Sub-area	**Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant**
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	compliant
1.3 Development processes	compliant

2. Quality Assurance
(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8)

Sub-areas

2.1 System and quality assurance strategy
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria			
2. Quality Assurance			
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy			**1 - 5**
2.1.1	The Department has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of the Institution's strategic management.		4
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.		4
2.1.3	The Department's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.		3
2.1.4	The quality assurance system adequately covers all the functions and sectors of the Department's activities:		
	2.1.4.1	Teaching and learning	5
	2.1.4.2	Research	5
	2.1.4.3	The connection with society	5
	2.1.4.4	Management and support services	5
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.		3
2.1.6	Students' evaluation and feedback		4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The department follows the university QAP and QAS, which are only very briefly addressed on a central website. The details were provided to us but not available publicly (as far as we can find). Moreover, there do not seem to be any departmental/chemistry program specific in the QAP or QAS. It is stated that external stakeholders are involved in the QAS, but it is not clear how. External stakeholders did express their very positive reflection on the program, and quality of the students finishing the program. It is not clear from the documents provided how discrimination is addressed in the quality assurance procedures.

2. Quality Assurance		
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study		**1 - 5**
2.2.1	The responsibility for decision-making and monitoring the implementation of the programmes of study offered by the Department lies with the teaching staff.	5
2.2.2	The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Department are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	3
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective, which have been presented and discussed.	4
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	4
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	5
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	4
2.2.7	The Department publishes information related to the programmes of study credit units, learning outcomes, methodology, student admission criteria, completion of studies, facilities, number of teaching staff and the expertise of teaching staff.	5
2.2.8	Names and position of the teaching staff of each programme are published and easily accessible.	5
2.2.9	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	5
2.2.10	The Department flexibly uses a variety of teaching methods.	5

2.2.11	The Department systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.		5
2.2.12	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.		5
2.2.13	The Department ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and/or international practices, particularly:		
	2.2.12.1	Building facilities	5
	2.2.12.2	Library	5
	2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	5
	2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	5
	2.2.12.5	Academic support	5
2.2.14	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic personal problems and difficulties.		4
2.2.15	The Department's mechanisms, processes and infrastructure consider the needs of a diverse student population such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities.		5
2.2.16	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.		5
2.2.17	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.		5
2.2.18	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff, enables continuous and effective feedback to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.		5
2.2.19	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.		3
2.2.20	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.		5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

As mentioned, the QAS states that the department is responsible for the specific assessment criteria, but these are not further clarified.

Student and staff welfare services including complaints and help procedures are in place. They should however be better communicated since the EEC learned that esp. students do not know where to go, except for their direct

supervisor (who can be the problem). The students also have very good relationships with the technical and administrative staff of the department.

The staff is doing a great job with the limited resources they have. The department and staff facilitate students that need to work or have other responsibilities. The research groups (groups of doctorate students per academic) are small, which severely limits their research output and continuity, but allows close supervision of the students. Unfortunately finances do not allow conference attendance etc for all doctorate students, which is important for their future career.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

Overall the QAP and QAS are in place, mostly organised from a central level. Students and staff are doing well and the required resources and infrastructure is in place.

Strengths

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

The department has very good teaching and laboratory facilities, including infrastructure. Students obtain hands-on experience with the instrumentation which is highly appreciated by them and their future employers. The students are very happy, which is mostly due to the personalised supervision, made possible by the small cohorts. The program allows students to follow the program part time, when e.g. financial or care responsibilities require.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The QAS states that the department is responsible for the specific assessment criteria, but these are not further clarified. The discussions with the staff seem to suggest this is left to the supervisor and examiners. The EEC strongly recommends working on a clear and transparent set of criteria, to help supervisors and students and to facilitate the procedures and make them more fair across the department. Equally, the exam setting and grading should be monitored better to ensure this is performed consistently over the department. The EEC advises to give these tasks to the already existing undergraduate and graduate study committees (It is not clear what the role and tasks are of the internal evaluation committee, which is mentioned in addition).

Moreover, it is surprising that the alignment and coherence of the programs and the monitoring of the learning outcomes is not addressed in the QA procedures (not in overall assessment, nor in the design and approval process of a new course). The EEC urges the department to anchor this, as this is very important for any program. It seems logical that this task also belongs to the undergraduate and postgraduate study committees. This alignment would need to be done before the departmental council decides on a course or change in curriculum. The exact role(s) of the departmental council are not clear, esp. in relation to the teaching (and thus the undergraduate and graduate study committees).

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

Sub-area	**Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant**
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	Compliant
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study	Compliant

3. Administration

(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
3. Administration		**1 - 5**
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	5
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of specified procedures, in the management of the Department.	4
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	4
3.4	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Department's council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	5
3.5	The Department applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	5
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	5
3.7	The Department's council operates systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the law and / or the constitution of the Department without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	5
3.8	The manner in which the Department's council operates and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	5
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	5

3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	4
3.11	Internationalization of the Department and external collaborations.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

Allocation of administrative support appears to be centralized, e.g. task-assignment for actual administrative roles performed inside the department, and it appears that e.g. assistance with applications for external and internal funding applications is in place. This may be meaningful considering the size of the department, but the University could consider embedding some of its central staff in departmental spaces. This may also lead to a higher appreciation of the tasks involved in running a department and better connection to the staff and content.

When discussing 3.10 with the groups of students, they did not seem to be aware of the official route through the administration system in case of a complaint/issue. They did not actually have any issues, but it should be made clear what the procedure is in case needed.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The department has a professional and dedicated management that clearly deals well with the many potential difficulties running a department with limited funds, but with a highly engaged and opinionated staff.

Strengths

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

The department has a large fraction of the staff that has been with the university for many years - this means it is a great place to work.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The department has a large fraction of the staff that has been with the university for many years - this means it is a great place to work. This comes with some challenges that should be addressed: many people in the technical and administrative roles have reached the limits of promotion and salary, i.e. have no clear career progression within the department. These staff members have a high workload and are crucial for running the department and programs, so more attention should be paid to recognise and award them appropriately.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
3. Administration	Compliant

4. Learning and Teaching
(ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

Sub-areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study
4.2 Organisation of teaching

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
4. Learning and Teaching		
4.1 Planning the programmes of study		**1 - 5**
4.1.1	The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study.	3
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	4
4.1.3	Intended learning outcomes, the content of the programmes of study, the assignments and the final exams correspond to the appropriate level as indicated by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	4
4.1.4	The programmes of study are in compliance with the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	5
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		
We are impressed with the teaching at the department - it is a large and difficult task for a small faculty to provide a modern and high-level education, and this appears to be achieved successfully. As mentioned earlier, the alignment and coherence of the programs and the monitoring of the learning outcomes is not addressed in the QA procedures (not in overall assessment, nor in the design and approval process of a new course)		

4. Learning and Teaching		
4.2 Organisation of teaching		**1 - 5**
4.2.1	The Department establishes student admission criteria for each programme, which are adhered to consistently.	4
4.2.2	Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	5
4.2.3	The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	4
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Department has regular and effective communication with their students, promoting mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship.	4
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	4
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	5
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	4
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies. We heard very positive evaluations from the students at the department - they appreciate the personalized teaching and supervision they get at the department.		

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

We are impressed with the teaching at the department - it is a large and difficult task for a small faculty to provide a modern and high-level education, and this appears to be achieved successfully.

Strengths

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

We heard very positive evaluations from the students at the department - they appreciate the personalized teaching and supervision they get at the department. We commend the 'open door' policy of the department faculty, and the students we met with felt comfortable approaching faculty, also outside their own area of expertise. This is a very good thing.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

There does not seem to be formal teacher training or mentoring in place, although staff who ask for advice feel they are looked after. We therefore suggest that a program of peer-reviewing of teaching is being implemented, where senior colleagues mentor junior staff, e.g. discussing teaching objectives and learning outcomes during the design of the course, as well as before and after individual lectures, and when designing assessment and grading. For this to be an effective and fulfilling exercise it is not necessary that the senior/junior professor is in the same specialization.

Periodical revision and adaptation of the programs of study is a time consuming task - especially for a small department - but it is essential to maintain the quality of the program.

We suggest a thorough look at departments teaching curriculum (this should be done every few years) to ensure the level is at an appropriate level, to 1: take into account the (changing) level of the students as they enter the first year of studies, 2: ensure that the teaching methods align with the topic and the students' qualifications and needs, and 3: that the learning outcome described in the curriculum are achieved and courses are aligned well - see also the recommendations under 2.

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

Sub-area	**Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant**
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	Compliant

5. **Teaching Staff** (ESG 1.5)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
5. Teaching Staff		**1 - 5**
5.1	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	4
5.2	The teaching staff of the Department has the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	5
5.3	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Department' programmes of study.	N/A
5.4	The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study.	5
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	5
5.6	The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught b teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	4-
5.7	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the programme of study.	5
5.8	Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of thei teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

-Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work: 13
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work: 1
- Number of visiting Professors: 0
- Number of special scientists on lease services: ~10

The teaching staff are highly qualified, having obtained their PhD and often PostDoctoral studies, in prestigious organisations. They are dedicated and supported by an excellent team of special scientists and technical staff. The student-staff ratio is very good so the students get individual attention. Each course gets evaluated by a Course and Academic Instructor Evaluation Questionnaire, which is also part of the career progression for academics. The students also complete an exit questionnaire when they graduate.

Findings

The high caliber of the teaching as well as the technical staff was evident during our visit. We met with almost all the staff and had open and transparent discussions with them. They are all dedicated and committed to the department. The students we met were very appreciative of the staff and their degree overall. The number of staff is small, and, especially with upcoming retirements, this may limit some of the activities in the future.

Strengths

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

The quality and dedication of staff, academic and technical, is an asset of the department. The individual attention they give to students is an asset. The laboratory teaching is a strength of the department-the excellent instrumentation, access and hands-on teaching offers very good preparation to the students. The opportunities for research in the undergraduate degree is also an asset.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The teaching staff are overburdened and given the approaching retirement of several staff members it is imperative to start the recruitment process early in order to ensure smooth transitioning as well as rejuvenation of the department. The EEC would like to reiterate here that the algorithm used by the university to calculate the maximum number of staff in any department, cannot be used as such for Chemistry (and other STEM disciplines). The Chemistry program is highly demanding and hands- on, with laboratory and research work. For appropriate preparation, supervision and to ensure safety, a significant number of staff is required (all of which are not anchored in the algorithm). The EEC urges the university to look at the staff number for Chemistry specifically and make the appropriate adjustment in their number.

Opportunities for development of younger staff could be more formalised and better communicated, at the moment it depends on the younger member of staff to seek advice and mentorship. For example teaching peer review could be implemented including from across departments.

As mentioned above, the low student numbers at the Msc and PhD level mean that many electives cannot run. The ECC recommends engaging external stakeholders, as they are very committed to help.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	**Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant**
Teaching staff number, adequacy and suitability	Compliant

Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

6. Research

(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
6. Research		**1 - 5**
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	4
6.2	The Department consistently applies internal regulations and procedures of research activity, which promote the set out research policy and ensure compliance with the regulations of research projects financing programmes.	5
6.3	The Department provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	5
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development o students' research skills.	5
6.5	The results of the teaching staff research activity are published to a satisfactory extent in international journals which work with critics, international conferences, conference proceedings, publications, etc. The Department also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	4
6.6	The Department ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	5
6.7	The Department provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	4
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teachin staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	3
6.9	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the teaching staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The staff are actively involved in research, which is also incorporated in the undergraduate and masters teaching. They publish, obtain grants and have international level standards. The department has very good instrumentation. Space is constrained but plans to expand seem to be in place. Funding PhD students can be a challenge, esp. since national funding sources for them seem very limited. Teaching assistant opportunities at the university are a (somewhat) alleviating factor.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

The academic staff are research active within several areas of modern chemistry and areas of interest to the local environment. Several groups have external research grants and are part of interdisciplinary activities. We met with staff and students, visited the labs and examined the PhD theses, in addition to the report we received.

Strengths

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

The department has high quality academics who are research and teaching active and engage with the students. They are able to attract academics from top institutions who are active in modern areas of chemistry. The students appreciate the research and supervision they get and are overall happy. The department is well equipped.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Research funding indirectly helps teaching by providing more resources for students to do their research projects. Depending on the funding source, PhD can be funded. To maximise the value of proposals for research funding, while recognising the inherently competitive nature of funding, we would encourage academics to consider joining larger bids, including in interdisciplinary efforts with other departments who have moved to the new campus such as Engineering and Medicine. In addition, the staff is advised to reach out to industry in Cyprus who seem eager to collaborate on applied research themes with the Department and can help in obtaining public private partnership type funding from for example the EU (or in special interesting cases directly fund research and positions) .

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	**Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant**
Research mechanisms and regulations	Compliant
External and internal funding	Compliant
Motives for research	Compliant
Publications	Compliant

7. **Resources** (ESG 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: Non-compliant
3: Partially compliant
4 or 5: Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria		
7. Resources		**1 - 5**
7.1	The Department has sufficient financial resources to support its functions managed by the Institutional and Departmental bodies.	3
7.2	The Department follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	5
7.3	The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	5
7.4	The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	3
7.5	The Department carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.	5
7.6	The Department's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	5
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

The financial resources provided to the department are satisfactory in terms of consumables and equipment, but the lack of funding projects to support the PhD students is hindering the achievement of their objectives researchwise. However, it is clear that they are doing an excellent job at managing and fairly distributing the available resources.

The department also ensures that all the necessary financial assessments are taking place through internal and external evaluation committees, and aims to enhance the already existing operations by evolving the finance plan for maintaining and replacing their instrumentation, as well as regularly reviewing the support facilities.

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.

It appears that the department struggles to secure financial support for PhD students to keep up their research through national or European funding projects. Whereas some of the university finances cover the purchase of equipment and consumables, there is no money available for maintenance of important instrumentation and this is left to the technicians (which is very challenging). The number of staff as allowed under the university algorithm is too low for the programs to be run and safety to be ensured, as discussed above. The management of the available resources is ensuring the welfare and development of the department, but it is reaching its limits.

Strengths

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

The awareness of their limited budget among all members of the department (staff and students) is allowing them to carefully assess and decide how to distribute the resources to achieve the smoothest possible operation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

As mentioned, the department should pursue more internal and external collaborations on multidisciplinary research with other related departments and industries and increase their effort in submitting research proposals, to increase the chances of securing fundings for the PhD students.

The staff is also encouraged to convey the message of the importance of Chemistry in different aspects of our life through campaigns and advertising to persuade the government and the university that more attention should be given and more resources should be provided so that the department can become more impactful on society.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	**Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant**
7. Resources	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 Department under review may be achieved.

The EEC is left with the overall impression that the Department of Chemistry at the University of Cyprus is functioning at a high standard. Our assessments and suggestions are given in the context of the department's stated ambition to flourish and grow in size (i.e. numbers of students, the size of the faculty, actual square meters of labs/office).

The department performs well in all aspects, esp. given the relatively small size of the faculty and the tight financial situation. The academic faculty is relatively small, and significant changes in the staff composition will take place in the coming years due to the age-profile of the current academic staff (5 retirements). Moreover, the faculty has an ambition to grow (if allowed) to 20 staff members. That means that important decisions on the new profile of the department are apparent. This is a huge change and effort, and successful recruitment (nationally and internationally) will be of the utmost importance. It is the impression of the EEC that this is a fantastic opportunity to bring new energy and science to the department, faculty and Cyprus, ensuring a strong research and educational profile. It is also a great opportunity for the current staff to grow into leadership and mentoring roles.

The EEC was impressed with the types and amount of modern analytical chemistry facilities in the department, and the fact that instruments and laboratories (old and new) function well. It is the impression of the EEC that this can be ascribed to the strong and dedicated technical staff. The modern facilities also indicate foresight on behalf of the department and the academic staff to secure resources for this important area. The fact that students get hands-on experience with modern equipment makes them strong candidates for future jobs.

The EEC met with groups of students and external stakeholders (including local industry) and all agreed: the Department is a great place, delivering high quality graduates with the right sets of skills, and they enjoy studying there or collaborating with the department. In fact, the external stakeholder would like to see more collaboration, in terms of teaching and research, which the department needs to activate immediately to help them with their education (e.g. electives and student internships), research and possible research income.

The department is well managed. Despite being a small department, there are many administrative tasks. Efficiency and transparency is important, for staff and students, either it being in assessment criteria, grading or career track requirements. In a time where large changes to the faculty staff are imminent, it is even more important to ensure that a sufficient level of clear, transparent, formal processes and quality assurance is in place and maintained. This to ensure fair processes for students and staff.

The key challenges facing the department in prioritized order are:

1) Expansion of the scientific staff. This is a challenge for several reasons. Both the large number of positions that need to be re-filled due to retirements and the wish to expand the size of the faculty complicates this issue. The autonomy of the department is limited, hence agility in the hiring process does not appear to exist. The funding is challenging and new hires must be competitive in the funding race as well as fit the research and teaching strategies of the department. Encouragingly this is the case currently. We are strongly supporting the English-taught MSc degree that may enhance the chances of attracting international faculty members. We recommend being careful with hiring strictly in the "traditional sub-disciplines"and attempt to focus on modern 'research themes', which may enhance chances to attract research funding. We recommend that a process is started as soon as possible to pro-actively identify candidates for the recruitment of faculty hires in the coming years. Here all internal and external stakeholders should contribute.

In addition, we want to reiterate here that the EEC strongly disagrees with the university applied 'algorithm' to determine the maximum size of departments at the University of Cyprus. This is a type of management tool that we understand, but we disagree with the fact that this is one algorithm for all. A chemistry department, and for that matter most STEM departments, covers a very broad scope, theory AND practical (laboratories), making it highly labour and cost intensive esp. since one also needs to ensure safety of all involved (something students need to be trained in).

2) Student numbers are fluctuating and low, which is a concern for the sustainability of the programs, and already causes limitations in for example in the number and types of electives students can take. Student recruitment is difficult, but the department is introducing an English-taught MSc degree to be launched in 2026. The EEC recommends focusing on attracting motivated students in order to optimize the return on the teaching investments made by the department. For this reason we recommend strong focus on advertising this new program as effectively as possible internationally, in countries with similar program systems (i.e. self-funded MSc and PhD programs, in contrast to Europe where most are positions with salary).

The EEC is confident that a cohort of international MSc students can transform the scientific environment with new energy and focus. These students may not be academically excellent when they arrive, but the enthusiasm and dedication of the staff will ensure that they leave fully equipped for a future in research or industry. The graduates from the department are the strongest ambassadors for the university, and may be good role models in recruitment and promotion of the department.

3) Attracting research funding is difficult due to the highly competitive funding reality; this is true both with respect to European and local funding opportunities. These challenges make the high ambitions of the department difficult to achieve. Successful fundraising is often an autocatalytic process, and small strategic investments locally sometimes lead to enhanced success in competitive calls. The department should try to use the opportunities in the process of hiring new faculty members to construct strong teams of scientists that can pursue funding opportunities as teams - either as teams of chemists from the department or as cross-department, or international initiatives. Moreover, the staff should actively pursue applied research opportunities in collaboration with external stakeholders, who are very willing to do so. Public private partnership consortia have more and different funding instruments, also in Europe, which will open up the funding possibilities and chances.

Finally, we recommend that the department form an external advisory board - perhaps consisting of strong candidates with a background in Cyprus (academic and industrial). This will greatly support the department in delivering its ambitions.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Professor Sophia Yaliraki	
Professor Michael Pittelkow	
Professor Moniek Tromp	
Dr. Elena Ioannou Papayianni	
Charalampos Christodoulou	
FullName	

Date: 23 April 2026