

07.14.318.060

Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Conventional-face-to-face programme of study

Date: Date

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Frederick University
- **Campus:** Nicosia
- **School:** Engineering
- **Department / Sector:** Mechanical Engineering
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme

In Greek:

Μηχανική Μηχανολόγων Μηχανικών (3 ακαδημαϊκά έτη,
180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό (PhD))

In English:

Mechanical Engineering (3 academic years, 180 ECTS,
Doctorate (PhD))

Language(s) of instruction: English

- **Specializations (if any):**

In Greek: -

In English: -

Programme's Status: Currently Operating



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 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the department in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.3.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

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

All areas marked as compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- a. *The PhD programme in Mechanical Engineering has the potential to attract international students. Actions towards a more international visibility of the PhD programme would help to extend its attractiveness to selected countries*

Department's Response:

Amongst the efforts to make its PhD programme attractive to potential international candidates the Department has placed a strong emphasis on enhancing its international visibility by requiring the faculty members and PhD students to primarily disseminate their research output via a notable and sustained annual increase in international journal publications and Conference participation. This is now an important integral part of the Department's recently revised research strategy and it is also fully aligned with the University's latest strategic plan. International conference and seminar participants from the Department are expected to highlight in their discussions its key research areas, activities and expertise, as well as the available incentives for prospective PhD international students at Frederick. The University offers 90% scholarships for PhD studies in its campaign to attract more PhD Students. Furthermore, it has launched another campaign called "Women in STEM" offering scholarships to women interested in engineering and technology, as a way of implementing the University's EDI (Equality, Diversity, Inclusion) policy and goals as well as to further promote its engineering programmes. Further to the above, the Department continues to actively pursue its international visibility and recruitment activities via various well-established ERASMUS+ links with other universities including short exchanges of faculty and PhD students.

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment

(ESG 1.3)

All areas marked as compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- a. *For the better visibility of the PhD programme, participation with paper presentations in well recognized international conferences would help to make known of the good research achievements of the PhD candidates and the involved faculty and expand the academic network of the whole University*

Department's Response:

Further to the response provided in section 1a regarding the international visibility of the programme, it is also highlighted that according to the “Mechanical Engineering PhD Programme Regulations” (Annex 1) it is a Degree requirement for our PhD students to publish their research work in at least two international refereed conferences or journals and to present at least one of the two at a conference, on their own. This policy contributes towards the general efforts to expand the international academic network of the Department and indeed of the whole University. A list of publications produced as part of this requirement by the Mechanical Engineering current PhD students and graduates, is attached (Annex 2).

3. Teaching staff

(ESG 1.5)

All areas marked as compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

a. *There is not much to improve at this stage*

Department's Response:

We would like to thank the EEC for their positive remarks.

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification

(ESG 1.4)

All areas marked as compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- a. *The faculty involved in the programme and the department are encouraged to undertake actions to increase the visibility of the PhD programme.*

Department's Response:

Please refer to the previous responses in sections 1a and 2a.



5. Learning resources and student support

(ESG 1.6)

All areas marked as compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

a. N/A

Department's Response:

We would like to thank the EEC for their remarks.



6. Additional for doctoral programmes

(ALL ESG)

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- a. *The committee believes that **the department has established a successful path to ensure a high-quality doctoral degree program.***

Department's Response:

We would like to thank the EEC for their positive remarks.

7. Conclusions and final remarks

The members of the EEC committee found the BSc programme in Mechanical Engineering, the MSc programme in Energy Engineering and the PhD programme in Mechanical Engineering to be compliant in all examined aspects. Overall, the programmes have been successful in attracting and motivating students. The existing course offerings provide a balance between fundamentals and practice including several activities that demonstrate effective practices of active learning, which is an important element of contemporary education. Moreover, the existing teaching laboratories and department facilities are of high quality in general.

A thorough revision of a broad range of examples on MSc/PhD dissertations demonstrates the complementary activities of academic staff in various emerging areas in Mechanical Engineering. This is particularly interesting because former graduates have been absorbed in high-profile industries or they hold academic positions in various institutions.

With regard to teaching, formal procedures have been established so as student feedback is seen in a constructive manner for the further tailoring of existing coursework, which follows the state-of-the-art. The ratio of a number of students-per-lecturer appears to be rather low, which can be considered an advantage. With regard to admission requirements, formal control points have been established so as high-calibre students enter the university at all levels. Moreover, doctoral student supervising/mentoring follows the same standards and practices of well recognised academic institutions. PhD candidates have adequate opportunities to present and disseminate their research findings at high-profile scientific meetings and national/international conferences. Most faculty and graduate students publish their scientific results in international high-impact peer-reviewed journals in the field of discipline based on numerous examples presented to the EEC committee.

Some recommendations for further improvements would include the following:

- Potential use of more digital resources in education (e.g., Massive Open Online Courses) as well as considerations in the graduate and post-graduate programmes.

- Consideration of emerging technological trends, such as the ones related to the 4th Industrial Revolution in the educational programmes.

The **evaluated graduate programmes are found useful** for addressing the needs of local industrial sectors and related business activities.

Project-based learning is a real asset because it allows students to experience real-world collaboration and to apply the learning from courses immediately in an applied project.

The **teaching staff is well qualified** to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning in the study programme.

The management of the University should take permanent care of keeping a **well-balanced and appropriate number of staff** in the programme.

The **students are in general very satisfied** with their accomplishments in the programme.

Generally, there is an **excellent availability of accessible resources** for achieving the objectives of the evaluated programmes

Department's Response:

Concluding, we would like to thank the EEC for their hard work and candid discussions held throughout the rigorous process of the evaluation. The University and the Department has adopted all suggestions made by the EEC as shown by the responses in sections 1-6. We are particularly pleased and gain much needed strength from the overall positive remarks and will strive to further improve and achieve our strategic goals in the near future.



B. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
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Date: [Click to enter date](#)

