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ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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Doc. 300.3.1

Date: Date

External Evaluation Report
(Departmental)

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

Programme 1
In Greek:
Programme Name
In English:
Programme Name

Programme 2
In Greek:
Programme Name
In English:
Programme Name

Programme 3
In Greek:
Programme Name
In English:
 Programme Name
- **Department's Status:** Choose status

ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

The External Evaluation Committee were provided with an extensive written application well in advance of the review. However it did not cover all assessment criteria. This was further supplemented with a presentation and the opportunity to ask questions (28/9/2020) of with the pro rector for academic affairs, academic staff including the department chair, professional support services staff, students and graduates. The meetings were constructive and informative and the questions from the EEC were addressed directly. We thank the students and staff of the department for contributing constructively to this review. The total duration of the virtual onsite visit of 4-5 hours (Sept. 28th, 2020) for both departmental and programmatic evaluation was somewhat short, which meant that some relevant questions had to be left out and discussions shortened.

The virtual tour of the University, which the EEC was provided, was not very informative and importantly didn't cover the teaching, study and laboratory facilities at the Department of Chemistry. Hence our conclusions on these matters are entirely based on second-hand information. Our numerical scoring in this report is based on the data, which the ECC has collected from the written application material, the onsite visit and the following meeting with the internal evaluation committee. In cases where the ECC felt that data were insufficient, we have not provided a score. This is intended to facilitate and simplify the responses from the department on these points.

The External Evaluation Committee found it surprising that a review of a chemistry department and chemistry program did not have a substantive section on safety and risk management in the department and university. We had the opportunity to ask about this in our meeting with technical staff but would have expected this to be part of the documentation. We understand that the documents provided are generic and not specifically designed for the review of chemistry departments and chemistry programs, but we recommend to The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education that they review the documentation for future reviews.

The External Evaluation Committee recognize that this review is taking place under extraordinary circumstances and that the Covid-19 pandemic has impacted upon many processes. We would particularly like to thank Anthi Prokopa of The Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education for her support though this review.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Maria Aletrari	Chief Chemist	State General Laboeratory
Jesper Bendix	Professor	University of Copenhagen
Xenarou Styliani	Student	Cyprus University of Technology
Moniek Tromp	Professor	University of Groningen
Tom Welton	Professor	Imperial College London
Name	Position	University

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *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:*

<u>Findings</u>

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

<u>Strengths</u>

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

<u>Areas of improvement and recommendations</u>

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

- *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 **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	**1 - 5**
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	5
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.	4
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic 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.	5
1.1.6	Stakeholders such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Department's development strategy.	3
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.	5
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.	

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1.1.1 - 1.1.3 The department evidenced a thorough process of strategy development. However, the mission, the strategy and the implementation is formulated in a too generic way to be optimal. The next step of developing a plan for actions has yet to be completed. This should include directly verifiable success criteria, which can be used by the department to prioritize activities in the upcoming years. This should include contingency plans for not meeting the set goals can be part of the plan. Specific goals for the funding level should enter the strategy.

1.1.6 The department has engaged its internal stakeholders fully and some external bodies. However, the extent to which the department has engaged with external stakeholders is unclear. We recommend that the department consider forming an external advisory board composed of representatives of Cypriot chemicals industries and international chemistry academics.

Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.

   The Department offers programs at the Bachelor's, Master's and PhD levels in Chemistry. The structure of the programs is quite straightforward creating no conflicts with regard to coherence and compatibility internally. The university policy of avoiding exam retakes, can lead to delays and some problems with the coherence of otherwise well-composed programmes. The EEC learned from students that the number and scope of advanced courses offered to graduate students, was somewhat limited. The EEC recognises that this can be a problem for small departments. The department has an ambition for growth supported by extension of its provision at the Master's level. We agree that this will be necessary to meet its plans for growth.

2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

While not evidenced in the application, it can be seen from the university website that the department complements well the others in the Faculty and wider University. We recommend that the expansion of Master's provision will be an opportunity to explore interdisciplinary courses in collaboration with other departments in the University.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

Click to enter text.

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.	3
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.	5

1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	3

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

1.2.1: The department does have visiting programs for the general public and high-school students. The department also engages in industry collaborations and consulting. However, graduates of the department indicated to the EEC that connection with society could be improved.

1.2.4: The mechanisms of interaction with communication with graduates are not formalized and relies primarily on good personal relations.

Click to enter text.

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.	4
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.

1.3.1: The formal requirements are somewhat limited. Teachers have the necessary qualifications regarding the topics taught by them, but teaching qualifications are not directly monitored, quantified or certified. From an international accreditation point of view, there are issues to be considered on this point.

Staff recruitment strategy, based on, and defining excellence should be considered. We are concerned that current university planning processes for staff recruitment may hinder the department from taking advantage of opportunistic availabilities of high-quality academics.

1.3.2 The EEC has been informed that a position in the Inorganic section is being filled. However it has not been clear how this will fit in with the departments Research Themes.

1.3.3 As the only Chemistry Department in Cyprus, the department is in a strong position for these students, However, a coherent strategy for overseas recruitment is required. Given the

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language of instruction in the UG program, the department may consider using English as the language of instruction for its new Master's courses.

Additionally, write:
- Expected number of Cypriot and international students
- The written application states (p. 123) that the department has 148 Cypriot students and 20 international students (origin stated in the application). This number is reasonable when the student uptake is around 35/y. However, the number of graduated students BSc. has been fairly low the last couple of years. This might create sustainability issues for the MSc and PhD programs unless the recruitment for these programs are made more internationally competitive
- Countries of origin of international students and number from each country

- The EEC note that there is a mismatch in the dates of students being accepted by UoC and Greek universities, which creates problems vis-à-vis the numbers of students who actually start the year.

Click to enter text.

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

Both staff recruitment and student intake are critical parameters both in terms of quantity and quality. As the department is aware, and indicates in its SWOT analysis, student recruitment is challenging due to the limited pool. Competition from private universities with pharmaceutical specializations is perceived as a threat. Visiting programs bring more 2500 visitors/y to the department, which is substantial compared to the actual intake of students.
The EEC finds student recruitment an important point to work on strategically.

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

The department is composed of a collaborative community of scholars, with good scientific infrastructure and competent researchers. The staff have a network of excellent international collaborators. It is important to use these strengths strategically in recruitment of both students and future staff.

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

Student recruitment and the link to former graduates from the department could be addressed simultaneously by using role-models from the department in the student recruitment process. The information material included in the application as Annex 1, might serve formal purposes of addressing the public, but we do not perceive it as very suited for student recruitment purposes. It would be relevant for the department to have alternative material directly reflecting their own analysis of the competition for good students. This should focus more on career opportunities,

internationalization, global societal issues like health and environment – and to quote the application "chemistry as the central science". It should also have a format, which is suited for visibility on social media.

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

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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.	5
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	5
2.1.3	The Department's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.	5
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	3
	2.1.4.2 Research	5
	2.1.4.3 The connection with society	4
	2.1.4.4 Management and support services	3
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	Choose mark
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.	

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2.1.4.1: There are several areas in which quality assurance in not conducted adequately, e.g., there is currently no peer review of teaching, mechanisms for student review are not in line with the most modern practice etc., see the programmatic review for more details.

2.1.4.3: The means of quality assurance of the connection with society are not entirely clear. It is quite probable that the departmental resources are used in the most optimal way by having quality parameters defined very closely by the goals of the department. Thus, monitoring the actual effect on recruitment by visitor programs and other activities might be relevant. The quality assurance of the management and support services seems not to be very formalized, but mainly consisting of having good and hard-working employees.

2.1.4.4. Many of the management and support services are supplied centrally by the university and are outside the department's control. Many universities have a system in which central administration staff have workspaces in departments to make better communication and inclusion of these functions.

Click to enter text.

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.	4
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective.	3
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.	5
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	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	5
2.2.9	The Department flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods.	5

2.2.10	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
2.2.11	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	4
2.2.12	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	Choose mark
	2.2.12.2 Library	5
	2.2.12.3 Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	Choose mark
	2.2.12.4 Technological infrastructure	5
	2.2.12.5 Academic support	5
2.2.13	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.	5
2.2.14	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
2.2.15	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.	5
2.2.16	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.	5
2.2.17	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
2.2.18	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.	5
2.2.19	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.

2.2.3 Specific indicators are not clearly described across all areas.

2.2.12.1 and 2.2.12.2: the lack of a score reflects the lack of detailed data provided to the EEC, largely, but not only, due to the virtual nature of the onsite visit.

2.2.2 and 2.2.4 refer to the programmatic review

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Click to enter text.

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

UoT has a comprehensive system of Quality Assurance. It is not clear to the EEC the extent to which this is embedded in departmental practice. In our interviews with staff we were often told "we speak to each other", when we asked for details of practices. While that can be highly effective, it did not leave a paper trail that was easy to analyse.

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

Excellent (physical) library provision

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

Again, we recommend the formation of an external advisory board.

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.	5
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.	5

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

Click to enter text.

3.3: Some administrative support is centralized, e.g. assistance with funding applications. This is meaningful considering the size of the department and the university, but it does provide some barrier for access. The University should consider embedding some of its central staff in departmental spaces.

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

The department is generally well supported administratively. As is common in institutions with small department much of this is provided centrally by the university.

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

Click to enter text.

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

One possible way to resolve this is for staff from the central administration to have workspaces in departmental buildings, so that they integrate more fully with the department staff, both academic and professional service.

Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

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

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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.	4
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	4
4.1.3	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.	N/A
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.

4.1.1: It is clear that the goal of periodical revision and adaptation of the programs of study is achieved. The mechanisms to ensure this are at least to some extent in place through external programmatic reviews. However, it transpired from the visit that other factors (recent changes in the number of UG programs) has the role as a primary catalyst for these processes. We understand that a new program of peer-reviewing of teaching is being implemented. We recommend that the department engages with this fully as it becomes available.

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4.1.3: Refer to the programmatic review

4.1.4: The department has expressed a desire for accreditation of its programmes by the Royal Society of Chemistry, which we strongly support. Until this has been achieved, this question cannot be answered.

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.	5
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.	5
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.	5
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.	4
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	5
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	4

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

4.2.8: The multiple methods of assessment, which compulsory for all courses provides possibilities for the students to demonstrate their mastering of the course. As for demonstrating the learning outcomes, the conclusion must take into account the actual content of the assessments.

Click to enter text.

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

The department offers a modern chemistry degree. It appears to be a collegiate and friendly environment, which relies heavily on opportunities for personal interactions.

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

Collegiate environment

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

We recommend that the department consider instigating processes for formal oversight of marking.

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's 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 by 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.	5
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 their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	5

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

5.1: The teaching load is quite substantial for all teachers. The distribution of the teaching load is, however, commendably even

Click to enter text.

Also, write the following:
  - Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
  15
  - 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
> 0
>
> Click to enter text.

Findings

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

The staff is well qualified. In general they have a solid international experience.

Strengths

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

The department of chemistry has a well-balanced staff composition with good complementarity concerning research topics. This makes it easy to compose a balanced and topically broad undergraduate program

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

It is difficult to be internationally very competitive due to the size and funding situation of the department. A central question is whether the future recruitment strategy should focus on maintaining the broad coverage and balancing the Physical/Organic/Inorganic/Analytical sub fields- or if recruitment should be considered a tool for increasing the international competitiveness and impact disregarding the current balanced situation. The EEC considers it an important and necessary strategic prioritization to make.

The current absence of a visiting professor program due to the funding situation is a weakness. Considering the size of the department and the significance of strong international collaborations, an area where the department has been doing well, it is important to reestablish a visiting professor program. Funding possibilities for such initiatives are often more plentiful and diverse than regular research funding. The department is urged to analyze the possibilities including bi-lateral agreements.

The age-profile of the department must be considered in relation to the future recruitment plans. It is of key importance for the department to obtain maximal autonomy and agility in the future recruitments.

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant
5. Teaching Staff	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.	5
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.	4
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 of 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.	5
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	4
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.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.	

![ENQA - European Association for Quality Assurance in Higher Education]

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA — ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
THE CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

6.2: The score of "4" reflects the existence of internal regulations, but lack of knowledge with the EEC concerning compliance with rules of funding bodies.

6.5: The research staff publication activity has a positive trend. Publications appear in international peer reviewed journals. There is no requirement for publishing open access, but it has focus.

6.8: The EEC does not have the comparison data which allows a decisive answer. There is a very large variation across Europe. The funding level is quite modest compared with many European countries, but similar to other countries. Locally, the department appears to be performing well.

6.9: On this matter, we cannot gauge the policy. However, the volume of the internal funding is such that policies appear to be no.

Click to enter text.

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

Obtaining funding is challenging for all departments. The department of Chemistry, University of Cyprus is no exception. The limited range of Cypriot funding bodies in conjunction with the extremely competitive European funding environment poses bottlenecks for the expansion plans of the department. It is very gratifying to see that the Department has been a partner in several ERC International Training Networks. It is also an important testimony to the ability to attract external funding, that the department is ranked as the second largest in the university with regard to the number of PhDs graduated during recent years

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

The staff of the department collaborate with some excellent international scientists. This should be maintained and this network should be exploited to support the department's development as a department.
The integration of research in teaching has the attention of the department and is promoted through several efforts as well as through interaction with the "The Centre for Teaching and Learning" at UC

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

Strengthening the funding of the department should be made a strategic goal with well-defined success criteria. Making optimal use of research networks, including mentorship from international collaborators, local start-up funding, and hiring with the future funding situation in mind should be central elements in the departmental operations

Please √ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant

6. Research	Compliant

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EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
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IN HIGHER EDUCATION

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
THE CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

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.	4
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.	3

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

7.1 The financial resources are adequate for current purposes, but the department has unlocked potential, which could be exploited in a situation with better resources.
7.4 and 7.7: The planned expansion with a growth of 25-33% in staff is not sustainable with the current funding. The EEC also received, an expected, alert from the technical staff concerning the need for extra man-power. The EEC does acknowledge, that the department is currently run with a minimal size of the technical staff, which should be considered in parallel with the planned expansion of the academic staff.
Click to enter text.

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

The department is managed well. Much is being achieved with quite moderate funding. However, the general funding landscape, the student intake and output and the age-profile of the department pose threats to the strategic plans.

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

The research and teaching infrastructure is very good for the size and age of the department. The technical staff is performing well and clearly committed to the department. Departmental safety and the chemical inventory is managed with verifiable quality.

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

The resources are not sufficient to sustain the ambitions for growth in the departmental strategy. Further instrument-specific training of the technical team would also be helpful.

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.

Click to enter text.

It is the impression of the EEC, that the department is functioning to a high standard. Our assessments and suggestions for actions are given in the context of the department's stated ambition to grow, which will require some changes in practices, and are not necessarily indicators of unsuitability of current procedures to achieve their current purposes.

Considering its small size, it performs well. With respect to research topics, it covers broadly, but is therefore, also stretched somewhat thin in terms possible synergies among the staff. The new focus on Research Themes has the potential to help with this, but will need to be thoughtfully managed, particularly in regard to upcoming appointments.

The department is well managed. Many administrative requirements exist at departmental level as well as at Faculty and University level. Given the size of the department and its collegiate nature, many internal arrangements are made informally. This can be a strength, but care must be taken to ensure that a sufficient level of formal processes is maintained. This will become more important as the department grows and external accreditation bodies, such as the RSC, will require record keeping of such processes. However, we recognize that this is a fine balance and that this should not be done in such a way as to give extra administrative burden. Techniques, such as having a standing item on agendas of confirming decisions made between meetings, shared documents etc. can be useful.

The key challenges facing the department in prioritized order are:

1) Expansion of the scientific staff. This is a challenge for several reasons. The autonomy of the department is limited, hence agility in the hiring process does not exist. The recruitment pool is quite limited. The requirement that new staff must speak Greek before they start is also a limitation. Provision of language training upon appointment could deal with this. Provision of language training upon appointment could deal with this. 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. The existing balance between IOPA traditional sub-disciplines, may hamper the right decisions in the department and the focus of Research Themes must be considered in this process.

2) Student recruitment is difficult. The EEC recommends focus on attracting motivated students in order to optimize the return on the teaching investments made by the department. Motivated students are not necessarily academically excellent at the outset, but with the enthusiasm for research in the department combined with the efforts to integrate research and teaching a shortening of the time the BSc students require to finish should be possible. This will also provide for a better sustainability of the graduate programs in the department. The department should

consider its graduates as potential ambassadors and exploit good role models in recruitment and promotion of the department.

3) Funding is challenging and does pose a bottleneck to the ambitions of the department. The department should analyze how it is doing in the national competition for funds and try to identify any unexplored possibilities. The central initiatives of the university regarding start-up funding and proposal support including dedicated sabbaticals for this purpose should be exploited as far as possible. Funding is often an autocatalytic process. Investing in teaching assistance to free-up time to enable strong proposals from the department can be a good deal on several levels. The department should exploit its strong scientific network of collaborators for building strong proposals for national, European and bilateral funding schemes.

4) Identification of central strategic initiatives in the society: sustainability, health, energy etc., should be done centrally by the department and used for student recruitment, for identifying appearing funding opportunities and for the general promotion of the department towards society.

Finally, we strongly recommend that the department form an external advisory board. This should consist of representatives of local industries, professional bodies and successful international academics. This will greatly support the department in delivering its ambitions.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Maria Aletrari	
Jesper Bendix	
Xenarou Styliani	
Moniek Tromp	
Tom Welton	

Date: 30/09/2020