

Doc. 300.3.2

07.14.313.004

Higher Education Institution's Response (Departmental)

Date: 10/10/2021

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Frederick University
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School:** Arts, Communication and Cultural Studies
- **Department:** Arts and Communication
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1

In Greek:

Οπτική Επικοινωνία (4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο (BA))

Κατεύθυνση:

1. Γραφιστική και Ψηφιακά Μέσα
2. Φιλμ και Ψηφιακά Μέσα

In English:

Visual Communication (4 Academic Years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Arts (BA))

Specializations:

1. Graphics and Digital Media
2. Film Making and Digital Media

Programme 2

In Greek:

Οπτικές Τέχνες (3 ακαδημαϊκά εξάμηνα, 90 ECTS, Μάστερ (MA))

- Κατεύθυνση:
1. Σύγχρονες Εικαστικές Πρακτικές
 2. Διεπιστημονικός Σχεδιασμός

In English:

Visual Arts (3 academic semesters, 90 ECTS, Master (MA))

- Specialization:
1. Contemporary Art Practices
 2. Interdisciplinary Design

Programme 2

In Greek:

Πρακτικές Τέχνης και Σχεδιασμού (3/4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 180 ECTS, Διδακτορικό (PhD))

In English:

Art and Design Practices (3 academic years, 180 ECTS, Doctorate (PhD))

Department'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. Department's academic profile and orientation

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

All sub areas marked as Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria

Num	Quality Indicator	Mark (1-5)
1.1.4	<p>The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.</p> <p>1.1.4 Specifically and only in relation to the modules on Digital Media, there slight room for improvement in addressing critical and historical material relevant to the programme of study and the topic.</p> <p>Additionally, provide information on the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs). <p>We are satisfied that the criteria for the coherence and compatibility for the programmes of study is fully met.</p>	4

Num	Quality Indicator	Mark (1-5)
1.3.3	<p>The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.</p> <p>1.3.3 A strategy for attracting students from abroad could be further developed. 1.3.4 Staff are satisfied with the university's funding system, but the panel did not have any information on this matter.</p>	4

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1.1.4 Some development of curricula and reading lists in the area of digital media could be adopted.

1.3.3 The department could express its values and way of working more fully internationally in order to attract students from overseas.

Department's Response:

We would first like to express our satisfaction and appreciation of the findings made by the EEC which we fully adopt.

An effort by both the Department as well as the University is the attraction of more international students. This is a strategic goal of the organization and an organized effort is made towards this end, including also communication with the State and other universities as to achieve internationalization of the educational system in Cyprus requires a complete ecosystem that at present is at its development. This is an ongoing activity which has already started and will be reinforced further with a strategic plan to include the University's representation at International Educational Fairs and the establishment of cooperations with International Recruiting Agencies.

As suggested by the EEC the curricula in the area of digital media is enhanced with additional reading lists and resources obtained by the Library. Under its running policy, the the Department Council will review and approve suggested updates in September before the start of the new academic year.

2. Quality Assurance

Sub-areas

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

All sub areas marked as Compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- a. The website could provide more information on staff research activities. Publications / exhibitions etc. could be listed more fully, with links to publications.

The provision of computers could be updated.

Department's Response:

- a. The EEC recommends an improvement of the website to include more information on staff research activities, Publications / exhibitions etc. could be listed more fully, with links to publications. The EEC was presented with the department's website dac.frederick.ac.cy which lists faculty's brief profile but on the general University website <https://www.frederick.ac.cy/school-of-arts,-communication-cultural-studies-people> – which is under redevelopment and nearly ready to be launched – there are faculty profiles with links to personal sites as well as links to a short CV with information on latest Key refereed journal papers, monographs, books, conference publications, exhibitions, design consultancies, awards etc. We expect the new university website to be launched in the beginning of 2022.

3. Administration

All sub areas marked as Compliant

Quality indicators/criteria

Num	Quality Indicator	Mark (1-5)
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.	4
3.8 we did not have sight of any information pertaining to this question.		

Areas of improvement and recommendations

3.8 More documentation could be provided for this in future quality assurance.

Department's Response:

The recommendation by the EEC suggests more documentation on minutes for statutory sessions of the department meetings could be provided for this in future quality assurance. The Department keeps minutes for all formal meetings, but we accept that it would be better to have more transparency on appropriate decisions taken to be available for review.

4. Learning and Teaching

All sub areas marked as Compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Satisfactory

Department's Response:

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

5. Teaching Staff

All sub areas marked as Compliant

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Satisfactory

Department's Response:

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

6. Research

Quality indicator / criterion

Num	Quality Indicator	Mark (1-5)
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
6.2 There is room for improvement in setting out the research policy and improving support for staff research. Sabbaticals/ dedicated research time are unpaid for instance.		
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
We did not have sight of policy regarding open access.		
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
6.7 Data on the rights of researchers would need to be provided.		
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	4
6.8 We note the importance of NiMAC for gaining research funding.		

Num	Quality Indicator	Mark (1-5)
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
6.9 There is room for improvement for the funding of research and time available for research for staff.		

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Please see notes above

Department's Response:

We agree with the EEC's suggestion that funding for research activities could be improved. In fact, the matter has been raised with the University management and a series of remedial measures have been decided, including teaching load reductions. Additionally, the university has launched an internal funding scheme which allows for seeding funds to faculty members that wish to develop small-scale research projects. It is noted that the Department has already obtained one such grant titled "Re-mapping Public Space: Investigating Social and Spatial Interactions in Cyprus Post Covid-19". We expect to have further successes and other support initiatives towards research support.

7. Resources

Quality indicators and Criteria for the department's resources were left blank by the EEC and there is a note that this information was not provided, possibly linked with the limited capacity of the EEC to review resources with physical presence. The Department notes that all information on the resources with details on ordering, reviewing etc is listed in the application of the Department for the Evaluation. Please refer to Annex 1 - Infrastructure. Furthermore, the CYQAA was provided with video recordings of laboratory infrastructures. ([Link](#)).

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Overall, we have a very good impression of the Department of Arts and Communication of Frederick University

We commend the strong team-spirit and comradeship of the staff and students of the department.

The portfolios produced by students are of a high level and the research produced by staff is of a significant and often internationally notable level.

We commend in particular the very positive feedback from alumni about all aspects of the programmes of study

Concluding we would like to thank the EEC for their hard work and candid discussions held throughout the rigorous process of the evaluation. 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

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
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Prof. George Demosthenous Rector



