

Doc. 300.1.2

Higher Education Institution's Response

Date: 18/11/2020

- **Higher Education Institution:**
CDA College

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **Programme of study
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Πτυχίο στη Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων

(4 Χρόνια, Συν Προαιρετικό Προπαρασκευαστικό Έτος
/240 ECTS Πτυχίο)

In English:

Bachelor in Business Administration

(4 Years, Plus an Optional Foundation Year, 240 ECTS,
Bachelor of Arts)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** 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.300.1.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study 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. 300.1.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

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

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

Findings

The undergraduate program of Business Administration is a 4-year, full-time program and requires a minimum of 240 ECTS. In general, the program is well structured, its objectives are in accordance with the overall strategy of the College and the intended learning outcomes stem from and are consistent to the content of the program. The purpose, objectives, and learning outcomes are clearly communicated and well-justified.

The BBA in Business Administration consists of 40 courses (11 courses and the final project) and requires a minimum of 240 ECTS credits to graduate. It includes compulsory courses (180 ECTS), educational compulsory courses (30 ECTS), elective courses (12 ECTS from courses of specialization and 12 ECTS from free electives) and, 6 ECTS from final project as a dissertation. Students should follow 3 offered elective courses.

The course content and the assessment system are uploaded to a Moodle (the technology CDA College uses) platform. The assessment system is course work 50% or mid-term exams, final exam 50%, with a passing mark of 50%.

The expected learning outcomes of the program are known to the students from the first week of the semester through the course syllabi, the course outlines, the website of the College and the College's electronic platform. Overall, the program seeks to prepare students for leadership roles in profit and non-profit organizations in the global competitive business environment.

The structure and content of the program include an appropriate number of core and elective courses. There are electives from different disciplines (for example, general management, accounting and finance, marketing, etc.) after the first two foundation years of study provide students with valuable options and indeed the College's faculty appear to steer students towards the modules that best fit one's interest and qualifications.

The admission criteria are adequate and indeed the College has made the strategic decision to keep these criteria at a high level who enrol in the program every year. Along the same lines, the selection criteria are consistent with the vision of the College to maintain a strong reputation and eventually be awarded a "university" classification.

Quality assurance mechanisms are present and fairly well-aligned with international standards. There is a number of quality assurance mechanisms (30) and formal policies for the development and the management of the program of study. Importantly, formal quality assurance mechanisms are accompanied by informal processes which also appear to be working quite well. Moreover, the Head of the programme is very capable, with appropriate expertise and committed to the successful fulfilment of his role.

Moreover, the program of study reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe that is, preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base.

Strengths

1. Following mostly UK experience the College is employing visiting examiners to inform and evaluate the development of the program.
2. The program provides textbooks and reference books for all the courses, one reference and 2-3 suggested textbooks or academic books. These books can be found in the library.
3. The number of the students in the class is distributed equally among locals and foreigners a fact that can strength competition and diversification for the College. Another strength is that the College put a lot of attention to students with special needs, distinguishing the College from its competition in that case.
4. C.D.A. College has a long experience in delivering educational programs in business administration. Previous programs as well as current programs in different campuses were also accredited by the Ministry's former accreditation process.
5. A number of the faculty teaching staff have adequate practical experience which ensures a good balance between theory and practice. Moreover, half of the teaching staff are Ph.D. holders (5 out of 11 permanent professors in a total of 13).
6. The information related to the program of study is publicly available. The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance are clear, adequate and well-communicated to the students. The course syllabuses and course outlines clearly define the expected learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the method of assessing student performance. The college had a very fast response to Covid-19 digital transformation using tools like Moodle, electronic libraries, online courses, and so on.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

While in broad terms the program of study is adequate there is space for improvement. Below, the committee suggests some key elements to put in attention:

1. Following mostly UK experience the College, we encourage the College to employ external examiners in a more regular base to inform and evaluate the development of the program. This is a noteworthy effort and the EEC applauds the College's efforts towards that end.
2. The focus of the curriculum is mostly on practical matters as illustrated by the reading material. This is aligned with the local market requirements that the program is targeting. Yet, the program could be somewhat more balanced towards theory and/or academic works. In fact the EEC encourages the faculty to incorporate into the modules courses that are in the core of academic knowledge so that the students can link their hands-on knowledge with more higher order thinking.
3. In line with point 2, the program is not equally weighted concerning (i) the structure of the courses among the years and (ii) the choice of courses. In particular:

- a. For point (i), a welcoming change of the program would be to move the introductory courses (for example entrepreneurship modules) in the first years of studies, as discussed during the interviewed meeting with staff. At the moment, a number of introductory modules seem to be randomly distributed among the years so a better structure would help the program, students and enrich its quality.
 - b. Also, for point (i), some electives are not aligned well with the increasing prevalence of entrepreneurship and business management across economies as well as with international practice across similar programs (that is for example to be more specialized or create axes of specialization).
 - c. Another issue is that the structure of the program is more oriented to local market and practice in management, (for example preparing future professionals for tourism industry in Cyprus), leaving less room for courses in economics and finance. This is also a problem when a student can replace International Finance with elective. The committee suggests having an more balanced structure of the modules, choosing them from all fields of business, without putting more attention only to the local market needs.
4. A suggested way to achieve the above (point 3), is to restructure the program by reducing the number of core compulsory ECTS (or 18 courses) to less (for example 12) and give room to more electives by specialization. This would enrich the strength of the program in twofold: first by introducing courses related to finance and economics and second, by introducing more academic conceptual concepts within the syllabi. This is to ensure that the recent educational and societal trends are followed (this content could be obtained from a benchmark study of comparable institutions).
 5. A minor issue is to have more visibility for the students and be more clear about the course outlines and the course work for every module.
 6. The international dimension of the program is strengthening over time and one way to accelerate that progress is to be inviting more visiting professors from abroad who could help in the development of the quality of the program and in the strengthening of the research profile of the program and staff through collaborations.

Response of the Higher Education Institution (HEI)

According to the above EEC's findings, the Program of Study has many strengths and some minor weaknesses which have been fully satisfied in the 1st section **Study programme and study programme's design and development** as follows:

1. CDA College has established 25 international collaborations agreements with European universities through the ERASMUS + program. CDA College promotes the cooperation with these academic institutions/universities and attracts visiting professors and students through the exchange programs and invites visiting tutors in all the programs of study each semester. Foreign visiting instructors and students visited CDA College: (Appendix 1)

- a. 120 foreign instructors visited CDA College the last 4 years
- b. 150 foreign students from 25 EU universities

Moreover, CDA College employs external professors (examiners) to conduct lectures, inform and evaluate the development of the program. Some of these external professors are:

- Dr. Anastasios Vasiliades - Institute of Entrepreneurship Development
- Dr. Antreas Stassis (Profesor) - Mechanical Engineering and Operations Management - Technical University of Cyprus
- Mr. Antreas Anastasiades - Cyber Technology & Business Crime
- Dr. Konstantinos Chatzimichael - Economist - ΤΕΡΑΚ,
- Mr. Thomas Parissis, Business Development Manager, Project & Innovation Manager, EU funding Expert.

2. **& 3** CDA College has incorporated the suggestions raised by EEC in the comments 2 and 3 and in the sub-comments a, b, c. The College has incorporated the following changes on the structure of the programme.
 - a. The introductory courses are moved to the first years of studies. (Appendix 2)
 - BUS235 Introduction to Finance is moved from 3rd to 2nd semester
 - MGT323 Introduction to Management is moved from 5th to 3rd semester
 - b. The elective courses are increased so as to have a more entrepreneurship/ business and management background same as with other international programs. (Appendix 2)
 - c. BUS313 the International Finance is now compulsory not an elective.
4. Hence, the reduction of the compulsory courses and the introduction of more business/finance/economics-oriented electives, strengthen the program and make it more oriented not only to the local market but the foreign market as well. These new business/finance electives courses give a specialized orientation to the program and it also makes the program more competitive. (Appendix 2)
 - Addition of BUS501 Innovation & Entrepreneurship (Appendix 3)
 - Addition of BUS502 Change Management (Appendix 4)
 - Addition of BUS503 Business Economics (Appendix 5)
 - Addition of BUS504 Managerial Finance (Appendix 6)
5. Student visible learning is one of the College's most important learning issues. That is why the College has set formal procedures for the student learning through the lecturers' course outlines where the lecturers provide specific and clear guidelines of their modules:
 - The purpose of the module
 - Learning outcomes of each courses
 - How much work load needed for each course?

- What task is required?
 - Ask students to think about their own expectations before starting the lesson.
 - What do you think you can do? What do you think will be hard for you here?
 - What they need to do to learn?
 - How well they learned it?
 - How they will be evaluated?
 - Methods of evaluating the students
 - The methodology to be used
 - Bibliography
 - Providing continuous feedback about their progress, etc
6. As we have mentioned in item 1 above, CDA College has established 25 international collaborations agreements with European universities through the ERASMUS + program. CDA College promotes the cooperation with these academic institutions/universities and attracts visiting professors and students through the exchange programs and invites visiting tutors in all the programs of study each semester. Foreign visiting instructors and students visited CDA College. These academic collaborations with other European universities promote the international strengthening dimension of the program. Additionally, the program will also be strengthened over time by inviting more visiting professors from abroad who will help in the development of the quality of the program and in the strengthening of the research profile of the program and staff through collaborations. (Appendix 1 & Item 1 above)
7. Finally, the comments of the EEC are very positive and the 1st section **Study programme and study programme's design and development** is evaluated as Compliant by the EEC. The subunit 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review, is evaluated as partially compliant, which has also been fully satisfied as per the restructuring of the program. (Appendix 2)

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

- | | |
|-----|--|
| 1 | Policy for quality assurance |
| 1.2 | Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review |
| 1.3 | Public information |
| 1.4 | Information management |

Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant

- | |
|---------------------|
| Compliant |
| Partially Compliant |
| Compliant |
| Compliant |

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and student assessment (ESG 1.3)

Findings

There is a comprehensive teaching methodology and mechanisms. C.D.A. College has given appropriate consideration to the overall teaching and learning design and delivery of the proposed program. The program is built with student needs in mind. Overall, the educational process comes across as well-structured, effective and well-implemented. Former accreditations have helped towards that end. There are well-documented academic procedures involving the Head of the program, the teaching staff and the students. The management of the program of study does not encounter any problems. The College successfully applies the ECTS.

The Head of the program responsible for the program and the administration associated to it are experienced and committed to its delivery. This ensures that the program can be managed by the academics in charge without inappropriate non-academic interventions. There is also a team of dedicated administrators who are involved in student support processes (library, student visas and accommodation etc).

There are quite effective internal quality assurance committees and processes. The quality assurance of the program of study is ensured through active participation of the members of the academic personnel, the members of the administrative personnel and the students. The procedure of quality assurance of the program of study is well documented and communicated in the application material and the presentations/interviews taken place during our virtually interviews.

The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance are clear, adequate and well-communicated to the students. There is good evidence of structured and well-organized taught material (lecture presentations, good blending of theoretical material and practice, independent study etc). All teaching material are readily available to students..

Strengths

Overall, the program compares positively with relevant programs offered in Cyprus and abroad. The intended learning objectives of the program conform to the aims and objectives of the program and they are effectively communicated to the students. Also, the structure of the program as well as the learning mechanisms are appropriate for the effective delivery of the learning objectives with some suggestions mentioned above.

In general terms the EEC feels that the program is fully managed by the academics in charge and there are no inappropriate non-academic interventions. The programme guarantees a friendly and collegiate environment between students and teaching/ administrative staff. The students interviewed by the Committee highlighted they are quite satisfied with the quality of the program especially when it comes to its international character as demonstrated via its participation in student exchange programs.

The College appears to have strong ties with the business community, and this is yet another plus in terms, for instance, of offering guest lectures to students, or future internships for graduation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. The textbooks used in the course syllabi are updated regularly but perhaps more importantly the syllabi could include course outlines and coursework, along with more textbook/academic articles in them to strengthen the academic component of the courses as the practical component is already at high levels.
2. It is not entirely clear how the transition from this BBA to a master level programme may differ for students of different preferences for their future. This is aligned with the elective courses mentioned above.
3. A number of external examiners may ensure proper delivery of module material and constitute an important means the College maintains consistent quality standards.
4. The committee suggest for visiting companies with students in order to strength the practical training when this is applicable.

Response of the Higher Education Institution (HEI)

According to the EEC's findings above 2nd section **Student-centered learning, teaching, and student assessment**, the program of study has many strengths and some minor weaknesses which have been fully satisfied as follows.

1. The textbooks used in the course syllabi are updated regularly, also the syllabi includes course outlines and coursework created by the lecturers. CDA College has fully equipped and enriched the library with updated editions and scientific journals, new electronic platforms, Databanks, Infotrack, upgraded VPN services for students and academic staff. Additionally, CDA College has four (4) libraries in Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca and Pafos capitalizing on interlibrary loans. The students can immediately borrow books from one library to the other. Moreover, the library is regularly upgraded with new editions of textbooks, magazines and e-databases. The new e-libraries EBSCO and Emerald has also many textbooks and scientific journals on all educational areas. Here below are detailed numbers of books in our libraries.
 - The number of books in the Nicosia library is: 3,317
 - There are 650 books on the BA Business sector.
 - Most of the text books editions are from 2000 – 2019.
 - Journals-Articles: 72, EBooks: 26, Databases: 25, General Information websites: 15, e-Libraries: 8.
 - The total number of books in the other 3 libraries of the College (Limassol, Larnaca and Pafos) is 6,143.
 - The College is a member of electronic libraries and databases.
 - College has an interlibrary loan service with the University of Cyprus, Cyprus University of Technology and several Data Banks.
 - The library is using DEWEY a worldwide known library classification system for organizing the library collections,
 - OpenAbekt a cloud base system for cataloguing, loading and searching of books.

- There are 6 Computers with Internet connection and searching software
 - Easy access to books, periodicals, scientific journals and other reference material
 - SearchBank databases through its Internet facilities, stock of videos,
 - Subscribed to the Travel and Tourism Online Platform: UNTWO e-Library <https://www.e-unwto.org/>
 - Subscribed to the IFRS Foundation (International Financial Reporting Standards) so as to be updated on the latest Accounting manuals and books.
 - Connected with internet so that students will have free access.
 - The library is regularly upgraded with new editions of textbooks, magazines and e-databases.
 - CDA Library is also using e-libraries such EBSCO and Emerald and also students have VPN services through these e-learning platforms.
 - “Moodle” the e-platform of CDA College has all the tutors teaching notes updated and available to all the students.
 - Moodle platform is also used for online teaching due to the pandemic Covid 19.
2. The restructuring of the programme and the increase of the elective courses (as per the suggestion of the EEC) provide clear transition of this BBA to a master level programme. Now the BBA programme offers more specializations to students by choosing the right elective courses along with the core courses. This provides them a focus towards the future preferences to follow in a master level programme. (Appendix 2 & section1, item 4)
3. CDA College employs external professors (examiners) to conduct lectures, inform and evaluate the development of the program. They also maintain consistent quality standards. Some of these external professors are:
- Dr. Anastasios Vasiliades - Institute of Entrepreneurship Development
 - Dr. Antreas Stassis (Profesor) - Mechanical Engineering and Operations Management - Technical University of Cyprus
 - Mr. Antreas Anastasiades - Cyber Technology & Business Crime
 - Dr. Konstantinos Chatzimichael - Economist - ΤΕΡΑΚ,
 - Mr. Thomas Parissis, Business Development Manager, Project & Innovation Manager, EU funding Expert.
4. The program does not have any practical training; however, as per the committee’s suggestion the College has strengthened its links with local businesses. This will offer the opportunity to students to do their final dissertation in association with one of these companies. CDA College reinforced its Career and International Affairs Office in establishing closer links between the institution and the industry. Moreover, the College’s Career and International Affairs Office provides vital insights and awareness of professional career opportunities and job vacancies locally and abroad. This is a vital stepping stone in enhancing the relations of the College and its students with businesses. This initiative will strengthen the College and intensify industry links. More important, it will also offer internship opportunities and enhance the employability of our students after their studies. The College has established the following links/agreements with local businesses, organizations for students’ internships and their future employability:

- PASIXE (Cyprus Hotels Association)
- CSTI (Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative)
- ΣΤΕΚ (Cyprus Tourist Enterprises Association)
- Cyprus Hotel Managers Association\Birdlife Cyprus
- Sabre offer internships to the travel agents
- Cyprus Economists Association
- Kinisis Travel, Nicosia and Limassol
- Haviaras & Philippou L.L.C (Law Firm)
- A.C. Techworx (Telephone Communication Co.)
- GCC Computer Co

5. Finally, the comments of the EEC are very positive and the 2nd section **Student-centred learning, teaching and student assessment** is evaluated as Compliant by the EEC.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas: Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

3. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Findings

During our meeting with the teaching staff we interviewed all full-time professors and some of the part time professors. For the most part full-time staff has adequate qualifications especially when considering the fact that the program is an undergraduate one.

Some of them hold Ph.D. degrees (5 out of 11 permanents in total 13) from local and foreign institutions and are active in research (i.e. doing some research, attending conferences, and so on).

During the interview the majority of the faculty participated actively in the discussion even though the EEC was seeking to give their opinion to challenging issues. That was a good outcome in many ways. We got more insights on the working conditions of the faculty, and how situation is currently in general, and how they see their future in the College or how do they really feel with the working environment. More practically, this participation was a good opportunity for faculty to express their thoughts and suggestions which could eventually feed into future reports as a means to improve working conditions for faculty. Overall, that part was very interesting during the evaluation. We were positively surprised by the willingness of most faculty members to participate in the conversation.

Strengths

1. The College appears to have reasonable teaching loads which decrease as the faculty member moves upward the ranks.
2. The College encourages research activities in a number of ways including full support for conference attendance and such activities can augment staff's professional development. It was also clear whether such support is provided on a need to basis or whether there is a research budget per faculty member at the start of each academic year.
3. There appears to be a good balance between young and experienced faculty members. The experienced faculty have been with the College for a long time, which implies a good working environment that is beneficial to the program.
4. It seems that the outcome of teaching is being monitored and taken seriously by the College and that any issues or problems are professionally and effectively taken care of. There is also a good process of evaluation of the faculty by both students and the Heads of the Management.
5. Junior (less than 5 years) and senior (more than 5 years) faculty promote research synergies. Moreover, the management is open-minded to suggestions and flexible with syllabi's' changes.
6. A very good work is conducted in Aristotelis' center, an activity that should be promoted.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. The College could invest more in resources that could help the faculty to conduct quality research (e.g. with the acquisition of databases or increase funding). While such activities may turn out to be prohibitively expensive a perhaps complementary means to augment the research activities of the faculty while generating revenues would be to promote the corresponding Master's program. Such programs could indeed spark research activities and help the College realize its long-term ambition.
2. The College should pursue to regularly conduct research seminars in which faculty members could present research papers to others in order to discuss them, a practice that is likely to improve the quality of the research. These initiatives could be undertaken not only within the College but also together with other Cypriot Universities and Colleges (sharing of seminar email lists, organization of joint research seminars etc.). This would promote research synergies as well.
3. The current flexibility in the promotion criteria is somewhat understandable given the different contributions of each faculty member to the program. However, some standardized criteria should be introduced as well. For instance, these could include a specified number of research publications in high calibre journals following international journal lists.
4. At present, only half of faculty members are Ph.D. holders in this program. This is not a concern per se. But, in the medium to long run, to stay competitive and maintain a healthy reputation the College should be aiming to hire more Ph.D. holders.

Response of the Higher Education Institution (HEI)

According to the EEC's findings above the 3rd section **Teaching Staff** has many strengths and some minor weaknesses which have been fully satisfied as follows.

1. CDA College aims at excellence in research and is fully committed to developing and promoting research activity. CDA College strongly supports and encourages faculty staff's research activities. That is why in 2016, the College has established the Research Centre "Aristotelis" so as to provide an independent platform for researchers and to promote the College research culture. The College has also set a research policy where the College encourages and supports faculty research activities, publications, attend conferences, seminars, workshops through financial support, reduction of teaching load, and other means as per the research incentives policy. (Appendix 7)

Furthermore, the College gradually improves its research quality through collaborations. Also, our faculty staff are holding continuous collaboration with institutions and acclaimed professors in Greece and the USA, as the University of Crete, the Mediterranean Agronomic Institute of Chania, University of Florida and University of Maryland and UK. Here below is the research funding and some of the research incentives.

1. CDA has set a research budget of €100.000 per year and this amount may be increased if there is more need for research.

2. Develop a research performance evaluation system to encourage the teaching staff to carry out research activities.
 3. The research budget is set to €40,000 the projects on the Business research area
 4. The research budget is set to €30,000 Travel and Tourism
 5. Another €30,000 for other research areas.
 6. The research proposals will be sent to the Research centre for approval.
 7. All the academic members should undertake research each year and the research centre will keep records for each research output.
 8. Encourage faculty staff to participate to seminars/conferences and all expenses paid by the research centre.
 9. The lecturers of all CDA campuses to undertake an individual or a group research on their specialization areas.
 10. Lecturers will get teaching hours off for the research undertaken.
 11. An amount paid for a complete research is based on the research length and quality.
 12. Lecturers will get extra payment if they entered into EU Research Funding Projects.
 13. Establish links with both EU and International research bodies and academic institutions for cooperation and sharing of research information and also participating in EU research funding projects.
 14. Based on the lecturers' research output and publications each year, they will get a reward, promotion and remuneration increase.
2. Moreover, the College has set a research policy that the College's four campuses will be cooperating on research activities. CDA College is under negotiation for establishing research agreements with other Colleges in Cyprus with the objective of cooperating in research projects. The College also organizes research seminars to discuss research papers of others and gradually improve the quality of the research, between Nicosia and Limassol campuses and between Cypriot universities and Colleges. For this project the College will exchanged email lists with all the campuses and other Colleges for joint research seminars, peer-reviewed and research collaborations. It is well known to all our faculty members that the improvement of the quality of the research will also enhance the quality of teaching and the programme as a whole. Beginning immediately, our BA and MBA programmes will introduce seminars of theoretical and empirical progress. These seminars will share the interest between the presentation of faculty's research, but also practitioners will deliver their experience on the market and their valuable perception.
3. CDA College introduced clear and standardized research criteria so as to provide further research initiatives by the lecturers. Also, the College has set up research policies for further improvement of the research quality and the further cultivation and development of research culture at the College. Moreover, a number of our lecturers have attended and participated in local and international seminars where they presented and discussed their research papers. The College has introduced additional incentives in Nicosia, Limassol and Pafos campuses where faculty will share seminar email lists, organize joint research seminars and also peer- reviewing of their research papers. Nonetheless, all faculty staff articles/research are published on online research platforms where they have previously been peer-reviewed. (Appendix 8)

4. As per the EEC, at present, the half of the faculty members are Ph.D. holders in this program. Our faculty members are qualified, experienced and very passionate in their teaching and they are all aware and follow the latest academic developments in the dynamic business sector. The College provides all the opportunities and help to improve their qualifications. Some of them are already aiming to obtain a Ph.D. degree. CDA College recognizes that faculty development is to its advantage, as well as to the advantage of its faculty. Therefore the College management has already developed an incentive mechanism for teaching staff to ameliorate its teaching capabilities and performance. It is therefore ready to make commitments, financial and otherwise, in support faculty development.
5. Lastly the comments of the EEC are very positive and the 3rd section **Teaching Staff** is evaluated as Compliant by the EEC

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

- 3** Teaching staff recruitment and development
3.2 Teaching staff number and status
3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant

- Compliant
Compliant
Compliant

4. Students admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Findings

The evaluation committee discussed with 3 students from BBA and 3 students from MBA in parallel, inquiring why they decided to join C.D.A. College, describe their experiences and present to us what they liked and what they thought could be improved.

The students were open in expressing great satisfaction with the College. They listed the very good academic environment, the premises and the reputation of the College. Two more prime reasons they decided to join the College are the residence and lower fees. Location considerations appeared to play a key role.

The students highlighted that the College is accommodating when it needs to be, that they are satisfied with the modules and with the infrastructure of the College. They also noted that the College is active in helping them find jobs and in overall, they did not raise any serious red flags.

Strengths

1. C.D.A. College is very student-oriented. For instance, when needed the College aids students in finding accommodation.
2. The students are well taken care of by the College. For example, there is individual feedback by the teaching staff.
3. There is an evaluation on behalf of the students and the issues raised are considered seriously by faculty and administration.
4. The institution seems to perform well as the local students think they obtain good-quality education for their employability in Cyprus especially as it relates to tourism and public sector.
5. The College offers scholarships on a competitive basis and this truly stands out. It helps the College to attract students. Moreover, the College put attention to students with special needs.
6. They College responded fast and adequate to the digital transformation during Covid-19.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. The dissertation part of the curriculum is a strong component but perhaps the College could consider increasing the credits allocated to it to maybe 12. This could increase the motivation of the students to engage more heavily with research and perhaps lead them at an even more increased rate to pursue graduate studies abroad – a process that could further enhance the reputation of the College.

Response of the Higher Education Institution (HEI)

According to the EEC's findings above 4th section **Students admission, progression, recognition and certification** has many strengths and one minor weakness which has been fully satisfied as follows.

1. As per the current BA programme curriculum, the dissertation is in the last (8th semester) and it already carries 12 ECTS. The dissertation is considered a strong component for the graduation of the students. That is why it provides a motivation to the students and they undertake a research so as to finish their dissertation and be able to graduate. (Appendix 2)
2. The comments of the EEC are very positive and the 4th section **Students admission, progression, recognition and certification** is evaluated as Compliant by the EEC.

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

- | | |
|------------|---|
| 4 | Student admission, processes and criteria |
| 4.2 | Student progression |
| 4.3 | Student recognition |
| 4.4 | Student certification |

Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant

- | |
|-----------|
| Compliant |
| Compliant |
| Compliant |
| Compliant |

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Findings

A short description of the situation in the Higher Education Institution (HEI), based on elements from the application for external evaluation and on findings from the onsite visit.

The video we were provided before the evaluation on the College's building together with the interviews we conducted lead us to conclude that C.D.A College offers adequate resources to both students and faculty including access to library material, IT infrastructure and administrative support.

Indeed, the building appears to be state of the art and this is a strong plus for the College. Along the same lines, the library appears well equipped (e-books, journal database, etc), and our overall impression is that all resources are in place and fully functional.

In terms of human capital support, the College is performing well on that front as faculty appear to be provided what they need to fulfil their teaching duties and, in part and when applicable, their research endeavours.

Strengths

The leadership team appears committed to support faculty and students with resources when required.

1. The students are quite happy with the services they receive in terms of the lounge, the library and the like.
2. The personnel are well-equipped and professionals and do a good job with any assistance that a student may need, for example, IT, library, physiological issues, etc. Also, the staff seems to be aware of most of the problems foreign student can face.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

1. Access to more databases would be a welcome addition. This could be on subscription fee basis or through bilateral agreements with other Colleges and Universities in Cyprus.

Response of the Higher Education Institution (HEI)

According to the EEC's findings above 5th section **Learning resources and student support** has many strengths and one minor weakness which has been fully satisfied as follows.

1. Recently the College has established new agreements under annual subscription with two library databases, EBSCO and Emerald. Additionally, the College has library bilateral agreements with other Colleges and Universities in Cyprus. CDA College has fully equipped and enriched the library with updated editions and scientific journals, new electronic platforms, Databanks, Infotrack, upgraded VPN services for students and academic staff. Additionally, CDA College has four (4) libraries in Nicosia, Limassol, Larnaca and Pafos capitalizing on interlibrary loans. The students can immediately borrow

books from one library to the other. Moreover, the library is regularly upgraded with new editions of textbooks, magazines and e-databases. The new e-libraries EBSCO and Emerald has also many textbooks and scientific journals on all educational areas. Here below are detailed numbers of books in our libraries.

- The textbooks used in the course syllabi are updated regularly. The number of books in the Nicosia library is: 3,317
- There are 650 books on the BA Business sector.
- Most of the text books editions are from 2000 – 2019.
- Journals-Articles: 72, EBooks: 26, Databases: 25, General Information websites: 15, e-Libraries: 8.
- The total number of books in the other 3 libraries of the College (Limassol, Larnaca and Pafos) is 6,143.
- The College is a member of electronic libraries and databases.
- College has an interlibrary loan service with the University of Cyprus, Cyprus University of Technology and several Data Banks.
- The library is using DEWEY a worldwide known library classification system for organizing the library collections,
- OpenAbekt a cloud base system for cataloguing, loading and searching of books.
- There are 6 Computers with Internet connection and searching software
- Easy access to books, periodicals, scientific journals and other reference material
- SearchBank databases through its Internet facilities, stock of videos,
- Subscribed to the Travel and Tourism Online Platform: UNTWO e-Library <https://www.e-unwto.org/>
- Subscribed to the IFRS Foundation (International Financial Reporting Standards) so as to be-updated on the latest Accounting manuals and books.
- Connected with internet so that students will have free access.
- The library is regularly upgraded with new editions of textbooks, magazines and e-databases.
- CDA Library is also using e-libraries such EBSCO and Emerald and also students have VPN services through these e-learning platforms.
- “Moodle” the e-platform of CDA College has all the tutors teaching notes updated and available to all the students.

2. The comments of the EEC are very positive and the 5th section **Learning resources and student support** is evaluated as Compliant by the EEC.

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

Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant

5	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

6. Additional for distance learning programmes (ALL ESG)



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



N/A



7. Additional for doctoral programmes
(ALL ESG)

N/A



8. Additional for joint programmes
(ALL ESG)

N/A

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

C.D.A College appears to carry a strong reputation in part because of its selectivity in student admissions and small size. This is a strong plus. The BBA has a clear long-term vision and the committee applauds that vision. Education is student centred and the program is well structured, follows international standards and overall offers students with an array of services.

On the other hand, some suggestions provided above can be incorporated. These suggestions include to introduce a balanced structure of the program moving introductory courses to first years, including more economic and finance courses, reduce the core courses and increase as well as improve the electives giving axes of specialization. These along with some measures regarding strengthening collaborations with external academics, course outlines, etc.

Findings and strengths:

- A well-structured and organized program adhering to the ECTS standards.
- The program of study is well-designed and delivered in line with its objectives and the College's strategy.
- Management, teaching and administrative staff committed to the delivery of the program.
- The process of teaching and learning supports student needs and development.

Areas of improvement:

- Better structure of the program regarding introductory courses and ratio between core and electives
- Research can be intensified.

Response of the Higher Education Institution (HEI)

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) rated all modules of the program very positively and the College has already taken the appropriate actions as to implement, improve and correct all the mentioned weaknesses of the Program of Study.

There is full compliance to all the weaknesses raised by the EEC. In the above program, the College applies high quality criteria and is constantly upgraded in accordance with the regulations of the Agency for Quality Assurance and Certification of Higher Education (CY.Q.A.A).

1. As we have already replied above, CDA College has incorporated the suggestions raised by EEC in the Section 1, items 2 and 3 and in the sub-comments a, b, c. for better structure. The College has incorporated the following changes on the structure of the programme.
 - a. The introductory courses are moved to the first years of studies. (Appendix 2)
 - BUS235 Introduction to Finance is moved from 3rd to 2nd semester
 - MGT323 Introduction to Management is moved from 5th to 3rd semester
 - b. The elective courses are increased so as to have a more entrepreneurship/ business and management background same as with other international programs. (Appendix 2)
 - c. BUS313 the International Finance is now compulsory not an elective.
4. Additionally, the reduction of the compulsory courses and the introduction of more business/finance/economics-oriented electives, strengthen the program and make it more oriented not only to the local market but the foreign market as well. These new business/finance electives courses give a specialized orientation to the program and it also makes the program more competitive. (Appendix 2)
 - Addition of BUS501 Innovation & Entrepreneurship (Appendix 3)
 - Addition of BUS502 Change Management (Appendix 4)
 - Addition of BUS503 Business Economics (Appendix 5)
 - Addition of BUS504 Managerial Finance (Appendix 6)
2. Moreover, the research is intensified as mentioned above in Section 3. CDA College aims at excellence in research and is fully committed to developing and promoting research activity. CDA College strongly supports and encourages faculty staff's research activities. That is why in 2016, the College has established the Research Centre "Aristotelis" so as to provide an independent platform for researchers and to promote the College research culture. The College has also set a research policy where the College encourages and supports faculty research activities, publications, attend conferences, seminars, workshops through financial support, reduction of teaching load, and other means as per the research incentives policy. (Appendix 7)

As can be seen from our response, we have already taken immediate action and adopt the EEC's suggestions and recommendations for further improvement of the program.

CDA College will strengthen its position in the education market by further highlighting the strengths of the College and the curriculum. The College firmly believes that the program "BA Business Administration, 4 Years Plus on Optional Foundation Year, Bachelor" has a lot to offer to the Higher Education and to the vital business sector. We once again point out the very positive evaluation of the program by the EEC which was largely compatible / compliant with the required standards and the full compliance and implementation of all the minor weaknesses raised by the EEC. Finally, we once again point out the positive evaluation of the program by the EEC which was graded as compatible (Compliant) in all modules, full compliance with the weaknesses raised by the EEC and we look forward to your positive response.



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

