

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 13/10/2020

External Evaluation Report (Programmatic)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
C.D.A. College
- **Town:** Limassol
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** Business
- **Department/ Sector:** Business
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακό Στη Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων

In English:

Masters of Business Administration

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status**
New programme: No
Currently operating: Yes



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. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

Following the invitation by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA), the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) had the opportunity to evaluate the Masters of Business Administration (MBA) program, offered by the CDA College Cyprus, based in Limassol.

The EEC consisted of three academics (i.e., Professor Kousenidis Dimitrios, Associate Professor Dionisis Philippas, and Associate Professor Simos Chari) with relevant disciplinary expertise to business administration and a student representative (Ms Marilia Mateidou).

Due to the on-going COVID-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, the evaluation for the Masters of Business Administration took place online on the 8th of October 2020. Prior to the evaluation, the EEC was supplied with a thorough internal evaluation report. On the day of the evaluation, the EEC met with: the senior management team of the college, academic faculty responsible for delivering the MBA, administrative and other support staff, and students representatives.

During the meeting, the senior management team of CDA presented the institution and the MBA program to the committee. After the presentations, the EEC had the opportunity to ask questions and collect further information. More specific, the EEC asked questions related to the program (e.g., its structure, delivery, assessments etc), faculty, and the institution more broadly. Additional evidence where also provided (e.g., report of the internal Quality Assurance committee) when it was required. We found the discussions to be fruitful and informative.

Given the online nature of the evaluation, the EEC did not have the opportunity to visit the premises of CDA in Limassol. However, the college provided links with video presentations of their facilities which were deemed sufficient for the purposes of this evaluation.

The external evaluation committee would like to thank all parties involved for their cooperation and support during the online evaluation. The committee would also like to express its gratitude to Mr. Lefkios Neophytou, the CYQAA coordinator, for his efficient way of managing the process.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Dimitrios Kousenidis	Professor	Aristotle University of Thessaloniki
Dionisis Phillipas	Associate Professor	ESSCA School of Management
Simos Chari	Associate Professor	Alliance Manchester Business School
Marilia Mateidou	Student	University of Cyprus

C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*
- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
 - (a) sub-areas*
 - (b) standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
 - (c) some questions that EEC may find useful.*
- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*
- *Under each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

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.

Strengths

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*
- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding the programme of study as a whole.*
- **The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.**

1. Study programme and study programme's design and development (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

Sub-areas

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

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
 - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
 - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (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)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
 - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
 - *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*

- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

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.

In general, the EEC finds that the Master in Business Administration is a well thought and nicely developed program. The evaluation committee enquired and received information regarding entry criteria, learning outcomes, the student-centred learning approach of CDA, the delivery of course units, assessment procedures, and pass rates. We were also provided information about the employability and career path of graduates.

The EEC noted that the intended learning outcomes and objectives of the program are clearly outlined and well communicated to perspective students. The EEC finds the admission criteria to be adequate and in line with those of other similar programs in the Cypriot market. The program consists of twelve (i.e., 10 compulsory and 2 electives) courses and requires a minimum of 90 ECTS credits to graduate. The expected student workload in ECTS and years of completion (i.e., 1.5 or 2 years) are clearly defined and communicated and the EEC believes that the ECTS workload is along the expected lines.

The EEC identified that there are several internal policies and procedures in place that assure the quality of the programme under evaluation. Evidence of quality assurance meetings, as part of an ongoing review and development, were provided by the college. Any changes to the program's structure are subject to a formal institutional approval process. Moreover, CDA's policies are clear when it comes to setting the standards across all aspects of the program (e.g., curriculum development, assessment policies, ECTS credits etc).

Finally, the evaluation committee finds that the program of study reflects the purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe.

Strengths

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

It was apparent from the internal report and from the data gathered, that the faculty members teaching on the Master of Business Administration, are highly qualified individuals with years of expertise in their respective fields. The faculty delivers the program with a student-centred learning approach.

The faculty uses a diverse set of methods for assessing the twelve modules of the programme which facilitates the development of different soft and hard skills. From the information gathered, it is apparent that the faculty/student ratio favours the customisation of the programme to the needs of students. The number of the students in the class is distributed equally among locals and foreigners which can result in diversity.

One of the strengths of the college itself is its internal quality assurance committee. The EEC noted that the college follows extensive policies and procedures to ensure the quality and smooth delivery of its programmes. Finally, the evaluation committee believes that the CDA is devoted to developing and promoting research activities among its members. The 'Aristotle Research Centre' was developed for these purposes.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

While the program of Master of Business Administration is well designed and structured, the EEC believes that the CDA and teaching team could consider ways with which the program can be improved.

Looking at the structure of the program, the evaluation committee is concerned with the potential overlap between ‘Financial Management’ (i.e., delivered in the second semester) and ‘Financial & Managerial Accounting’ (i.e., delivered in the first semester). The evaluation committee suggests the CDA and coordinator of MBA to consider moving ‘Financial Management’, which is a more general course unit, to the first semester and replace ‘Financial & Managerial Accounting’ with a ‘Accounting & Finance’.

Also, the committee believes that important aspects of Business Administration, like ‘Operations Management’, and ‘International Business’ are not blended in the current curriculum of the Master of Business Administration. The EEC suggests that the college should consider blending ‘Operations Management’, and ‘International Business’ in current running course units to minimize drastic restructuring. For instance, the committee believes that ‘Operations Management’ can be taught alongside ‘Total Quality Management’ or ‘Marketing’.

The MBA program is offering a list of seven specialized elective units that the student can choose two from and personalize his/her program of study. However, the EEC would like to point out that the list of elective units lacks electives from the specialization areas of ‘Economics’, ‘Finance’, and ‘Entrepreneurship’. Electives in such areas of specialization could make the MBA of CDA stand out from competing Colleges and Universities.

Finally, the EEC suggests that the ‘Final Project’ of an MBA should have the format of either a ‘consultancy project’, or ‘feasibility study’ or that of a ‘New Business Venture’. The final project of an MBA should be as practical as possible in order for students to apply the knowledge gained.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Partially compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

2.2 Practical training

2.3 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*

- *The criteria for and method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

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.

Overall, the EEC finds that the process of teaching and learning at CDA to be well-structured and effective. The program coordinator, the faculty team, and the administrative supporting staff are all committed to the effective delivery of the MBA programme.

The educational process at CDA appears to be flexible and seems to support students' individual and social development. There is evidence that module leaders meet regularly (e.g., beginning of each semester) and coordinate their teaching approaches and modes of delivery, and material. This is done systematically to avoid overlaps and repetition among course units. The EEC notes that the assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance are clear and well-communicated. Evidence of structured and well-organized taught material have been provided to the evaluation committee.

Finally, the evaluation committee believes that there is a process in place that monitors the latest field developments and updates the MBA programme when is deemed necessary. Evaluations such as the one performed on the 8th of October are an opportunity for CDA and the programme director to reflect on what is necessary for the program and its further improvement. To this extent the EEC has provided a list of suggestions and recommendations. From the data gathered, the MBA program also benefits from regular module-level amendments and changes. In addition, the EEC believes that the internal quality assurance procedures and guidelines ensure the effective and smooth implementation of the programme.

Strengths

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

Overall, the EEC believes that the MBA program compares favourably with similar programmes in the industry and the Cypriot market.

The pedagogical methods, tools and material used in the teaching and learning processes are the expected ones. The evaluation committee notes that overall delivery of the programme meets the expectations set by modern practices.

The program is fully managed by the faculty in place which can efficiently cover the current needs of the program. The EEC identifies the willingness of the teaching faculty regarding the implementation of student-centred learning approach.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

The EEC suggests the CDA and the program coordinator to consider appointing academics and practitioners as external advisors. Such appointments could play a pivotal role in disseminating and encouraging good practices. For example, external academic appointments could inform future curriculum reviews and improvements. Whereas external practitioners could provide insights as to the skills needed to possess for a successful future career in higher management positions. The latter is crucial for MBA students especially. The committee also suggests industrial visits to strengthen practical training.

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	Partially compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*

- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How are the members of the teaching staff supported with regard to the development of their teaching skills? How is feedback given to members of the teaching staff regarding their teaching results and teaching skills?*
- *How is the teaching performance assessed? How does their teaching performance affect their remuneration, evaluation and/or selection?*
- *Is teaching connected with research?*
- *Does the HEI involve visiting teaching staff from other HEIs in Cyprus and abroad?*
- *What is the number, workload, qualifications and status of the teaching staff (rank, full/part timers)?*
- *Is student evaluation conducted on the teaching staff? If yes, have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*

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 evaluation committee noted that the program is supported by a well-qualified faculty (i.e., all members of the teaching staff have PhDs). It is evident that there is good fit between the teaching team's qualifications and expertise with the course units they deliver. A discussion with the faculty showed that there is a clear workload policy when it comes to teaching allocation. The committee believes that this fair and consistently applied

From the evidence gathered, it is apparent that the teaching staff is also involved with research activities (e.g., research publications and conference presentations). The EEC identified that there is a synergy between teaching and research. Such teaching and research spill-overs can enhance the students' learning experience.

The EEC also observed that members of staff have been employed for several years. This makes it possible to efficiently and effectively operationalise the program's curriculum.

Strengths

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

From the information gathered, the EEC identified that the college has a budget (i.e., 100,000€) available to support staffs' research, training, and professional development. The EEC also considers the work of the Aristotelis' and the concept of a center like this is to be a strength for CDA College.

The evaluation committee had a long, open, and honest discussion about the working conditions and how the faculty really feels about their working environment and employer. The general sentiment among the members of the committee is that there is a positive and collegial environment at CDA. The college offers favourable working conditions for its members and supports staff for professional and personal development. The faculty met, expressed their overall satisfaction with the resources and time available to meet their personal goals and objectives.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Overall, the EEC is satisfied with the human resources supporting the program. One suggestion that the EEC would like to make for further improvement, is that the college needs to set clear rules on career progression and promotion and disseminate these the faculty.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

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

4.1 Student admission

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

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 student admission requirements have been found to be clear and in line with the criteria set by the national HE framework. These are clearly communicated by the college to prospective students.

The EEC observed that the CDA and the MBA program have policies and mechanisms in place to ensure development of students. Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are also in place.

Strengths

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

The EEC identified that the college and the program are student oriented. From our discussions with two currently enrolled students on the program and one that has recently graduated the program, the committee observed that the students are overall satisfied with CDA and the program itself. The students promoted the academic environment of the college and spoke positively about the teaching abilities of the academic staff.

In addition, the evaluation committee noted that CDA college offers scholarships (i.e., bursaries) on a competitive basis and that the college welcomes students with special needs/abilities.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Overall, the evaluation committee is satisfied regarding student admission, progression, recognition and certification. No further suggestions.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

5.2 Physical resources

5.3 Human support resources

5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

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.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and travel restrictions, the EEC did not have the opportunity to visit the premises of CDA college in Limassol. The view of the EEC related to facilities, teaching, physical and human support resources is primarily based on the internal report, the videos links provided, and the discussions with CDA's stakeholders. Overall, the EEC believes that CDA offers adequate resources and a wide range of services to both students and teaching staff (e.g., access to library material, IT infrastructure and administrative support). This especially applies to the library facilities

that feature a wide range of sources (e.g., books, e-books, journal databases, etc) from reputable publishers. In terms of human capital support, the college is performing well on that front as well; there is an adequate number of experienced and well-educated staff that supports the smooth operations of the college and the program.

Strengths

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

The EEC from the data gathered believed that the leadership team of college is committed in providing quality programs and supporting staff with the necessary resources needed to perform their duties.

In terms of personnel and staffing, the EEC also notes the ethos and zealous of the supporting staff to help students of any ethnic background and ability/disability.

From the discussion with the faculty and supporting staff, the committee noted that the college was able to migrate teaching activities online when circumstances related to the pandemic dictated so. This is a testimony to the resilience of the Institution and its people.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

NA

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	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)

Sub-areas

- 6.1 Distance learning philosophy and methodology
- 6.2 Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF
- 6.3 Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities
- 6.4 Study guides

6.1 Distance learning philosophy and methodology

Standards

- *The distance learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Feedback processes for students in relation to written assignments are set.*
- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on distance learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*

6.2 Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF

Standards

- *Twelve weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The distance learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
 - *Simulations in virtual environments*
 - *Problem solving scenarios*
 - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
 - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
 - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
 - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for distance learning, which is responsible for the support of the distance learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*

6.3 Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities

Standards

- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
 - *among students*
 - *between students and teaching staff*
 - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students and teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of distance learning.*

6.4 Study guides

Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with distance learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
 - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
 - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
 - *Weekly outline of set activities and exercises and clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
 - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
 - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*
 - *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
 - *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the nature of the programme compatible with distance learning delivery?*
- *How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- *How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- *Are the academics qualified to teach in the distance learning programme?*

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.

N/A

Strengths

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

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

N/A

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Distance learning philosophy and methodology	Not applicable
6.2	Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF	Not applicable
6.3	Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities	Not applicable
6.4	Study guides	Not applicable

7. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

7.1 Selection criteria and requirements

7.2 Proposal and dissertation

7.3 Supervision and committees

7.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

7.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *the minimum word limit*
 - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

7.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*
 - *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
 - *support for writing research papers*

- *participation in conferences*
- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?*

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.

N/A

Strengths

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

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

N/A

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
7.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
7.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
7.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

8. Additional for joint programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 8.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement**
- 8.2 The joint programme**

8.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement

Standards

- *The joint programme is offered in accordance with legal frameworks of the relevant national higher education systems.*
- *The terms and conditions of the joint programme are laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement in particular covers the following issues:*
 - *Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme*
 - *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation, including funding, sharing of costs and income, resources for mobility of staff and students*
 - *Admission and selection procedures for students*
 - *Mobility of students and teaching staff*
 - *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures*
 - *Handling of different semester periods, if existent*

8.2 The joint programme

Standards

- *The partner universities apply joint internal quality assurance processes.*
- *The joint programme is offered jointly, involving all cooperating universities in the design, delivery and further development of the programme.*
- *Aims and learning outcomes are clearly stated, including a joint syllabus, language policy, as well as an account of the intended added value of the programme.*
- *Study counselling and mobility plans are efficient and take into account the needs of different kinds of students.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Does the joint study programme conform to the requirements of a study programme offered at the specific level?*
- *Is there a system that assures the quality of joint provision and guarantees that the aims of the programme are met?*

- Do the mechanisms for ensuring the quality of the joint study programme take into consideration the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)? Are they adopted by all the universities involved?
- Is the division of responsibilities in ensuring quality clearly defined among the partner universities?
- Is relevant information about the programme, e.g. admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures, well documented and published by taking into account the specific needs of students?
- What is the added value of the programme of study?
- Is there a sustainable funding strategy among the partner universities? Explain.

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.

N/A

Strengths

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

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

N/A

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
8.1	Legal framework and cooperation agreement	Not applicable
8.2	The joint programme	Not applicable

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 programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

The EEC found the college and the MBA program to be along the expected national and international practices. The program of MBA has been running successfully for a number of years now and it meets the learning objectives set and students expectations. Despite the good design of the program, the EEC believes that there are further improvements, pertaining to the curriculum and its structure, that can be made. We advise the faculty to take into consideration the feedback provided above and adopt necessary changes. The EEC believes that these changes could further strengthen and improve the program and make it more competitive in a an already saturated small market like Cyprus.

The committee would like to express its gratitude to the staff and leadership of CDA college for their support and their professionalism during the online evaluation.

We remain at the disposal of CYQAA for any clarification, if necessary.



E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature	
Dimitrios Kousenidis		
Dionisis Philippas		
Chimos Hari <u>Simos Chari</u>		
Marilia Mateidou		

Date: 13/10/2020