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External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:** Cyprus College
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Διπλωμα στη Διοικηση Επιχειρησεων

In English:

Diploma in Business Administration

- **Language(s) of instruction:** Greek
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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, via a Zoom meeting, the Diploma in Business Administration at Cyprus College. The meeting was coordinated by Mr. Avramis Despotis and took place on April 4, 2021.

We were supplied with a number of documents beforehand which included the Quality Insurance Policy, the program of study and the course guides for the offered modules. At the committee's request, we were supplied with additional information after the virtual meeting. These included the PowerPoint presentation of the College and the program, samples of course notes and samples of exams.

The committee had the opportunity to meet with the senior management of the College, the academic faculty, support staff and students. During the meetings, the committee attended presentations organized by the College related to the institution and the program. The EEC had the opportunity to ask questions related to the program, faculty, and the institution more broadly and ask additional evidence when it was required. Given that the evaluation took place online, the EEC did not have the opportunity to visit the College's premises. Still, comprehensive video presentations were provided which were considered 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 faculty, administration and school leadership were generous with their time and we appreciate their (virtual) hospitality. The committee would also like to thank the CYQAA coordinator for managing the process both efficiently and effectively.

In broad strokes, we found the presentations, the discussions, and the documentation to be helpful in enabling us to understand the program structure, its management, and the wider context. As we detail below, we identified strengths of the program but also significant points of attention which we strongly recommend to be addressed before the program is accredited.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Ernst Verwaal	Professor	KU Leuven
Pernille Eskerod	Professor	Webster Vienna Private University
Christos Kolympiris	Associate Professor	University of Warwick
Lito Zumaridi	MBA candidate	University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

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.

The Diploma in Business Administration program is a 2-year, full-time program and requires 120 ECTS. The program is meant to supply both practical and theoretical knowledge to students which can serve them well in their professional careers, be it as they enter employment or as they continue and upgrade their current posts. Importantly, upon completion of the Diploma, graduates can transfer into the 3rd year of equivalent Bachelor's programs. Indeed, this is an opportunity taken up by several Diploma holders.

The structure of the programme affords significant improvements. The contribution of each module to the core competences that are to be developed is not clear and how each module builds on knowledge acquired in previous modules is questionable. The sequence of modules does not map clearly on the learning outcomes and overall, the program comes across as rather ad hoc. A few examples of shortcomings along with corresponding suggestions:

- Statistics is offered in the fourth semester while it should be moved in the 1st semester, as it is a foundational course.
- It is not clear why you choose to include introduction to sociology in the fourth semester.
- There is space to merge courses so that you free up space for more temporary topics such as corporate social responsibility or leadership.
 - For example, introduction to financial accounting could be merged with introduction to managerial accounting and intermediate English, which is offered in the first semester, could be merged with advanced English, which is offered in the third semester. Along the same lines, Introduction to Sociology and Introduction to Psychology could be packaged into a larger course similar to stand-alone behavioral economics courses.
- Given Cyprus' international outlook, consider whether Cyprus business law could become part of a broader module covering business law across relevant geographies.

Besides shortcomings with regards to the structure of the program, the committee identified additional points of attention:

- Only a limited number of instructors hold a doctoral degree. This is not a shortcoming *per se* as industry experience for instance can also be quite relevant for students. But advanced training in the form of a PhD is also relevant and therefore the College, in the medium to long run, should take this into account.
- Importantly, the program relies heavily on one instructor who delivers roughly 30% of all modules. This is an excessive amount which likely limits the exposure of students to different expertise, views, and the like. At the same time, it can also limit the opportunity for the said lecturer to gain deeper knowledge in a more confined set of areas. As such, the committee strongly suggests imposing in maximum number of modules per faculty in the program. For instance, this could be three modules.

The admission criteria are clear but not of very high standards. In the long run, this may stand in the way of the college to maintain a strong reputation. More practically, adapting somewhat higher standards could be aligned with the suggestions above to merge a number of modules as it will create a more homogeneous cohort of students. Presently, the heterogeneity of students in terms of educational background partly necessitates the offering of

multiple modules on the same topic (for example English) and this, as discussed above, limits the number of modules, such as leadership, which could lift the overall quality of the program.

Quality assurance mechanisms are present and fairly well-aligned with international standards. There is a number of quality assurance mechanisms 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. Having said that, there's no external peer evaluations and this is something to be considered.

All in all, we encourage the college to restructure the program significantly not only in terms of the modules offered and their sequence but also in terms of who delivers which module.

Strengths

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

- The offering of afternoon classes. These could accommodate students with full time jobs or/and those with inflexible schedules.
- The student-centred approach of the program which allows students close communication with instructors.
- The solid effort in the quality assurance of the program including an internal quality committee which is responsible for ensuring that the program runs smoothly and in line with learning goals.

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.

- As noted above, the committee strongly suggests updates in the program structure including:
 - bundling the two English courses together.
 - repackaging the sociology and psychology courses into a behavioral economics offering.
 - move introduction to statistics in semester 1.
 - making the introductory course on IT proficiencies more advanced.
 - introduce more contemporary topics into the curriculum such as corporate social responsibility.
 - overall ensure that the knowledge provided in the previous semester serves as a foundation for knowledge required for following semesters.
 - offer electives.
- Following mostly British tradition, the program could benefit from employing external experts (called external examiners in the UK) to validate its offerings, provide feedback to course and program material and overall push for improvements and refinements when not picked up by internal faculty. Indeed, competing Colleges in Cyprus have started to employ such strategies.

- While the committee views the flexibility of the program to allow its graduates to transition into the Bachelor's program as a strong component, it also notes that there might be space for strategic manoeuvring from the students' side. Students may be entering the Diploma even if they do plan to study for the Bachelor's as a means of a) easier admission and b) perhaps somewhat better chances to succeed in the courses they enrol into the first 4 semesters as the equivalent courses in the Bachelor's program may be more demanding.
- Enforce a maximum number of courses in the program per faculty member. We suggest 3 courses.
- Strengthen the admission criteria.
- Following international standards, the committee also urges the college to consider offering more elective courses.
- In addition, it would be beneficial if more processes were in place for instructors to communication across courses to prevent over-laps and improve integration.

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	Partially compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Non-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 and student-centred teaching methodology

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 the 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.

The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance are clear and well-communicated to the students. There are well-documented academic procedures involving the Head of the Business Department, the teaching staff and the students. The management of the program of study does not appear to encounter any problems and the College successfully applies the ECTS. The College has modern educational technologies which are also conducive to a positive student experience.

While the course guides list required readings out of textbooks, students are often not required to buy those textbooks relying instead on notes delivered by the instructors. Generally, the notes are informative, but it should become clear to the students that these notes are the so-called required readings. Textbooks could be listed as supplementary readings. The notes and other teaching material should also be more reflective of recent developments in the corresponding scientific fields.

The program could also gain from the modules engaging the students more in group work and having more guest lecturers delivering sessions.

Strengths

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

- A number of committees as well as a dedicated program quality administrator to ensure proper delivery of module material.
- Through the Cyprus-wide library network, students have the opportunity to access databases that would be difficult to access otherwise. This is particularly relevant when designing programs meant to offer key resources to students.
- 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 is of relatively small size and 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. They have also indicated that communication with faculty members and the administrative team is open and part of the culture of the staff.
- Finally, an innovation of the program is the option of graduates to enroll as 3rd year students in the Bachelor's degree. This is similar in spirit to the move from community colleges to universities in the US and the committee applauds the College for that innovation.

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 option to transition Diploma graduates in the 3rd year of the Bachelor's program is a strong plus, it is not entirely clear how the transition may differ for students of different backgrounds. The committee suggest for clear guidelines to be published.
- The College should improve its support regarding the professional development of faculty in relation to staying up to date with teaching methods and research that can later be incorporated into the teaching provision.
- The College should give more consideration to the teaching and learning design. Required readings should be flagged as such clearly, students should be clearer on how pedagogical methods relate to the achievement of the intended learning outcomes and the like.
- Overall, the program could be improved considerably. The intended learning objectives of the program should conform linearly to the aims and objectives of the program and they should be effectively communicated to the students. Also, the structure of the program as well as the learning mechanisms should be appropriate for the effective delivery of the learning objectives.

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	Partially compliant
2.2	Practical training	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.

As a primarily teaching focused college, Cyprus College, has, understandably, focused its recruiting efforts towards faculty with mainly teaching responsibilities. As a result, the majority of faculty who contribute to the program in question, are not PhD holders. They typically have strong industrial experience, and, in many ways, they mainly draw from that experience when delivering modules.

In line with the observation above, opportunities for developments in terms of research are rather limited. Broadly, the faculty are clear on criteria needed to achieve in order to progress within the college and receive both formal and informal assistance towards that end. The college does not offer sabbaticals and we found interactions with research active faculty outside the college to be rather limited. All in all, the committee found only limited evidence of research feeding into teaching.

The majority of faculty who teach at the program are permanent employees of Cypress college and this is in line with formal requirements.

Strengths

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

- The College appears to have reasonable teaching loads.

- The HR procedures and guidelines for promotion are clearly communicated.
- The faculty members have shown their satisfaction with the working conditions and College's environment. They take teaching seriously.

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 College should engage with research more strongly as a means to deepen the expertise of each faculty within their domains and therefore allow them to feed that expertise into their teaching. Engagement with research could manifest in different ways:

- One, hiring decisions should place more weight in having a PhD.
- Two, promote existing faculty to engage more heavily with research. This could for instance be via sabbaticals, reductions in teaching loads when conducting research and via incorporation of research activities in the criteria for promotion within the college.
- Three, infuse the college with a mentality that favors research. For example, you could develop a seminar series with external research active faculty from other colleges and universities in Cyprus and elsewhere. Similarly, you could launch internal research awaydays in hopes of developing research collaborations between existing faculty.

The committee also noted the relatively small number of faculty who teach in the program. This is a point of concern. You should ensure that students are exposed to a larger number of faculty members.

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	Partially compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Non-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, processes and criteria

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 evaluation committee discussed with students inquiring why they decided to join Cyprus College, follow the Diploma, 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. The students highlighted that the College is accommodating when it needs to be (i.e., the provision of afternoon course), that they were satisfied with the modules and with the infrastructure of the College. They also noted that the family-like culture of the College, attributed their choice to attend Cyprus College to its reputation and overall, they did not raise any red flags.

The admission criteria are rather low as in essence what is required is having a high school diploma. This may lead to problems not only in terms of the college's reputation but also in terms of having a student population that is too heterogenous in terms of educational background and achievement. In those cases, it is difficult for module material to be at a challenging yet achievable level for all students.

Strengths

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

1. Cyprus College is very student oriented. For instance, students noted that they had relatively easy access to faculty.
2. The students are well taken care of by the College. For example, there is individual feedback by the teaching staff (an advantage of a small program).
3. There is an evaluation on behalf of the students and the issues raised feed into the quality assurance committee.

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 level of admission criteria should be raised.
- The College should ensure the safe transfer from Diploma to other programmes without overlapping courses, material, etc.

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	Partially 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.

The video we were provided before the evaluation on the College’s building together with the interviews we conducted lead us to conclude that Cyprus 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, and our overall impression is that all resources are in place and fully functional.

Strengths

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

1. The leadership team appears committed to support faculty and students with resources when required.
2. The students are quite happy with the services they receive in terms of the lounge, the library and the like.
3. Access to a wide range of databases via the library.

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 uncertainty about ‘face to face’ teaching post-Covid19 faced by all education institutions means that the College will need to ensure that it has ‘fail safe’ contingencies in place to ensure that students can access materials and learning remotely at any times when this is necessary.

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 doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements**
- 6.2 Proposal and dissertation**
- 6.3 Supervision and committees**

6.1 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*

6.2 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.*

6.3 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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Choose answer
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
6.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer

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 committee thanks Cyprus College for a thorough submission. Faculty and staff made themselves available to the committee and engaged flexibly during the remote visit. We also appreciate the fact that the College followed up with suggestions for additional material after the online visit. Overall, the committee was provided with all necessary material and found the interactions with the College representatives constructive.

As noted above, while it is clear that education is student centered, the program should be restructured in a number of ways. The committee has offered concrete suggestions on how to improve the program including the sequencing of modules in a more linear way, and the offering of modules of more contemporary nature. The committee also offered suggestions on the role of each faculty member in the program so that students have the opportunity to interact with and learn from faculty of different expertise. Along the same lines, the college is strongly encouraged to engage more strongly with research as a means to generate synergies between research and teaching.

Students appear to be happy with the College and this is noted by the committee. However, as alluded above, there is space for improvement on the student experience front as well.

In the committee's assessment, the program needs generous restructuring before accreditation.



E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Ernst Verwaal	
Pernille Eskerod	
Christos Kolympiris	
Lito Zymaride	
Click to enter Name	
Click to enter Name	

Date: 08/04/2021