

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: Date.

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
CIIM
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακό στη Διοίκηση Ανθρώπινου Δυναμικού και
Οργανωσιακή Συμπεριφορά

In English:

MSc in Human Resource Management & Organisational
Behaviour

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws of 2015 to 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.1.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

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

Findings

The CIIM meets the standards for quality assurance. It has a clear quality assurance system that is publicly available. Many of the stipulated values and goals of the business school are evident in the programme design. Academic integrity is safeguarded through use of Turnitin software.

The Director regularly engages in benchmarking activities, and a breadth of relevant HRM-related content is offered to students. Other stakeholders are involved in the design of the programme, notably, CyHRMA. For the most part, the content corresponds to the number of ECTS. Although few students take the opportunity to undertake an internship, these are readily available.

The design of the programme ensures smooth student progression (i.e. modular approach). There is an inevitable tension between the modular approach and having a coherent approach, i.e. logical sequence of modules. However, the use of prerequisites ensures that students have the requisite knowledge and abilities before embarking on advanced subjects.

The qualification is clearly specified and communicated and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education. The programme is kept up to date through regular interactions with practitioners. The programme meets the standards required for Public Information and Information Management.

Strengths

The CIIM is a well-established institution with strong links to industry and to the international academic community. Clear and compelling examples were provided to show the benefits of industry contacts for both students and the institution. Furthermore, CIIM regularly engages in accreditation activities that prompts its leadership to reconsider the structure and content of programmes. A significant strength of the HRM programme is the benchmarking activities, and the corresponding breadth of information covered across relevant HRM domains.

The committee also took note of the structured manner in which changes to the programme design are initiated and formally approved. The Committee commends the new Programme Director for increasing the ECTS credit weighting to include more emphasis on sustainability and CSR, features that align with the vision of the institute.

The modular structure was praised by the students, as it provides flexibility. The website is also clear, with easily accessible information for prospective students. The Moodle sites were also well organised and consistent in formatting.

The students also praised their ability to apply their knowledge in the workplace. The positive feedback from students was a particular strength.

Areas for improvement

One of CIIM's values is "community service" and we applaud the new Programme Director's plan to emphasise this value through increasing the credit weighting to CSR/sustainability. However, the notion of

“community service” implies action, and we therefore encourage the Programme Director to consider ways to incorporate active engagement in community service within the revised CSR module (e.g., volunteering).

CIIM Response: We welcome the suggestion of the committee to incorporate a community service component as part of our curriculum. Therefore, in addition to the expanded course on CSR which allows for a more in-depth examination of ethics, CSR and sustainability issues, the new Programme Director is introducing a 3 ECTS elective course in “HR & Sustainability” which includes a community service component. The course examines the role of HR in sustainability efforts as they pertain to the triple bottom line (profit, people, planet) and the 17 Sustainability Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations. This elective course allows the programme to focus even more on sustainability issues as they pertain to HR professionals and further aligns it with the overall vision of the institute. The new Programme Director has engaged in discussions with the Executive Director of CIIM about community partnerships. CIIM already has links with many national NGOs including the largest volunteer network in Cyprus “Together Cyprus” and we are currently exploring ways in which this partnership can be further capitalized to increase the active engagement in community service – not only in relation to the MSc HRM & OB programme, but also CIIM in general.

We would like to highlight an initiative that has already taken place in which the new Programme Director and current MSc HRM & OB students delivered a free webinar on “Interviewing Skills” to job seekers. This event was part of the “Volunteerism Week” organized by the Pancyprian Volunteerism Coordinative Council and took place on Friday, December 4 2020. We have already renewed our commitment to participate in this event next year. *[See Attachments 1 & 2]*

Finally, we would like to stress CIIM’s commitment to community service by outlining a few of the actions that have taken place during the past year:

- Pancyprian Volunteerism We “adopt” families for Christmas and Easter
- Pancyprian Volunteerism We motivate our students to become volunteers
- Voluntary Blood Donation
- Hope for Children Last years’ CIIM Christmas party We purchased blue noses for students and Alumni Christmas Gifts
- Karaiskakio Donation of Bone Marrow. Students and Alumni offered sample of Bone Marrow.
- Gay Parade posters for the advertisement of the Gay Parade events
- Marching at Europa Donna Cyprus
- SPAVO event for the general public for Domestic Violence
- Advertisements at special magazines for people with mobility problems
- Free webinars through the year especially during the outbreak of the covid-19 pandemic in order to support and consult businesses and the overall economic situation in Cyprus.
- Free open lectures
- Free Lectures organized at schools for the purpose of career placement advising
- Free consulting to our students and graduates with the aim to help them in regards to their business development depending on the need.
- Partners and supporters of Together Cyprus in all activities related to the 17 goals of sustainable development, especially for Let’s do it Cyprus

- Collecting Plastic Caps. CIIM and EYzO have an established collaboration since 2016. CIIM Students and employees participate in the collecting of plastic caps which are used to sponsor wheel chairs to those in need.

Although a wide range of HRM-related topics are addressed, the new Director may consider how industrial relations (labour-management relations) is approached in the curriculum. Especially salient today because of COVID-19, the committee also noticed an absence of health and safety and wellness. The new flexible content module that is being proposed could ‘test drive’ some of these topics.

CIIM Response: Industrial relations (labour-management relations) is addressed in the existing course HR555- Labour Law & Employment Relations. The learning outcomes are included here for your convenience. *[See Attachment 3 for the course outline]*

HR555 Course Learning Outcomes:

1. Explain the core principles that underpin employment law as it applies in Cyprus and the EU in general, including common law, their purpose, origin and practical implications
2. Identify and critically evaluate the roles and functions of the different parties to control and manage the employment relationship.
3. Advise fellow colleagues in an enterprise about significant legal implications of decisions, plans or proposals in the employment field.
4. Determine the appropriate organisational response when legal action on the part of a worker or employee is anticipated, threatened or taken.

Issues of employee health and safety as they pertain to labour legislation are also covered as part of the same course (i.e., HR555).

The whole programme is recognizing the impact of COVID-19 and the direct implications it has for the field of HR and we inject that in our courses. Class discussions across the curriculum tackle the impact of COVID-19 and when feasible assignments ask students to research and reflect on the impact of the pandemic on the given topic. We welcome the suggestion of the committee to ‘test drive’ some of these topics as part of the new flexible content module that we want to offer. To this end, as part of a Special Topics in Management course that was delivered in January 2021, students were asked as part of a group project assignment to research the implications the pandemic had on the overall employee experience including issues of employee well-being. *[See Attachment 4 – Course Assignment Description]*

Recognizing the added stress and psychological strain students are experiencing during the pandemic, the new Programme Director organized an online workshop #IamRemarkable for our working women students who tend to juggle multiple responsibilities including childcare. This workshop focused on empowering women to not only acknowledge their accomplishments but to also confidently speak about them. *[See Attachment 5 for the workshop invitation]*

It is important to note the prompt response of CIIM to ensuring employee and student safety and wellness. All government directives and protocols have been adhered to and were timely communicated to employees and students. Remote teaching has allowed students to continue their quality education and additional administrative support (e.g., in terms of IT support) has been provided to students and staff to ensure a smooth transition to online teaching. Also, CIIM has offered manageable tuition payment options

for students who have lost their jobs or struggled financially as a result of the pandemic so they could continue their studies.

Finally, CIIM in response to the needs of the business community gave a presentation on “Post-Covid Management for the Business Community on October 16, 2020” whereas CIIM Programme Directors shared key insights on the topic. The new MSc HRM & OB Programme Director delivered a presentation on “Navigating the world of work and how we manage people during and beyond COVID-19” which included a discussion on the impact of the pandemic on employee health and well-being. *[See Attachment 6]*

The committee recommends that the Director installs an annual event where teaching faculty are invited to discuss the content of their modules. The committee views this as important for two reasons. First, some subjects might be falling through the cracks. For instance, the module leader of Rewards mentioned that the Balanced Scorecard was taught in SHRM, whereas the module leader of SHRM mentioned that the Balanced Scorecard was taught in Rewards. The second reason is to understand how synergies can be created between modules. For instance, the quantitative module can be tied to Rewards, and the qualitative module can be tied to Talent Management.

CIIM Response: In addition to the individual meetings and discussions with the instructors of the program in which among other things the synergies of their courses with other courses were discussed, the new Programme Director has instituted an ‘end-of-year’ annual online meeting (to take place every July) with all the faculty teaching in the programme (resident and visiting faculty) to identify synergies, exchange ideas and improve the overall quality of the programme. The Dean and Director of Academic Affairs will also participate in this annual meeting. *[See Attachment 7 for the preliminary meeting agenda]*

The ECTS awarded to the thesis is relatively small (7 points). In most international business schools, the thesis is an opportunity for students to conduct independent research and is typically weighted between 25-35 ECTS points. The committee elaborates in Section 2 an avenue that the programme may take that enables students to conduct research within the context of HRM. This would make the thesis offering redundant.

CIIM Response: We recognize that the ECTS awarded to the thesis is relatively small. We will provide additional comments on this as part of Section 2.

The committee was presented with excellent programme evaluation scores. However, the last programme evaluation was conducted in 2017. Programme evaluations should be conducted each year, and progress should be captured and acted upon.

CIIM Response: The programme will be evaluated with the other programmes of CIIM in an institute wide survey / programme evaluation that will take place towards the later part of the current academic year.

This is the only area in this report that we deem ‘partially compliant’. We saw no evidence that there is a policy and procedure that “guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff”. We strongly recommend that the CIIM develops a policy and procedure, in consultation with staff and students, that clearly outlines acceptable and unacceptable behaviour, and the procedures by which students or staff can follow in case they feel that they, or a colleague or student, is victimised (e.g., harassment, bullying). As the CIIM becomes more diverse, clear definitions of harassment, bullying, and

other unacceptable behaviours need to be clear and clearly communicated to staff and students, so that there is a common understanding.

CIIM Response: CIIM recognizes its obligation to provide a safe, non-discriminatory environment, free from sexual and other harassment. Policies and Procedures are in place for student grievances for matters other than grades (including sexual harassment). These are included here:

Procedures for other student grievances

Students having grievances for matters other than grades refer them to their Advisor, the Programme Director or the Academic Affairs Director (AAD) who investigates the matter and makes an effort to resolve the grievance. If unsuccessful, the grievance is referred to the Department Chairperson, who may resolve it or refer it to the Department Council. If the student is still not satisfied, he/she may appeal the decision to the Department Council's Appeals Committee and escalate it all the way to CIIM's Appeals Committee, whose decisions are final.

Complaints about sexual harassment

CIIM recognizes its obligation to provide a safe, non-discriminatory environment, free from sexual and other harassment. In the case of sexual harassment complaints, CIIM provides a safe, non-discriminatory environment for all students to report an incident or file a complaint with the university authorities, starting with the Student Affairs Office. CIIM honours requests for confidentiality, but this may limit its ability to meaningfully investigate the incident. CIIM provides a range of supportive measures for complainants and respondents both prior to and after the filing of a formal or when a sexual harassment case is reported. Requests for supportive measures can be made by or on behalf of the complainant or respondent to the Student Affairs Office. Students may also seek assistance from the Dean of CIIM. The student affairs office will work with the appropriate office(s) to ensure that the complaint is properly investigated and appropriate supportive measures are promptly provided. CIIM has developed an on-line training program for faculty, staff, and students to assist them in recognizing sexual misconduct, teach them how to respond to reports of such conduct, and ensure that they are aware of available on- and off-campus resources.

Please also see the CIIM Sexual Harassment Policy as it applies to *all* members of the CIIM community. [See *Attachment 8*]

All incoming students during the Orientation Day are given the Participant's Handbook which includes key policies and procedures. In addition, during Orientation students are introduced to the Student Affairs & Academic Affairs Departments which are there to offer support and guidance on any issues (personal or academic) students may face during their studies at CIIM. In addition, due to the open-door policy of CIIM, in cases where students feel that they have been victimized, they reach out to their Programme Director and/or Director of Student Affairs who then follow the proper procedures as outlined above.

Regarding CIIM staff, all staff goes through orientation where their director supervisor communicates the key policies and procedures of the institute.

A final area for improvement pertains to the gender diversity of teaching faculty. The committee noticed, and the student representatives commented, that there are very few women on the teaching faculty. Although the majority of resident faculty are mainly men, an effort should be made to hire more female adjunct faculty to ensure adequate gender representation.

CIIM Response: We identify the importance of gender diversity and as such we were pleased to hire a woman as the new Programme Director, Dr Vicky Katsioloudes. Currently, approximately half of the core courses (i.e., 5 out of 14) are taught by women – Dr Olga Kandiskaia (MA565), Dr Anastasia Kynighou (HR600) and Dr Vicky Katsioloudes (HR535, HR575, HR560). The majority of the mandatory HR workshops (i.e., 3 out of 5) are being taught by women – Ms Athena Neophytou Xynari (Human Capital Metrics & Analytics), Ms Argyro Loizidou Demetriou (Coaching Skills & Techniques) and Ms Georgia Stylianides (Managing Diversity). As we continue to increase our visiting faculty and special teaching faculty network we will continue to ensure gender representation.

CIIM is currently searching to fill several academic positions with a particular focus and preference to women to ensure a more gender balanced resident faculty. Here are the links to the current job advertisements: [Euraxess Post](#); [University Positions Post](#); [Akadeus Post](#).

In closing, the committee would like to suggest that the new Director consider the purpose and potential of this programme. There is a tension that exists between differentiation in the market and being ‘everything to everybody’. The breadth of modules is a strength, but it may come at the expense of having a clear identity or purpose. Educational programmes like this one have the potential to change how businesses operate by nurturing the mindsets and building the skills for the future. It may be worthwhile to consider the changes happening in industry, or perhaps more importantly, the changes that *should* be happening in the industry, and then question how a leading institution like CIIM can shape the way that HR is perceived and leveraged by businesses. Once the programme leadership has a clearly articulated vision of the future of HR in Cyprus, they can build a programme that educates the next calibre of HR business leaders to realise that vision.

CIIM Response: CIIM was the first institution in Cyprus to introduce a graduate degree in HRM & OB. Our comprehensive programme aims to develop reflective HR Generalists who possess the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities to effectively lead the HR function primarily of SMEs (as most of our graduates are absorbed by SMEs).

We are monitoring the debate on the future of work and how it is changing particularly in relation to the pandemic and sustainability. We are creating a focal point in our courses around the future of work as they relate to diversity, sustainability, hybrid work, and flexicurity. To this end, and as already mentioned, we have increased the weight of the CSR course and we are introducing a new elective course in “HR & Sustainability”. We believe that placing added emphasis on issues of sustainability differentiates our programme from our competitors and further aligns our programme with CIIM’s vision.

Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)

Sub-area 1.1. Policy for quality assurance – Partially Compliant



CIIM Response: The only deficiency noted under the quality indicators was in relation to the policy for quality assurance where CIIM was deemed to be ‘partially compliant’. This was addressed as part of CIIM’s response to Section 1.1. above and particularly in relation to the CIIM policies and procedures about harassment and discrimination.

2. Teaching, learning and student assessment

(ESG 1.3)

Findings

CIIM places a heavy emphasis on teaching and recognizes excellence in instruction. The program's modular structure is designed to offer students a high degree of flexibility and facilitates the integration of foreign faculty into the teaching program. The courses apply a variety of delivery methods including case study analysis. The students are exposed to a comprehensive program that meets the criteria of the practitioner community as evidenced by its recognition by the Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM). The program is oriented towards the development of HR generalists. This strategy makes sense given the fact that most of the firms absorbing the program's graduates are SMEs. Several modules appear to use advanced technology such as gamification as a means by which to engage students.

Strengths

A student survey conducted in 2017 found 70+% to be very satisfied or satisfied with the program. In our conversation with current and former students, all reported to be highly engaged in the learning and expressed that they felt a good deal of involvement in and control over the learning process. Students highlighted the interactive sessions as a plus.

Modules are characterized by the blending of theory and practice. Courses receive substantial practitioner input with reviews by the stakeholder-based Professional Advisory Board.

The modular structure of the program offers student a high degree of flexibility in their learning.

Administrative systems are in place to ensure students due process in evaluation and grading. Evaluation criteria and mechanisms appear to be fair and consistent, and are specified in module syllabi.

Addition of new workshop in "Trends in HR" will facilitate the updating of program and ensure that students are getting insights into state-of-the-art ideas and approaches.

Based on our observation of one class (Olga Kandinskaia's "Foundations of Accounting and Finance" course), it appears that teaching quality is high. Moreover, we observed that the students were comfortable and confident in conversing on issues relating to finance. The students demonstrated comprehension of quantitative concepts and the ability to analyse financial data and effectively interpret results. This suggests that the school's leadership may be underestimating the impressive quantitative aptitudes of the program's students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

While a breakdown of evaluation components was provided in course syllabi, few if any of the course outlines that we received made any reference to specific evaluation criteria (grading rubrics). Accordingly, the program is border-line compliant with regard to sub-area 2.3 (student assessment). **We strongly encourage the program administrators to incorporate grading rubrics into course syllabi in order to ensure that the program does not emerge as non-compliant on this parameter in the future.**

CIIM Response: The institute has been working in recent months on institution wide assessment rubrics. The HRM & OB programme has been using rubrics and student peer reviews (the latter in all courses that use group assignments as part of their assessment) for student assessment. [See Attachments 9a, 9b and 9c for rubric samples]

Student satisfaction survey should be more regular.

CIIM Response: As mentioned in another section of the report the programme will be evaluated with the other programmes of CIIM in an institute wide survey / programme evaluation that will take place towards the later part of the current academic year. Programme evaluation will address student satisfaction. Ongoing course evaluations also capture an aspect of student satisfaction.

Although the report mentions application of innovative teaching approaches, we saw no real evidence of flipped classrooms, and even use of case studies appeared to be somewhat limited. Also unclear to us was what is meant by “problem-based teaching” and how this was actually applied. In addition, certain courses (such as the course in rewards, talent management) should incorporate more hands-on simulations in which students actually develop plans/policies for a fictitious enterprise.

CIIM Response: Case studies are used in many of our courses including Rewards Management, Training & Development, Employee Resourcing & Appraisal & Talent Management and Organisational Behaviour.

Problem-based teaching refers to the use of ‘real-world’ problems to help students attain the course learning outcomes. These real-world problems can stem from the instructor’s own professional experience (e.g., consulting projects), from industry magazines and websites, and other relevant sources. These problems are then solved & presented during class by student groups with immediate feedback provided by the instructor and peers.

No evidence of students involved in research. For an MSc program, students should be given more research opportunities.

CIIM Response: All students as part of their studies are required to take two courses on research methods (i.e., MA575 – Statistics & Quantitative Research and HR585 – Qualitative Research). Students also have the opportunity to conduct research as part of their individual and/or group assignments. For instance, the Strategic HR course incorporates a large, one-month consulting project with a methodology section. Also, our teaching approach has students reviewing articles and supporting their claims with high-quality sources (e.g., as part of the Communication Skills course students have to prepare an individual written assignment using high-quality sources to support their claims). Finally, students who select to do a thesis have the opportunity to conduct research.

As part of the online Annual Faculty Meeting, faculty are to identify additional opportunities for students to conduct research by integrating research methods in a variety of courses (e.g., introduction of a mini-research project as part of a particular course, exercises that require students to apply their research skills as part of individual/group course assignments).

Although the modules integrate practical applications, the program involves no practicum. Given that many students are already employed in HR, this may not be relevant to many/most students. However, for those with no experience, such an experience would be extremely valuable.

CIIM Response: The programme requires all students to participate in five core professional workshops. These workshops are essentially practicums taught by professionals in the field. The workshops are

designed and delivered as to allow students to gain practical skills by participating in role-playing and other appropriate training methods.

We also encourage students with no relevant experience to pursue an internship. In many cases we help students identify internship sites.

Modular approach, despite its benefits, may need to be adjusted to ensure rational progression from one course (e.g., statistics) to others (rewards, appraisal and training).

CIIM Response: We make every effort to schedule courses in a progressive way, so students can first take the core general courses (e.g., Foundations of Accounting & Finance, Communication Skills, Organisational Behaviour) before progressing into the core HRM courses (e.g., Rewards Management, Training & Employee Development). In addition, as part of the online advising sessions of all the newly registered students, the new Programme Director advises students on the sequence of courses to take and students are strongly encouraged to take at least one of the research courses (quantitative or qualitative) early on in the programme.

We already have pre-requisites in place. Specifically, Organisational Behaviour (HR405) is a pre-requisite for Leadership Development (HR575) and Strategic HR (HR605). Strategic HR in addition to HR405 has two additional courses as pre-requisites (any two out of HR565, HR570, HR560). Expanding the Strategic HR Capstone course increases the number of pre-requisites course to also include the research courses (i.e., MA575 – Statistics & Quantitative Research and HR585 – Qualitative Research).

Recommendations:

1. As noted in our initial statement, we believe that the Strategic HR capstone course should be expanded from its current 6 ECTS units to at least 10 ECTS units on the basis of a more extensive final project involving:

- a. An individual component or peer assessment to ensure individual contributions
- b. The application of research methods learned in the program (collection, analysis and interpretation of empirical data).
- c. Application of a minimum number of scholarly articles to reinforce students' recognition of the value of, and appreciation for, evidence-based management.

CIIM Response: Currently, the Strategic HR course incorporates a large, one-month consulting project with a methodology section. Moreover, the Strategic HR course has both an individual component of assessment (exam) and a group assignment (consulting project). When group assignments are involved student peer reviews are incorporated.

We welcome the suggestion of the committee to expand the Strategic HR capstone course to include a more extensive final project according to the specific guidelines and increase its ECTS units from 6 to 10. This change (alongside the expanded CSR course) alters the redistribution of ECTS units between core & elective courses. Also, as mentioned by the committee at another section of the report, the expanded Strategic HR capstone course makes the thesis option redundant. We see value in continuing to offer a "Research Project" elective course (for 9 ECTS units instead of 7 ECTS units) to allow students who are interested in completing (or working as part of) a specific Research project to expand their research skills

beyond the capstone course by working towards submitting a paper to an Academic Conference and/or academic/professional journal. For the MSc HRM & OB updated programme curriculum please see *Attachment 10*.

The *Fall 2021 incoming students* are to follow the updated/revised programme curriculum. [*Attachment 10*]

2. Integration of research methods in all courses (integrate material on analytics from SHRM):
 - a. Quantitative – Rewards (Regression), Appraisal (Validity Analysis), Training & Development courses (Validity Analysis; Utility Analysis)
 - b. Qualitative – Employee climate; exit interviews

CIIM Response: As part of the online Annual Faculty Meeting, faculty are to identify additional opportunities for students to conduct research (e.g., introduce a mini-research project as part of a particular course and/or integrate research methods as part of individual/group assignments in a variety of courses). Courses already include some of these elements (e.g., Training & Development course has students calculate training budgets & ROI) and during the online Annual Faculty Meeting ways to strengthen these elements are to be identified.

3. For workshop-based skills development, more attention need to be given to student evaluation. Skills should not only be evaluated as part of the SHRM capstone course.

CIIM Response: The Core (HRM) Professional Workshops aim to develop practical skills closely related to the HR profession (Conflict Management, Managing Diversity, Emotional Intelligence, Human Metrics & Analytics, Coaching Skills and Techniques). As part of each workshop, students are assessed on the skills they have developed as part of relevant workshop activities (e.g., role-plays). For instance, in order to successfully complete the “Conflict Management” workshop, students as part of a small group have to participate in three work-related scenarios (assuming a different role in each scenario) and effectively apply the practical skills learned during the workshop to resolve the conflict.

Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)

CIIM Response: No deficiency was noted in the quality indicators by the EEC.

3. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Findings

We strongly believe that teaching staff has excellent and relevant qualifications and experience to deliver teaching and inform the learning process through their own research activities. The College provides good support to teaching staff to improve their research skills and networks through financing conferences and other activities. Teaching staff is evaluated in a transparent and systematic way considering the quality of their research activity.

Strengths

- The academic personnel are research active and publish research in high-quality international peer-reviewed journals, edited volumes, books, and participate and present in international conferences.
- International non-resident faculty with a diverse set of research interests and teaching experience that feed this into the learning process, and this is highly appreciated by students.
- Commitment to the continuous development of the research of the faculty through various forms of support and a generous research budget.
- A new programme director who is passionate about the programme and has several innovative ideas for changes in the programme and an eye for continuous improvement.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Some mismatches between research expertise of faculty and modules they teach, e.g., a faculty member with research on neuroscience teaching rewards management, or faculty with expertise and research on economics teaching qualitative methods.

CIIM Response: CIIM places teaching quality at the centre of its success and ensures that faculty have the expertise for the modules they teach. Our faculty have a wide-range of experiences (e.g., participation in various consultancy and research projects) that are relevant to their teaching module; these infuse their teaching and enable them to effectively connect theory and practice.

Specifically, the faculty professor Cleanthous who teaches Qualitative Methods was trained in the said discipline while he was doing his Ph.D. at Yale University. In fact, he attended all courses a Marketing Ph.D. attends at Yale University's School of Management. It is for this reason that his first academic job was at the Marketing Department of New York University's Stern School of Business where he participated and led PhD seminars in both quantitative and qualitative research methods and taught qualitative methods as part of his courses to Marketing graduate and undergraduate students. He continued to do this at the University of Cyprus, even though he was working in an Economics Department as part of cross-disciplinary courses. At the same time, professor Cleanthous has been advising firms on how to collect and analyze qualitative data since 2003. Finally, he incorporates Qualitative methods as part of his own research. At CIIM, he has been teaching the course since 2013.

Professor Psychogios who teaches Rewards Management is an HRM scholar who uses neuroscientific insights to inform part of his current research and teaching on various HRM issues. He has long experience in teaching this module in many different institutions. Professor Psychogios has published research on Rewards Management (1 published paper plus 1 chapter in a HRM book) and rewards are part of his

current research interests. Finally, he has long experience in consulting organisations (especially SMEs) in performance and reward management systems applications.

- teaching performance is not adequately rewarded and recognized in promotion and recruitment; for a school that generates the majority of its income through tuition and places teaching quality at the centre of its success, it is expected that there would be an explicit reward and recognition for effective teaching.

CIIM Response: Teaching performance is greatly valued at CIIM and taken into account in three stages a) in the assessment of performance during the probation period, b) in the annual faculty evaluation, c) at the contract renewal, and d) in compensation and promotion. The relevant teaching quality criteria go beyond student evaluations, to include direct observation by the Programme Director and the Dean as well as student & alumni surveys. There are intrinsic and extrinsic incentives, outlined below, to encourage faculty to consider their teaching and its quality at par with their research and its quality. To further encourage and reward excellence in teaching the School is introducing an “Award for Teaching Excellence” based on the following criteria and a formal nomination and selection process:

- Motivates students to learn and facilitates in-depth learning.
- Develops meaningful and innovative curricula.
- Uses novel or innovative teaching methods.
- Uses meaningful methods for evaluating student learning.
- Demonstrates depth of knowledge in and commitment to his/her field.
- Demonstrates receptivity to students’ questions

The “Award for Teaching Excellence” is presented in the Graduation Ceremony or a special awards event. The award recipient receives a monetary award or gift certificate. The name of the award-recipient is placed on a plaque in the school and publicised. The recipient of teaching awards is asked to deliver a public lecture on a topic of his/her choice or on a stipulated subject.

- Stronger incentives for director to upgrade the programme and for staff to further improve and develop their courses.

CIIM Response: Recognizing that the primary incentives that motivate faculty to further upgrade their teaching strategies to deliver high quality education center on intrinsic and personal rewards, the School builds on this motivation to encourage faculty to further improve and develop their courses. These intrinsic and personal rewards include the opportunity to provide innovative instruction and apply new teaching techniques as well as self-gratification, fulfilling a personal desire to teach, recognition of their work, and peer recognition.

Of course, faculty need to understand the reward system and how course upgrading and development impacts annual evaluations along with promotion. Promotion and tenure committees must clearly articulate their expectations to faculty. Junior faculty, in particular, need to clearly understand how the quality of their teaching will affect them as they go up for promotion and tenure in the future.

The strong feelings about time requirements along with the need for assistance and support is being addressed to support faculty efforts as more frequent upgrading is implemented and more innovative delivery methods are adopted. Since junior faculty see financial rewards as more of an incentive, and time requirements and support needs as less of an obstacle, CIIM's long-range planning is strengthening the support structure, especially to junior faculty.

Processes are being developed which will adjust faculty workloads to accommodate the time requirements as faculty refine and implement their existing and new courses. This also includes the time required for training to develop skills related to technology that assists the distance delivery methods. Strategies will continue to be developed to provide appropriate assistance and support to faculty for both instructional design and the delivery process.

The majority of ECTS points of the core courses are delivered by visiting faculty (around 70%); a more balanced delivery of core courses by resident and visiting faculty would be better to establish relative continuity.

CIIM Response: Currently, out of the 14 core courses, 7 core courses are delivered by resident faculty (i.e., permanent teaching & research personnel) and only 50% is taught by non-resident faculty. Specifically, the courses taught by resident faculty are: HR535, HR495, MA565, HR575, HR585, MA575 and HR560. Out of the 7 courses delivered by non-resident faculty, 6 courses are delivered by visiting faculty with an academic rank and 1 course (HR555) is delivered by special teaching personnel.

CIIM is actively searching to recruit more full-time resident faculty. Here are the links to the job advertisements: [Euraxess Post](#); [University Positions Post](#); [Akadeus Post](#).

Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)

CIIM Response: No deficiency was noted in the quality indicators by the EEC.

4. Students

(ESG 1.4, 1.6, 1.7)

Findings

The CIIM has clear regulations regarding student admission, including English language proficiency tests, an undergraduate degree, and letters of recommendation. These policies are administered consistently and transparently. The processes that underpin student progression are likewise clear and robust.

The CIIM has published clear regulations regarding student recognition, and fairly recognises qualifications and other forms of learning from other accredited learning institutions. Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on best practice, and cooperation with other institutions (SHRM, CyHRMA).

Strengths

The CIIM meets or exceeds all criteria as outlined in this section. The committee was impressed with the interviews with the professional staff, in particular Lena Jelic. Lena was professional, showed an abundance of knowledge about the students, procedures and CIIM, and showed a passion for higher education.

Another strength is that the programme is commended by HR-related bodies, including SHRM and CyHRMA.

Areas for improvement and recommendations

The committee noted that CIIM has an excellent reputation in Cyprus and therefore has the potential to further distinguish itself from competitors, such as the University of Cyprus. One way to do so is through selection mechanisms, which act as a signal of quality. The programme might consider a requirement for a minimum GPA for an undergraduate degree, and the use of the GMAT or GRE for admissions. The latter would be especially helpful to ensure that candidates are able to pursue more analytics-driven curricula and may be particularly important for those with limited work experience (less than 7-8 years of managerial experience).

CIIM Response: The current CIIM admission requirements (included below) are institution wide and whilst they do not require a minimum GPA a stronger preference is given to those students with a higher GPA and those with a lower GPA are expected to have other qualities to compensate for the lack of a higher GPA (e.g., work experience).

CIIM's Admission Requirements;

1. A Bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college.
2. Proficiency in the English language evidenced by graduation from an English language institution, or satisfactory IELTS score (5.5) or equivalent TOEFL score or other standardized language examination.
3. Satisfactory quantitative skills as evidenced by the quantitative courses they have taken during their bachelor degree study.
4. A personal interview is an integral part of the selection process. The interview and documents providing evidence of the above qualifications are used as the basis for evaluating candidates. In cases where applicants have graduated from unfamiliar programs or universities, a GRE/GMAT examination score may be required.

Overall, CIIM admission requirements are up to par with the other higher education institutions in Cyprus.

As noted, the committee was impressed with Lena Jelic. Top business schools are managed by professional staff who possess many of the same qualities that the committee saw in Lena. The committee believes that Lena may be under-utilised in her role, and that she may greatly benefit from upskilling in the MBA (or similar) programme. Professional staff like Lena have the potential to contribute strategically to any business school, in areas such as sales and marketing and partnerships with industry.

CIIM Response: CIIM recognizes the abilities and potential of Lena Jelic who also happens to hold an MBA from CIIM. As the current Director of Academic Affairs & Registrar's Office, Lena has a pivotal and strategic role at CIIM.

Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)

CIIM Response: No deficiency was noted in the quality indicators by the EEC.

5. Resources

(ESG 1.6)

Findings

In general, we find all resources available and fit for purpose. There are certain aspects, however, that can be improved. Our recommendations on how to achieve this are listed below.

Strengths

- Modern campus with adequate teaching space and equipment
- Modern audiovisual technology is available and accessible
- Space for students' socialization is available
- A good visible presence of administrative and support staff, IT support and student welfare.
- Access to distance learning, particularly during the pandemic, which provides flexibility to students who are working and/or have families.
- Access to electronic resources through EBSCO database

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- Further investment on electronic resources, as these become more important during the pandemic; a plan is mentioned to expand this though using access from other higher education institutions in Cyprus, such as the University of Cyprus; we consider it important to proceed with this plan.
- Wider access to case studies that could be used across courses, as well as simulations, which are particularly relevant for the rewards management course.

CIIM Response: CIIM is continuing to invest in electronic resources (e.g., EBSCO library) including case studies and simulations. CIIM is also proceeding with building partnerships with other higher education institutions in Cyprus so CIIM students can have wider access to online resources.

Deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)

CIIM Response: No deficiency was noted in the quality indicators by the EEC.



6. Additional for distance learning programmes
(ALL ESG)

Not Applicable



7. Additional for doctoral programmes
(ALL ESG)

Not Applicable



8. Additional for joint programmes (ALL ESG)

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B. Conclusions and final remarks

Overall, the evaluation committee was positively impressed with CIIM in general, and the Nicosia-based HRM-OB program. As specified below, there was general consensus that the program complies with all but one of the standards specified by the CYQAA. In particular, the school's leaders, faculty, administrators and students expressed a high degree of enthusiasm about the program as well as a commitment to its further enrichment and development. When asked to indicate areas of improvement for the program, students were unable to list even a single limitation. Additional strengths include the school's strong links with stakeholders in the community and leading scholars outside of Cyprus, an excellent track record of relevant employment for the program graduates, and a strong record of research excellence for teaching faculty.

That said, as we detail below, we feel that there are a number of steps that should be taken to better position the school and this particular program for the future. These steps include:

1. Boosting the application of evidence-based knowledge, technical competencies in HR, and analytical skills (both qualitative and quantitative) by means of an expanded capstone Strategic HR course. In particular, as students receive an MSc. degree, the program should have a broader, applied research component, as well as one in which *individual* students' capabilities in applying the knowledge and skills gleaned in the program are more directly evaluated. We recommend that the course go from 6 to at least 10 ECTS units to encompass this applied research component, and that the final project require: (a) the application of no fewer than five scholarly journal articles, and (b) the collection, analysis, and interpretation of empirical (qualitative and/or quantitative) data.

CIIM Response: As already mentioned in a previous section of the report, CIIM is adopting this recommendation. Please see *Attachment 10* for the updated/revised MSc HRM & OB programme.

2. Adjusting particular modules to allow for greater application of analytical skills (developed in the statistics and methods module) throughout the program. This might involve actual exercises and simulations requiring students to apply their knowledge of correlation and regression analysis to, for instance, build a pay structure or conduct a validity analysis of a selection tool. Additionally, it might involve exercises designed to ensure the application of qualitative analysis skills for conducting exit interviews, performing a needs analysis, or assessing organizational norms and values.

CIIM Response: As already mentioned in a previous section of the report, as part of the online Annual Faculty Meeting, the faculty are to identify additional ways to allow for greater application of analytical skills as part of their respective courses.

3. Integrating more sophisticated selection techniques to differentiate CIIM HR grads from those graduating from competitive programs. For instance, to the extent that CIIM wants to position its graduates as "in another league", it may want to select students with stronger analytical/quantitative aptitudes. This would allow the program to, for example, promote its graduates' skills in financial analysis and HR analytics. To do this, the program might introduce new acceptance criteria for candidates lacking several years of managerial experience such as a minimal score on the GMAT or GRE, minimal GPA, or minimal grades in undergraduate courses in quantitative fields.

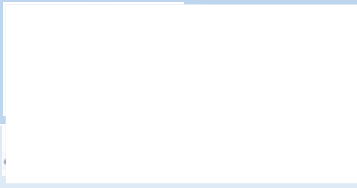
CIIM Response: As mentioned in previous sections of this report, the admission requirements are institute wide and include a personal interview. So, even though currently there is no acceptance criteria related to

minimal GPA etc. during the interview faculty members consider the GPA and examine the grades candidates have earned in their undergraduate courses. In cases where applicants have graduated from unfamiliar programs or universities, a GRE/GMAT examination score may be required.

4. Taking steps to ensure diversity and inclusion objectives. In particular, steps should be taken to (a) achieve a greater gender-balance in faculty, and (b) adopting, disseminating, and enforcing policies aimed at ensuring academic integrity, promoting diversity and community involvement, and preventing discrimination and harassment.

CIIM Response: As mentioned in previous sections of this report, CIIM is currently recruiting for several faculty positions with priority given to qualified applicants who are women in order to achieve greater gender-balance. CIIM has policies to ensure academic integrity and prevent discrimination and harassment as mentioned in Section 1.1. In terms of promoting diversity, in addition to the steps taken to achieve greater gender-balance in faculty, CIIM welcomes students from diverse backgrounds and is actively involved in the community as outlined in Section 1.1. These efforts will continue.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Theodore Panayotou	Dean & Director	
Vicky Katsioloudes	Programme Director MSc HRM & OB	
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Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

Date: 2 February 2021

