

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 11 July 2022

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Limassol International University (LIU)
Formerly the Cyprus International Institute of Management

- **Town:** Limassol and Nicosia

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

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

MSc in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics (14 full-time or 24 months part-time, ECTS, 2nd Cycle)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **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 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

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 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2nd column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
 - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in *.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

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

| Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC | Actions Taken by the Institution | For official use Only |
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| <p>Documenting quality assurance meetings and decisions needs to be more comprehensively and systematically undertaken. An informal approach that revolves around coordinators may be effective when there is a small team in place. Considering the expected growth, more attention to processes and details will be needed.</p> | <p>We confirm that since the beginning of 2022 all administration and faculty committee meetings, including those of the Quality Assurance Committee are scheduled for the year on fixed dates and recorded in the Outlook Calendar of the institution (ANNEX 1), available to all concerned.</p> <p>All the meetings are recorded and minutes are taken (including the list of participants, topics of discussion, decisions taken, actions arising and next steps) and shared via email along with the link of the recorded video.</p> <p>Minutes are now posted on the institution's intranet and available to internal stakeholders on a "need to know" basis for GDPR reasons. The Chairman of the QA Committee is responsible to oversee the process and ensure all necessary measures are taken to comply with the decisions taken and actions arising.</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |
| <p>The EEC recommends that the quality assurance process is carefully monitored, so that results meet CYQAA standards and so that a culture of quality is promoted. This particularly applies to mapping the course program outcome and assessment to the program learning objectives and competencies. Data on student performance can help</p> | <p>The EEC is right in calling for the quality assurance process to be carefully monitored, so that results meet CYQAA standards and a culture of quality is maintained. For this reason, we have established QA Committees at three levels: Department, School and University. The operation of the QA committees has been made more transparent and integral to the University community with regular feedback from both internal and external stakeholders. External stakeholders are, from now on, be involved in the quality assurance process in a structured and systematic way. Furthermore, external advisors from partner universities, relevant to the subject matter on the agenda being discussed, are invited to take part in the QA meeting. Furthermore, the monitoring of the quality assurance process is assigned to the internal auditor.</p> <p>It is a long standing rule and practice for CIIM to map course intended learning outcomes (CILOs) against programme intended learning outcomes (PILOs), see ANNEX 2.</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |
| <p>The quality assurance framework presented appears to touch on all aspects. Still certain areas need to be considered more carefully and thoroughly. For instance, the EEC recommends that external stakeholders are involved in the quality assurance process in a structured and systematic way.</p> | <p>CIIM was established by a group of business leaders and a team of prominent academics representing some of the world's top business schools. The involvement of business leaders has been a part of the design, review and redesign of CIIM academic programmes from the very beginning, and continues to be so today. Regular meetings take place between the Dean, the Programme Directors, and the external stakeholders. Through such consultation meetings, CIIM has, in recent years, designed and launched</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |

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| <p>This can help both inform the design and content of the program (e.g. when it comes to practice, case study materials, thesis projects etc.) but also employability.</p> | <p>new programmes such as the MSc Financial Law and International Taxation, the MSc in Applied Information Technologies, and the Master in Green and Digital Management. When CIIM’s operations will be transferred to the Limassol International University, we will continue to involve our external stakeholders, to even greater degree since Limassol is the economic and business center of the country with many local and international companies, such as AMDOCS, MSC Ship Management, Interorient Navigation, Medochemie, Lanitis Group, Galatariotis Group, Anchoria Bank, Prime Real Estate, Eureka Group, Paradisiotis, Engino and others with which we maintain close relationships and, with some of them, partnerships. Many we will continue involving in the design of our programmes and others in their review as members of a wider quality assurance process.</p> | |
| <p>The EEC enquired about employability stats. The response was that 100% of the MSc students are employed. Although this is excellent, it would have helped to have more detailed insights as to career prospects of the students in relation to the program. Put differently many students are already working so instead of just reporting if they do so, it may have been better to know if the program helped them secure a more relevant to their training job.</p> | <p>We conduct regular surveys of both students and alumni to ascertain whether the programme helped them to do their current job better, get promoted, get a raise, or find a better job. We ask them what courses helped them most and what courses the least; what new courses they would like to see in the programme and what new programmes to offer. The specific programme under review, the MSc in business Intelligence and Data Analytics, since its pioneer establishment had and continues to have excellent career prospects with students finding jobs with double the salary of their previous job. For this reason the recruitment of students in this programme relies on word of mouth (for over 80% of the recruits).</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |
| <p>It will be useful to have a consistent implement to how class participation contributes to course marks (ideally it should not exceed 10% unless there is a clear rationale).</p> | <p>Class participation at CIIM-LIU contributes 10-20% to the final grade since the institution puts great emphasis on interactive teaching and learning methods: peer-to-peer teaching, role playing, business games, team work, in-class quizzes and the Socratic dialectic method. etc. Participation can mean anything from asking questions to leading discussions. Students that regularly participate in class are more likely to remember a greater portion of the information and to more depth. Active class participation also improves critical and higher level thinking skills. Students who participate in class study the material well enough to introduce new concepts to their peers. Participation can also help students learn from each other, increasing comprehension through cooperation. This can in turn improve relationships among students and between the students and instructor.</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |

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

| Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC | Actions Taken by the Institution | For official use Only |
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| <p>There are opportunities to engage external stakeholders from local industry regularly as part of the course but also at program level. Considering that many students are already working locally there may be also an opportunity to use their relationships with employees to both benefit their learning experience but also the experience of the other students.</p> | <p>There is 30+ year tradition at CIIM of engaging external stakeholders such as alumni, employers, industry experts as guest lecturers and practitioners regularly as part of courses but also at the programme level in programme design and review. Our students who, in their great majority are working, use their relationships with employers and fellow employees to disseminate information they gain in class as well as to bring problems and challenges from their workplace to the classroom to tackle thus creating a two-way flow of knowledge and experience. This is part of CIIM-LIU modus operandi and a major competitive edge of the institution.</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |
| <p>Assessment moderation could help add another level of quality assurance</p> | <p>The director of the program of study has the task of reviewing the grade analytics in terms of distribution, average grade, variance, possible grade inflation, conformity with the suggested grading curve, and, consistency across courses. Any irregularities such as grade inflation, an unusual number of failures, grade concentration etc. are referred to both the instructor for corrective action and the QA Committee for review.</p> <p>The grade moderation in terms of the soundness and fairness of grading of individual exams is done by the QA Committee, as part of its quality monitoring role, through sampling: 3-5 exams with very low grades, and 3-5 exams with very high grades are sampled from each course and reviewed by the members of the QA Committee, which can access outside expertise if needed. Sampled Second Marking, and Double Marking is also employed in problematic cases. The QA also examines student complaints about grades in ad hoc sessions. This method of grade moderation was introduced to us by our external examiner many years ago and it was sanctioned by EFMD in 5 consecutive international accreditations and by CYQAA in more than 10 accreditations.</p> <p>The introduction of grading rubric more recently is helping to ensure that grades are fair, valid and reliable, and that assessment criteria are applied consistently. The rubric ensures consistency in marking between individual markers, within cohorts and across cohorts.</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC | Actions Taken by the Institution | For official use Only |
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| <p>The 2022/23 handbook provided, states that resident academic faculty members have a teaching load of 40 ECTS and the following teaching, examination and final project supervision responsibilities. Considering that these ECTs can be delivered twice (in two different sites) this can result in a significant workload balance that is likely to exceed the expected 30%. In the short/medium term thing, there will be also additional demands with the regards to the institutional transformation, new program launches, the move to a new campus etc. Consequently, it is important that staff recruitment takes place with more urgency to ensure that workloads remain manageable and do not impact teaching continuity and quality.</p> | <p>The EEC’s concern that the teaching load of resident academic faculty members of 40 ECTS along with final project supervision responsibilities, might be excessive is understandable but is due to misunderstanding. The “up to 40 ECTS” teaching load applies to only a few faculty members who have been with CIIM for a long time on a fixed-time contract when CIIM was focusing more on excellence in teaching than on frontier. Yet, these faculty members have the option of requesting reduced teaching to do more research if they so choose and, for this purpose, there is funding to buy off part of their teaching.</p> <p>Newly recruited faculty members (tenured and tenure-track) have reduced teaching load <i>ab initio</i>, stated in their contract, in the range of 20-30 ECTS (2 courses in each semester, or less) with 40-55% of their time allocated to research.</p> <p>EEC’s impression that the fact that ECTs are delivered twice (in two different sites) can increase the faculty’s workload is not accurate since this far from increasing their teaching load is reducing it because preparation time is reduced; the number of ECTS and the class contact hours do not change: 110-140 class contact hours per year for research-oriented faculty and 160-180 class contact hours for teaching-oriented faculty. However, everyone is expected to do some teaching and some research to fulfill their contractual obligations but at different proportions.</p> <p>It is indeed a challenge to undergo the transformation into a University while maintaining continuity of existing activities and subsequently undergo transition to a new campus. The Temporary Governing Board is fully equipped and prepared to oversee the transformation guided by an operational plan and a transition committee will oversee and coordinate the shift to the new campus. A faculty recruitment strategy has been in operation for a year through advertising in multiple academic job sites. We received over 1,000 applications with some 150 applications for faculty positions in the Department of information Technologies which were assessed by the Faculty Selection & Promotion Committee. This year we hired four new faculty members (two senior and two junior) for the Information Technologies Department. Our</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |

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| | Hiring Plan (see ANNEX ...) provide for recruiting four additional faculty members for the Department, two of them in the coming academic year. | |
| Similarly, the workload policy should not be only a set of guidelines. Activities undertaken should be measured and actual workloads associated with the delivered activities are captured. This will ensure a fair and transparent balancing of duties among staff. | Activities undertaken by the faculty receives points towards the attainment of 100 points per year. These are aggregated the annual performance evaluation. Each member undergoes an annual evaluation of his/her performance before May 15th of each year (ANNEX 4). The Performance Review covers the one-year period since the last annual review. In April, the member sets the goals for the year with the help of his/her mentor. In a year's time, the faculty member sets the new goals for the year, and self-evaluates him/herself given the goals set a year earlier. Faculty members submit, by April, the completed Faculty Evaluation Form to the Dean. The mentor along with the head of the department then grade the member. The dean ratifies these decisions. In each area of evaluation (teaching, research, service and community outreach), the faculty is assessed on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is excellent and 5 is unsatisfactory. Finally, the university faculty member gets a weighted average based on the contractual workload, which determines whether the individual will get a zero-level, one-level, two-levels' increase in the pay scale (to be put into effect with university operations) or be reprimanded for underperforming. The evaluation is based on common knowledge criteria. More information is provided in the Faculty Handbook (ANNEX 5) | Choose an item. |
| Activities related to continuous pedagogic training and innovation are organized. It will be useful though to systematize these in order to support colleagues' development (e.g. by organizing regular T&L workshops and seminars) and the spread of good practice (e.g. via peer-observation in teaching). | While recognizing that continuous pedagogic training and innovation takes place at CIIM-LIU, the EEC recommends to systematize these activities to better support faculty development. The EEC is right noting that in the past these were largely ad hoc. However, since early last year they have been formalized and incorporated in the Faculty Handbook. There is now a policy and a formal process of faculty development involving regular T&L workshops and seminars and peer-observation in teaching to the spread of good practice. See Faculty Development Policy in ANNEX 6. At the same time we developed the "Learner-Centered, Problem-Based Teaching & Learning Model: an Instructors' Manual with innovative in teaching and learning methods described and tested (see ANNEX 7) | Choose an item. |
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

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| <p>A more granular and systematic data collection about student matters (especially employability and diversity) can help feed into future iteration of the program (e.g. criteria, links to practice, courses to include etc.).</p> | <p>While data on student-related issues are being collected this has been more <i>ad hoc</i> than systematic. Now following the EEC recommendation data collection and their analysis is systematized. The ERP software system being acquired as part of the University's technological infrastructure provides for such monitoring system of students' employability, diversity, professional destinations and career advancement. Nevertheless, we have also been exploring supplementary monitoring systems, such as "Career System Manager", "Odo", "Epafo – 4 Schools" and "Salesforce".</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |
| <p>Admissions include interviews with students. It will be useful to potentially make admissions criteria more specific or at least provide guidelines as to the expected level of certain knowledge and competencies (especially when it comes to statistics and programming). This will help make final admissions decisions more consistent.</p> | <p>We agree with the EEC on the importance of admissions criteria being explicit. Below are the explicit admissions criteria of the MSc in Green & Digital Management:</p> <p>Admission Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Bachelor's degree from an accredited university or college. • 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. • Satisfactory quantitative skills as evidenced by the quantitative courses they have taken during their bachelor degree study. • 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. <p>There are guidelines as to the expected level of certain knowledge and competencies in quantitative methods (including statistics) and computer skills but no prior knowledge of programming is required.</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |
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5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC | Actions Taken by the Institution | For official use Only |
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| <p>Student numbers are likely to grow for what is a program that has already seen much demand. Concentrating activities in one location will mean that balancing available resources per student may not be as effective as it was in the past. There are plans to increase the number of student machines in the computer labs which will remove the need for students to use their own machines (although the EEC notes that this for this program this may not be as much of an issue). Such plans need to be more specific taking into account student increases</p> | <p>To clarify, there will be no concentration of activities in one location; the University will continue to offer the MSc programmes in both the Limassol and the Nicosia campuses. Therefore, there is no risk of disturbing the balance of available resources per student. Therefore, resource allocation will continue to be as effective as in the past.</p> <p>The IT infrastructure of computer laboratories includes hardware, software, access to countrywide resources, and access to the cloud. In terms of hardware, the number of computers increased by 33% to 30 machines in the Nicosia lab and by 60% to 16 in the Limassol lab. These computers have reasonably fast processors (>2.5 GHz), sufficient memory storage (0.5-1 Terabyte), and RAM (>4GB). Our plan to increase the number of student machines in the computer labs from the current number of nearly 50 to 150 will be implemented in two phases: 50 new machines in advance of the launching of the undergraduate programmes and another 50 machines the following year. The expected student intake of all three undergraduate programmes will not exceed 100 and will probably lower with one third being the students of the BSc in Computing growing at the rate of 10% a year according to our timeline.</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |
| <p>Collections are updated following an annual acquisition plan. Such updates can feature up-to-date text in what is a fast-evolving area.</p> | <p>Library operates a collection of more than 5000 titles of printed materials with topics reflecting the academic programs via a specialized Library Management System with a 24/7 online public catalogue. Full-text 24/7 access is provided to online academic materials of over 43 subject fields from 29 online research databases, and 4 eBook collections, using the EBSCOhost information portal. Additionally, a directory of Open Access resources is provided on at Library's Moodle page.</p> <p>Separated Library Moodle pages are prepared to meet the needs of specific programs that require key documents, resources, and direct links gathered to one space.</p> <p>Library provides updated guides regarding the following topics: a. advanced searching (multiple fields and limiters) b. searching strategies, c. research process stages, d. evaluation of resources, e. referencing (complete guides for APA, Harvard etc.).</p> <p>The library recently renewed its subscription to Turnitin, the plagiarism software's extended version that gives the</p> | <p>Choose an item.</p> |



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| | additional option of feedback and comments to improve training and independent research skills. The library is prepared to provide guidance on data management plan creation regarding future research projects. | |
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6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

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7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

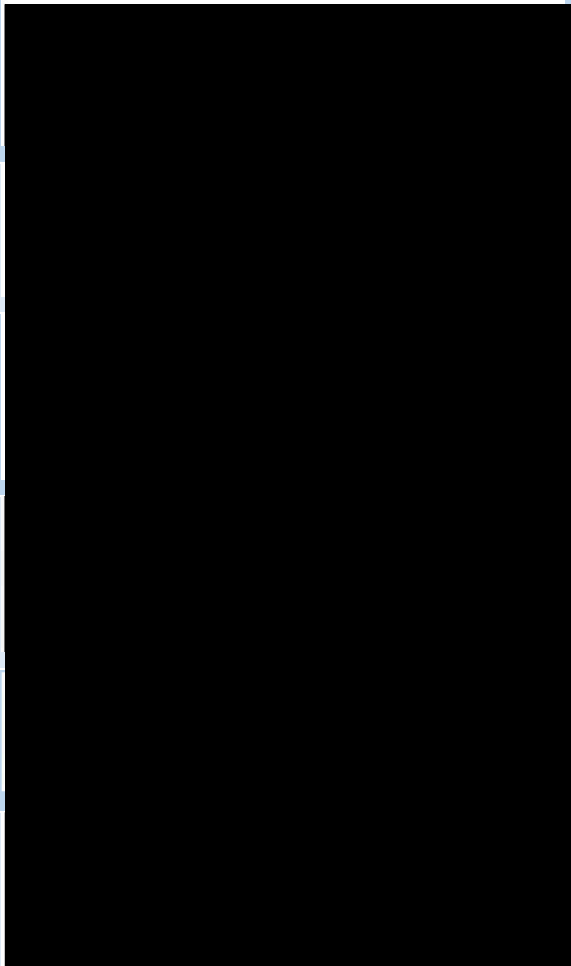
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B. Conclusions and final remarks

| Conclusions and final remarks by EEC | Actions Taken by the Institution | For official use Only |
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| Overall, the EEC concludes that the currently running MSc program in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics that was under evaluation has the potential to deliver quality education of the expected standards that complies with the standards of the CYQAA. | We are delighted at the EEC conclusion that the currently running MSc program in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics has the potential to deliver quality education, of the expected standards that complies with the standards of the CYQAA. | Choose an item. |
| In this report the EEC has provided constructive feedback to further strengthen the programme and improve its future success prospects. | We thank the EEC members for their constructive and developmental comments and recommendations which prove catalytic in further strengthening the programme and improving its success prospects. | Choose an item. |
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D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| <i>Name</i> | <i>Position</i> | <i>Signature</i> |
|---|--|---|
| Professor Theodore Panayotou | Rector (Formerly Director CIIM) |  |
| Professor Doron Sonsino | Vice Rector and Dean of Law & Social Science School | |
| Associate Professor Theodosios Mourouzis | Dean of Technology & Innovation School | |
| Professor Waldemar Pfoertsch | Director of Research Centre and Dean of Business School | |
| Assistant Professor Stathis Hadjidemetriou | Chairman Department of Information Technologies | |
| Associate Professor Theodosios Mourouzis | Coordinator MSc Business Intelligence and Data Analytics | |

Date: 11 July 2022

