Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 5th May, 2021

External Evaluation Report

(Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**

Cyprus International Institute of Management (CIIM)

- **Town:** Nicosia

- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty

- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector

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

  In Greek:

  N/A

  In English:

  Applied Information Technologies (14 months,90 ECTS, Master (MSc)) - Nic

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English

- **Programme's status:** Proposed

ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

- **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.

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) virtual-visited on 23rd April, 2021 the Cyprus International Institute for Management (CIIM) at their campuses in Nicosia and Limassol. This visit was preceded on 21st April, 2021 by a virtual briefing of the EEC by Ms Natasa Kazakouai, CYQAA. The EEC engaged in wide-ranging discussions with representatives of the different stakeholders (schedule summarised below) promoting the new MSc degree in Applied Information Technologies to be offered concurrently in the Nicosia and Limassol campuses. We commend CIIM and CYQAA for the excellent organisation of the visit and their prompt response to our requests for additional information.

10:00 - 10:40 Meeting with the Rector - Head of the Institution, and members of the Internal Evaluation Committee.

10:40 - 11:50 Director and Co-Director of MSc Applied Information Technologies programme.

12:00 - 13:00 Meeting with a selection of the academic staff listed to teach on the course.

14:00 - 14:30 Meeting with the administrative staff who will support the course.

14:30 - 15:00 Meeting with current and former students of the MSc Business Intelligence and Data Analytics and MBA programmes.

15:15 - 15:30 Discussion on the recorded video of the campus visit and infrastructure.

15:30 - 16:00 Exit discussions with the Dean, Director and Co-Director of the MSc programme under review.

18:30 - 19:30 Live streaming of the Web & Social Media Analytics course.

B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Professor D K Arvind	Chair in Distributed Wireless Computation, and Director, Centre for Speckled Computing, School of Informatics	University of Edinburgh, Scotland
Ms Ioustina Harasim	Final year undergraduate student of Computer Science	University of Cyprus, Cyprus
Professor Gregory O'Hare	Professor, School of Computer Science	University College Dublin, Ireland
Professor Sasu Tarkoma	Professor and Head, Department of Computer Science	University of Helsinki, Finland

.

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.***

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

eqar//// enqa.

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)*

- o *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
- o *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
- o *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
- o *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
- o *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
- o *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*
- o *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- o *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*
- o *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:*
    - o *selection criteria*
    - o *intended learning outcomes*
    - o *qualification awarded*
    - o *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
    - o *pass rates*
    - o *learning opportunities available to the students*
    - o *graduate employment information*

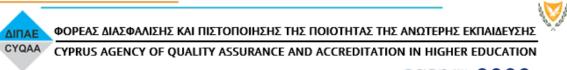## 1.4 Information management

Standards

- ● *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
    - o *key performance indicators*
    - o *profile of the student population*
    - o *student progression, success and drop-out rates*

- o *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
  - o *learning resources and student support available*
  - o *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.

1. CIIM Quality Assurance processes and instructions are documented in the Quality Assurance Handbook and there are both internal and external processes for monitoring and ensuring quality of the educational programs. The internal Quality Assurance Committee (QAC) is responsible for the QA within the school. The QAC consists of the CIIM Director, three members of the teaching staff, one member specializing in QA, two student representatives (undergraduate and graduate student), and two representatives from the administration.
2. The Academic Committee is responsible for the educational programs including creating and updating programs as well as monitoring the delivery of education. The CIIM Academic Council, consisting of academics from international universities, is an external QA mechanism responsible for the monitoring and assessment of programs.
3. A systematic program-wide review takes place every five years or when the need arises. Internal Annual Review process inspects course grade reports for irregularities.
4. The study program is based on short-term modules that students can select. A student can start the studies at any time. The modules are delivered across two distinct campuses.

Strengths

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

1. Every student is assigned a faculty member who acts as an advisor and tutor until the student graduates. The tutoring system is used to gather student feedback and detect bottlenecks in programs.
2. Staff seemed to manage effectively the delivery of the study modules across two distinct campuses. No apparent issues were identified arising from this.

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.

1. A mechanism should be developed to ensure the coherence of the study program. This is very important since the study program is based on short-term modules. It was not always clear as to the rationale adopted for the inclusion or indeed exclusion of curricula content.
2. It was less than clear as to the unique selling point of graduates from the proposed programme. Were such graduates to be software engineers/programmers or someone that understood the process of software development and would manage this process.
3. It was not fully clear how short-term and long-term recruitment planning is conducted with respect to the strategic goals of the program and the institute.
4. The staff members can allocate 30% of the work time for research; however, the strategic support for research and research-based target indicators should be clarified and communicated to the staff members.
5. The EEC observed that staff members were not fully aware of the relevant administrative processes and policies. The EEC recommends the organization of training events and tutorials for the staff

members regarding the administrative processes and increasing interaction in joint planning of the study program.

6. The lack of independent external oversight (common in reputable European Universities) of the proposed M.Sc. program and examination processes are of concern and should be addressed.

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

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

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

Sub-areas

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology
2.2 Practical training
2.3 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning 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?*

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

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

eqar//// enqa.

- ***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.

1. CIIM is a private, for-profit institution, supported by investors - implications for commitment of resources to maintain good staff-student ratio for the projected expansion in student numbers of 24 students in the first year increasing to 40 students in the second year.
2. The students have to pass 90 ECTS credits in total: of these 66 credits are compulsory and 24 credits are elective courses. The project worth 12 credits is optional.
3. The dual-campus offering has the benefits of economy of scale but has implications for the work-load on the lecturers (offering 3 modules, twice) and ensuring parity in coursework and examination levels of difficulty for the two offerings in Nicosia and Limassol.
4. The style of offering the programme modules sequentially in 2-week blocks is a practice favoured in MBA programmes. How well does this transfer to the course under review? The lecturers seem to favour it, although students hinted wanting more time to assimilate the material before the examination.
5. The course under review will be peeling some of the numerate courses from the current MSc Business Intelligence and Data Analytics programme and adding some new modules. The new course is lacking in coherence and a clear image of the strengths of the graduating students.
6. The lack of independent external oversight (common in reputable European Universities) of the proposed Masters course and examination processes is of concern and should be addressed.

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

1. CIIM's international reputation has been based on their experience of conducting the MBA course for around 30 years. More recently they have been offering a numerate MSc degree in Business Intelligence and Data Analytics. This experience will serve them well in offering the proposed new course in Applied Information Technologies.
2. CIIM has already in place the physical infrastructure and support staff to run similar courses.
3. The dual-campus offering has the benefits of economy of scale whilst providing access to postgraduate education to students living/working in the region around Limassol.

4. The 2-week long, sequential modules- based course structure with lectures and activities scheduled during evenings and Saturdays makes the course attractive for working students who wish to up-skill at the Masters level.

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.

1. CIIM should publish a work-load model for its core and adjunct faculty which balances research, teaching and administration. This should be linked to its target staff-student ratio on the proposed MSc course so that the quality of student experience and the work-life balance of teaching staff is maintained with the projected increase in student numbers.
2. The syllabus for the course should have a coherent core which reflects the image of the students graduating from the course. We would wish this to be better elucidated.
3. The Masters project should be a critical component of any postgraduate course- a significant piece of independent work which brings together the material taught in the course and supervised by a member of the teaching staff. The project should be compulsory and awarded greater credit (at least 18 credits) than is currently the case.
4. The appointment of an independent external examiner should be mandatory for the new course.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
2	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Partially compliant
2.2	Practical training (project work)	Partially compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Compliant

3. **Teaching staff** *(ESG 1.5)*

Sub-areas

> 3.1 **Teaching staff recruitment and development**
> **3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
> 3.3 **Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1 **Teaching staff recruitment and development**

Standards

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

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

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

3.3 **Synergies of teaching and research**

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*
- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

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

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

1. Overall the management of the School/Programme could benefit from further delegation of responsibilities. The creation of a cabinet to oversee key School portfolios, e.g., curriculum management, examinations, research, external engagement. Examples of routine oversight that would benefit the School would be regular programme/year review meetings; year tutors and course tutors;
2. Staff did not seem to understand how responsibilities are divided when recruiting new staff members;
3. There is a stated objective of staff to spend 30% of time in research. Staff were aware of this and seemed to believe they had sufficient time to engage in research;

4. It was observed that the staff recruited were academically strong. However, post recruitment both the number and quality of staff research outputs seemed generally to decline. This may be indicative of a number of things: too little time for research; insufficient recognition of the importance of research by the institute; an environment that does not support research;

5. The institute supports staff training and various courses are organized and available.;

6. The ratio of female staff was unclear;

7. The staff seemed to feel that the teaching burden was reasonable in particular given that often the teaching load was comprised of lectures delivered twice one at each site;

8. Anonymous student evaluations of staff are routinely conducted and this feedback is used in refinements of the material and it's presentation. This feedback seems to be freely available to staff however how this impacts upon appraisal/promotion is unclear;

9. Staff seemed to manage effectively the delivery of the module across two distinct campuses. No apparent issues were identified arising from this;

10. Research did seem to underpin teaching. However, one wonders if the curriculum programme is 'defined' wholly by the research interests of the staff. A danger exists that as a consequence there is no clear rationale for the curriculum offering.

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

A number of strengths were identified:

1. The students currently benefit from a very good teacher-student ratio (1:4). The teachers have frequent office hours and are accessible to the student body within these times and indeed beyond these times. Students reported on the high levels of support offered by staff and were highly complimentary of responsiveness of staff to queries and requests for advice/support;

2. The small student cohort seems to engendered a strong bond within the student group and indeed between students and staff.

3. Students on pre existing programmes felt that they were being equipped by the staff with relevant, sought after skill sets that were attractive to potential employers;

4. Students were supportive of the Institute's brand and the qualifications that it would ultimately bestow upon them;

5. Student feedback does seem to be duly taken into account. A student mentoring system is operational and does appear to provide an appropriate vehicle for both expression of students views/problems/feedback and a mechanism for recording and subsequently considering and addressing such issues.

6. Student welfare and wellbeing does seem to be adequately monitored;

7. Visiting and adjunct teaching staff of high quality have been used to good effect in the past. However, a policy of altering this balance and converting visiting/adjunct positions to permanent full time positions is underway. This is both noted and welcomed.

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.

1. A clear workload model needs to be agreed, discussed and updated annually to accurately reflect current workload for all staff. This model ought to be visible. Annually a staff meeting should discuss relative load and balance across the cohort of academic staff within the School/Subject area.
2. This workload model does exist but is not sufficiently evident in and seems not to be sufficient to democratise work load;
3. A clear policy needs to exist and be made visible which will incentivise and adequately reward the securing and participation in research grants. Faculty can allocate 30% of their time to research. The research emphasis is commendable; however, the staff members would benefit from additional and continuous support for research and preparing scientific publications. The number of publications and research projects reported by the teaching staff is not very high. The link between research and education could be significantly enhanced through establishing research projects and research collaborations.
4. A clear process needs to be formulated and communicated to staff around how cases for additional faculty may be made, the criteria upon which these ought to be based (eg staff Student ratio SSR), how they will be adjudicated on and who will adjudicate upon them.
5. Faculty contracts would appear to benefit from more detail and less ambiguity. Certain faculty seemed unclear as to the duration of their contract and exact details around terms and conditions.
6. Staff promotion processes need to be made clearer. Faculty did not appear to be aware of the promotion process. It appears that progression is constrained within National policies but notwithstanding this a clear policy/procedure roadmap is required and this needs to be made visible to all staff. This document should set out any staff appraisal policies, promotion application processes, assessment and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that will be used, provide examples of performance and accomplishments that would be expected of different grades;
7. Staff would benefit from teaching 'buy out' possibilities if large grants with overheads were secured;
8. Faculty would benefit from a formal year/term sabbatical scheme;

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

Sub-area		*Non-compliant/* *Partially Compliant/Compliant*
3	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Partially Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

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

eqar//// enqa.

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*

  o *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.

1. The admission procedure for recruitment of students is well defined. A degree from an accredited university or college is required. All applicants must undergo an interview with the Director and Co-Director of the program. The program's language of instruction is English and as result a proficiency of language is required.

2. The learning objectives are communicated to students for each course and students are aware of their obligations in their academic progress. The students can monitor their progress and get efficient feedback.

Strengths

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

1. The possibility is offered to students to transfer credits earned from an accredited institution.

2. Communication between students and teachers is active due to the small community.

3. A student mentoring system is operational and appears to function well.

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.

1.The selection system could include other possible aspects such as "statement of purpose", recommendations letters or a CV.

2. It is unclear in the public literature what the minimum average grade(GPA) of the applicant should be.

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

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

5. Learning resources and student support *(ESG 1.6)*

Sub-areas

5.1 **Teaching and Learning resources**
5.2 **Physical resources**
5.3 **Human support resources**
5.4 **Student support**

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

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

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

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

eqar//// enqa.

- *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.)?*

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

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

eqar//// enqa.

- *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.

1.The evaluation took place over an online meeting and the tour of the institute was based on the video and description provided through documentation. The physical resources were found to be generally of good quality, but in the remote meeting with students and graduates, it was mentioned that the infrastructure could be improved.

2. The Moodle system is used to make available the course material as well as to deliver the assignments, which increases the availability and accessibility of the content of the program. It is also used for communication between teachers and students to solve any questions that may appear.

3.There is a computer laboratory, which can be used daily during the opening hours and it offers high-end computers, 6 servers and internet connection in all areas. There are also 5 classrooms,1 amphitheater,1 library that can be used as a study space and 1 room for seminars,in the institute in Nicosia. In the institute in Limassol there are 4 classrooms and 1 library that can be used as a study space.

4.The library has signed exchange/loan agreements with other libraries in Cyprus.

5. On registration, every student is assigned a member of the academic faculty who acts as his/her academic advisor, until he/she graduates. It must be ensured that the student receives effective support, appropriate to their individual needs.

Strengths

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

1. Flexibility of the programme to offer part time study and lectures in the evenings after office hours for workers.

2.The physical infrastructure and premises can be accessible to students with disabilities.

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.

1.The computer laboratory supports a capacity of 33 people and contains more than 15 computers, and as a result the students must often work in groups during the lessons according to how the lecturer assigns them. This does not allow each student to work individually on a computer. The ratio of computers to students at the institute could be improved.

2.A student cannot have remotely access to files stored on a laboratory computer.It would be a nice idea to support a VPN service where it will allow students to access the institute's network directly through a secure encrypted channel and thus be able to access their files as well as the laboratory's resources.

3.The institute can consider adding a new computer laboratory that will be accessible 24/7.

4.The institute needs to ensure that the adequacy of resources (i.e. course materials,subscriptions, IT resources) is maintained and refreshed.

5.There was an issue ordering the necessary hard copies of books and we commend joining the collective purchasing scheme. More investment is required in subscriptions to e-books and e-journals. Also, it is recommended to continue the investment in the library (electronic and physical) resources.

6.It would be good if the institute makes available space for group and individual study in addition to the current facilities in the classrooms and library.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
5	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

6. Additional for doctoral programmes *(ALL ESG)*

<u>**Sub-areas**</u>

    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:*
    - o *the stages of completion*
    - o *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
    - o *the examinations*
    - o *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
    - o *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:*
    - o *the chapters that are contained*
    - o *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
    - o *the minimum word limit*
    - o *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.

N/A

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

N/A

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

N/A

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
6	Selection criteria and requirements	N/A
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	N/A
6.3	Supervision and committees	N/A

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 CIIM has an international reputation for delivering targeted MBA and MSc courses for the past 30 years. There is both a national and international demand for taught MSc courses in Applied Information Technologies. The delivery style of sequential, intensive 2-week long modules of teaching, coursework and examination has been adapted from the MBA courses. The dual-campus model offers economy of scale and ensures that the students living and working in Limassol have access to postgraduate courses targeted at the working population who wish to upskill. These are some of the good reasons for delivering this new course.

However, the panel has also identified some deficiencies which once addressed will result in a course which will be in demand in Cyprus and in the eastern Mediterranean region.

1. The EEC recommends the creation of a *cabinet* which would oversee the effective delivery of the proposed programme. It is necessary to delegate responsibility and in so doing remove burden upon key resources like the Dean and also empowering and developing key managerial staff.

2. The *cabinet* would also be instrumental in ensuring the coherence of the study module-based program.

3. We would recommend that the importance of the individual project is recognised on the course and is given its due credit weightage.

4. The provision of a mandatory independent external examiner is necessary in order to provide oversight of the MSc programme.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Professor D K Arvind	
Ms Ioustina Harasim	
Professor Gregory O'Hare	
Professor Sasu Tarkoma	

Date: 5th May, 2021