Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education

Republic of Cyprus

External Evaluation Report
Program of Study

Institution: American College

District: Nicosia

Name of the Program of Study in Greek:

Πγνξέκ Ορβθ Πζβλκφκλδεά

Name of the Program of Study in English:

Bachelor Degree in Computing and Information Technology

Department: Computer Science

Language/s of instruction: English / Greek

Faculty: Computer Science

Program Status (check √ where applicable):

➢ New Program of Study: √
➢ Currently operation Program of Study:
  • Registered but not evaluated
  • Evaluated and accredited by SEKAP
  • Evaluated by the Cy.Q.A.A. and did not get accreditation

Program Category (check √ where applicable):
➢ Conventional √
➢ Distance Learning
➢ Inter-university (Name of collaborating university/ies)

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INSTRUCTIONS:

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 2016" [N. 136 (I)/2015].

The document is duly completed by the External Evaluation Committee for each program of study. The ANNEX (Doc. Number 300.1) constitutes an integral part of the external evaluation report for the external evaluation accreditation of a program of study.

EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE:

NAME	TITLE AND RANK	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION
Philippe BONNET	Professor	IT University of Copenhagen
Schahram DUSTDAR	Professor	TU Vienna
Yehuda AFEK	Professor	Tel Aviv University

INTRODUCTION:

I. The External Evaluation procedure

The documents that we studied include:
- The application form with tables describing the structure of the program as a list of major requirements, math requirements and elective courses, the course distribution per semester, the course distribution per teacher, the teacher load;
- Annexes with course descriptions, the CV of teachers, a description of the infrastructure at AC (campus, library, classrooms, etc), the AC quality assurance guide and an evaluation form for student facilities and services;
- A self-evaluation based on the accreditation form, where all criteria are marked as YES with corresponding explanations.

Visit: In the onsite visit we met the AC Director, Dr Americanos, as well as four teaching staff members. The Computer Science related teaching staff of the evaluated program consists of five lecturers, out of which four were present at the visit. There was no presentation prepared or made by the AC staff, rather, we were expected to jump right into the discussion of the program. Our interviews began with analyzing the structure of the AC itself, followed by a lengthy analysis of the teaching personnel and a discussion with the four present members of the teaching staff. Furthermore, we interviewed administrative staff as well as four international students.

Infrastructure: We visited all of the AC infrastructure relevant for the evaluation such as teaching classrooms, library, cafeteria, and computer labs. We visited four computer/networking labs as well as the central server room and some offices of the lecturers.

II. The Internal Evaluation procedure

We have thoroughly read the documents, and discussed at length the situation with the staff of the American College (AC), the academic staff, management, administration and students. The application in its current form has major weaknesses including major issues with the document itself.

Let us be clear, that while we have major concerns with the application we found some of the teachers and staff as competent and highly motivated, such as, Dr Yianna Danidou, Dr Giannos Antoniou, and others. These people are doing their very best, work very hard, and did the maximum possible for its success. In a way they were given a task that requires a larger team with higher qualities. It seems to be beyond their capabilities without additional personal.

Issues with the document include the fact that 14 faculty members are listed as contributors to this program, while there only 4 IT currently employed teachers (and one currently being considered for being hired based on the acceptance of this program). Another significant issue is the curriculum vitae of Pavlos Panayi. It lists three publications, two of which are just one (that appears twice in exactly the same way, looks like a copy and paste fail, but a too gross for a typo). While we were able

to find and verify these publications on the web and in the mentioned journals, they appear to have been published by a different set of authors. Pavlos Panayi is not listed as one of the authors of either publication as recorded by these journals. This must be explained or corrected in a new application, if one is to be submitted. In the same way, all other information provided in the entire document must be verified and checked correct.

FINDINGS:

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES

The student admission requirements to the program of study, are based on specific regulations. Based on what we were shown, we conclude that the number of students in each class allows for constructive teaching and communication, and it compares positively to the current international standards and/or practices. The organization of the educational process safeguards the quality implementation of the program's purpose and objectives and the achievement of the learning outcomes. The implementation of the specific academic calendar and its timely publication is achieved. The disclosure of the program's curricula to the students, and their implementation by the teaching personnel is achieved.

The program web-pages, updated with the relevant supplementary material is somewhat *problematic*. For example, the Bachelor course on Computing and Information Technology is published online on the AC website, even based on our information from the agency, this should not be the case. The individual course webpages would be based on Moodle, but we have not verified their existence, since the program has not yet started.

The procedures for the fulfillment of undergraduate and postgraduate assignments / practical training could be partially verified in the discussions with the teaching staff.

The procedures for the conduct and the format of the examinations and for student assessment could be partially verified in the discussions with the teaching staff as well as with the administrative staff.

The effective provision of information to the students and the enhancement of their participation in the procedures for the improvement of the educational process could be partially verified in the discussions with the teaching staff.

Moderate learning resources are available to the students, including the facilities such as the library, the general infrastructure, student welfare, and academic mentoring, as far as we can judge. Judging from what we were shown, we cannot say that the facilities are modern and adequate, but rather moderate.

A written policy for regular and effective communication, between the teaching personnel and the students, is applied, though we cannot verify fully as regarding its effectiveness and efficiency. As far as we can see, the teaching personnel, for each course, provide timely and effective feedback to the students. Statutory mechanisms, for the support of students and the communication with the teaching personnel, are effective. Control mechanisms for student performance are effective. Support mechanisms for students with problematic academic performance are in place mainly via utilizing the office hours of the teachers. Students, who have issues,

contact the individual teachers and/or the head of the respective departments during the office hours. If the problems are solved effectively, is not possible for us to verify. The students we interviewed stated that in some cases the students themselves are also utilized to help mitigating problems, such as finding appropriate housing.

The area of academic mentoring processes is somewhat transparent for undergraduate and postgraduate programs and are taken into consideration for the calculation of academic workload. If they are effective as they are, we cannot verify at this stage.

We cannot verify if the program of study applies an effective policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism. The documents do not mention this and also there was no mention of this in the interviews. We cannot verify if the program of study provides satisfactory mechanisms for complaint management and for dispute resolution.

2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS

The creation of a BSc program on Computing and Information Technology at AC, in addition to the existing diploma program is motivated by the need for IT professionals in Cyprus. However, there is no clear connection between the program and the Cypriot labor market and society, neither in the documents that we reviewed or in the discussions we had during our visit. The program is clearly aimed at the segment of the international student market that can afford a 4 years program.
The program is managed by the head of Computer Science, Dr. Yianna Danidou. This double role is justified, as teaching is the dominant activity in the department.

The program is defined as a two year extension of the existing diploma program. Teaching activities is shared between diploma and bachelor students, specially in the first two years. This is not good academic practice. The level of teaching naturally goes to the minimum level of the students.

A BSc program was submitted by the AC to the ministry many years ago (no precise date was given during the interview) but never accredited. No students were accepted on that BSc program. The list of courses for this BSc program was available online during our site visit so that we could compare the years-old proposal with the current proposal: major requirements are essentially unchanged, electives have been added. This has several negative consequences:
1. A key difference between the years-old proposal and the current proposal is that the course "Theory of Computation" has been dropped, because of the high failure rate among diploma students. However, such a course is a necessary foundation for Bachelor students in Computing and Information Technology.
2. There is project work in some courses, but the only independent project work making possible for students to apply what they have studied in separate courses is the 4th year project. A project course for Bachelor students in the 2th year would not be shared with diploma students.
3. A course such as "web designing" is outdated and is not appropriate for a Bachelor program in Computing and Information Technology.
4. The courses computer programming and computer programming II are based on C++. Introducing programming to bachelor students through a different

programming language (e.g., Python) would require a separation between diploma and bachelor courses.

The syllabi of several course such as, Data Bases, Computer Networks, Object Oriented Programming, Computer Programming I & II, and Web design are out of date and should be revised and updated. Some important courses are missing and their addition should be considered: Obligatory: Distributed Systems, Basic theory of Computer Science, seminar (where students read a paper or report and present it to the class).

Students are admitted to the program three times a year. Students that start their study in the spring semester might have to follow computer programming II before computer programming I, or computer science project II before computer science project I. This is unacceptable.

The languages of study for the program are English and Greek. At this time, all courses are proposed in English. AC plans to give courses in both English and Greek if the demand materializes. This would require a significant increase of the teaching staff, which is already seriously understaffed.

A guideline is described for the quality assurance process in the submitted document. It describes the process for the development of new programs, the monitoring of the education offered as well as the review/modification/discontinuation of existing programs. Our visit established that business considerations drove decisions in the preparation of this new BSc program.

3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING

The intended Bachelor program on Computing and Information Technology cannot ensure that teaching and learning are adequately "enlightened by research". The reasons are manifold. As a college in which there are in total of five teachers who focus on the main obligatory technical courses, it cannot be expected that teaching is based on recent technical research. The teachers are basically occupied fully by simply teaching. Therefore, new research results are not embodied in the content of the program of study. On the positive side, the program includes Cloud Computing and IoT as new topics for elective courses, which are intended to be included. It remains to be seen if that can actually happen. The reason is that those areas require a deep and technical dedication of teachers and students.

It is safe to say that only moderate facilities and equipment are provided to support the research component of the program of study, which are available and accessible to the personnel and the students. Current facilities are unlikely to be reasonably appropriate for modern topics such as Cloud Computing and IoT.

We cannot confirm that results of the academic personnel's research activity are published in international journals with the peer-reviewing system, in international conferences, and publications. There is some evidence of publications of personnel mainly during their respective PhD years, but it is not very impressive.

We cannot verify or confirm any external, non-governmental, funding for the academic personnel's research activities. Internal funding, of the academic personnel's research activities, is very moderate. Roughly 10,000 Euro per year for all academic personnel was mentioned by the AC director, Dr Americanos. That amount would need to be split between all teaching staff. This is not enough.

The policy for, indirect or direct, internal funding of the academic personnel's research activity is not specified in detail. It appears to be on the basis of "per request". We have no indication to believe that there is any participation of students in research activities. Student training in the research process is not specified and therefore, not sufficient.

4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK

There is a Student Welfare Service that supports students with regards to academic and personal problems and difficulties. Statutory administrative mechanisms for monitoring and supporting students are sufficient. The efficiency of these mechanisms is assessed on the basis of specific criteria.

There are some books and journals supporting the program of the application, however, we could not verify the quality level of them. The library consists of one rather small room for all topics and we did not have the means to verify individual books or journals. There is a supportive internal communication platform based on Moodle. The facilities are moderately adequate in number and size. The equipment used in teaching and learning (laboratory and electronic equipment, consumables etc) are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate, however, as said before, for teaching purposes in the domain of IoT and AI more advanced equipment is very likely to be needed.
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Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are accessible to students. If they are of quality, are adequate, and are updated regularly could not be verified in this visit. Furthermore, we could not verify that the teaching personnel are provided with training opportunities in teaching methods, in adult education, and in new technologies on the basis of a structured learning framework.

The management and allocation of the financial resources of the program of study, for the development of the program and of the academic / teaching personnel is purely based on business considerations. If decisions are based on academic excellence or needs of the teaching personnel (as it should) cannot be verified.

The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters, is not in responsibility of the relevant academic departments but rather solely the decision of Dr Americanos.

We cannot verify if the remuneration of academic and other personnel is analogous to the remuneration of academic and other personnel of the respective institutions in Cyprus. Salaries were not disclosed.

Student tuition and fees are consistent to the tuition and fees of other respective institutions. This is due to the fact that the upper bound of the tuition fees is set by the ministry.

5. DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS

Not applicable.

6. DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY

Not applicable.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS OF THE EXTERNAL EVALUATION COMMITTEE[1]

As currently proposed, the program has several significant weaknesses that all relate to the fact that academic considerations are subordinate to business decisions:

- The BSc program is designed as a two-year extension of a diploma program. The two first years of the BSc education are the diploma education;
- The BSc program is recycled from an old proposal with few changes to the major requirements and addition of electives;
- The entire BSc program relies on five (four already employed to the best of our understandings) IT teachers, leaving no opportunity for research or research-based teaching;
- Issues associated with multiple admission dates or Greek and English language courses that may require a significant increase in teaching staff are not properly addressed.

The subordination of academic considerations to business decisions is not specific to AC, it is a systemic problem for colleges in Cyprus, as far as we can tell. Establishing a much higher academic independence from financial considerations is a must for any program that issues academic degrees. The suggested program would mislead international students that would get in Cyprus a lower-than-expected education, below the minimum of the state of the art for BScs.

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[1] It is highlighted, at this point, that the External Evaluation Committee is expected to justify its findings and its suggestions on the basis of the Document num.: 300.1. The External Evaluation Committee is not expected to submit a suggestion for the approval or the rejection of the program of study under evaluation. This decision falls under the competencies of the Council of the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation of higher education.

Quality Standards and Indicators

External Evaluation of a Program of Study

Institution: …………………………

Program of Study: …………………………

Duration of the Program of Study: ………………………….

Evaluation Date:…………………………

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The document describes the quality standards and indicators, which will be applied for the external evaluation of programs of study of institutions of higher education, by the External Evaluation Committee.

DIRECTIONS: Note what is applicable **for each quality standard/indicator**.

1. Poor
2. To an unsatisfactory degree
3. To a satisfactory degree
4. Best practice
5. Excellent

It is pointed out that, in the case of standards and indicators that cannot be applied due to the status of the institution and/or of the program of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the institution's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality standard or indicator.

Members of the External Evaluation Committee

NAME	TITLE AND RANK	UNIVERSITY / INSTITUTION
Philippe BONNET	Professor	IT University of Copenhagen
Schahram DUSTDAR	Professor	TU Vienna
Yehuda AFEK	Professor	Tel Aviv University

Date and Time of the On-Site Visit: March 5th 9am-4pm

Duration of the On-Site Visit: 6 hours

1. EFFECTIVENESS OF TEACHING WORK – AVAILABLE RESOURCES							
1.1	**Organization of teaching work**		**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1.1.1	The student admission requirements to the program of study, are based on specific regulations which are adhered to in a consistent manner.					X	
1.1.2	The number of students in each class allows for constructive teaching and communication, and it compares positively to the current international standards and/or practices.					X	
1.1.3	The organization of the educational process safeguards the quality implementation of the program's purpose and objectives and the achievement of the learning outcomes. Particularly, the following are taken into consideration:						
	1.1.3.1	The implementation of a specific academic calendar and its timely publication.		X			
	1.1.3.2	The disclosure of the program's curricula to the students, and their implementation by the teaching personnel				X	
	1.1.3.3	The course web-pages, updated with the relevant supplementary material			X		
	1.1.3.4	The procedures for the fulfillment of undergraduate and postgraduate assignments / practical training			X		
	1.1.3.5	The procedures for the conduct and the format of the examinations and for student assessment			X		
	1.1.3.6	The effective provision of information to the students and the enhancement of their participation in the procedures for the improvement of the educational process.			X		
1.1.4	Adequate and modern learning resources, are available to the students, including the following:						
	1.1.4.1	facilities			X		
	1.1.4.2	library			X		
	1.1.4.3	infrastructure			X		
	1.1.4.4	student welfare			X		
	1.1.4.5	academic mentoring			X		

			1	2	3	4	5
1.1.5	A policy for regular and effective communication, between the teaching personnel and the students, is applied.				X		
1.1.6	The teaching personnel, for each course, provide timely and effective feedback to the students.				X		
1.1.7	Statutory mechanisms, for the support of students and the communication with the teaching personnel, are effective.				X		
1.1.8	Control mechanisms for student performance are effective.				X		
1.1.9	Support mechanisms for students with problematic academic performance are effective.				X		
1.1.10	Academic mentoring processes are transparent and effective for undergraduate and postgraduate programs and are taken into consideration for the calculation of academic work load.				X		
1.1.11	The program of study applies an effective policy for the prevention and detection of plagiarism.		X				
1.1.12	The program of study provides satisfactory mechanisms for complaint management and for dispute resolution.				X		

See Section 1 for justifications.

AC expects 60% international students in the program. We met students from Bengladesh, Philippines, Sri Lanka and Nigeria.

The maximum number of student per class is set to 20.

1.2	**Teaching**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1.2.1	The methodology utilized in each course is suitable for achieving the course's purpose and objectives and those of the individual modules.			X		
1.2.2	The methodology of each course is suitable for adults.			X		
1.2.3	Continuous-formative assessment and feedback are provided to the students regularly.				X	
1.2.4	The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance, are clear, adequate, and known to the students.			X		
1.2.5	Educational activities which encourage students' active participation in the learning process, are implemented.		X			
1.2.6	Teaching incorporates the use of modern educational technologies that are consistent with international				X	

		1	2	3	4	5
	standards, including a platform for the electronic support of learning.					
1.2.7	Teaching materials (books, manuals, journals, databases, and teaching notes) meet the requirements set by the methodology of the program's individual courses, and are updated regularly.		x			

Course syllabus is based on textbooks.
1.2.3 use of moodle
1.2.5. No seminar, only one project.
1.2.7 some textbooks are old

1.3	**Teaching Personnel**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
1.3.1	The number of full-time academic personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, and their fields of expertise, adequately support the program of study.	x				
1.3.2	The members of teaching personnel for each course have the relevant formal and fundamental qualifications for teaching the course, as described by the legislation, including the following:					
	1.3.2.1	Subject specialization, preferably with a doctorate, in the discipline.		x			
	1.3.2.2	Publications within the discipline.	x				
1.3.3	The specializations of Visiting Professors adequately support the program of study.					
1.3.4	Special Teaching Personnel and Special Scientists have the necessary qualifications, adequate work experience and specialization to teach a limited number of courses in the program of study.					
1.3.5	In every program of study the Special Teaching Personnel does not exceed 30% of the Teaching Research Personnel.					
1.3.6	The teaching personnel of each private institution of tertiary education, to a percentage of at least 70%, has recognized academic qualification, by one level higher than that of the program of study in which he/she teaches.				x	
1.3.7	In the program of study, the ratio of the number of courses taught by full-time personnel, occupied exclusively at the institution, to the number of courses taught by part-time personnel, ensures the quality of the program of study.				x	

No.	Description				
1.3.8	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching personnel is adequate for the support and safeguarding of the program's quality.				X
1.3.9	The academic personnel's teaching load does not limit the conduct of research, writing, and contribution to the society.	x			
1.3.10	Future redundancies / retirements, expected recruitment and promotions of academic personnel safeguard the unimpeded implementation of the program of study within a five-year span.		X		
1.3.11	The program's Coordinator has the qualifications and experience to efficiently coordinate the program of study.			X	

1.3.3 no mention of visiting professor in the context of this program.

1.3.4, 1.3.5 no special teaching personel

1.3.10 ad-hoc, no plans

2. PROGRAM OF STUDY AND HIGHER EDUCATION QUALIFICATIONS							
2.1	**Purpose and Objectives and learning outcomes of the Program of Study**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2.1.1	The purpose and objectives of the program of study are formulated in terms of expected learning outcomes and are consistent with the mission and the strategy of the institution.				x	
2.1.2	The purpose and objectives of the program and the learning outcomes are utilized as a guide for the design of the program of study.	x				
2.1.3	The higher education qualification and the program of study conform to the provisions of their corresponding Professional and Vocational Bodies for the purpose of registration to these bodies.			x		
2.1.4	The program's content, the methods of assessment, the teaching materials and the equipment, lead to the achievement of the program's purpose and objectives and ensure the expected learning outcomes.		x			
2.1.5	The expected learning outcomes of the program are known to the students and to the members of the academic and teaching personnel.				x	
2.1.6	The learning process is properly designed to achieve the expected learning outcomes.			x		
2.1.7	The higher education qualification awarded to the students, corresponds to the purpose and objectives and the learning outcomes of the program.		x			

2.1.2: The diploma courses are used for the 2 first years of the program. This is a business decision, not an academic consideration.

2.2	**Structure and Content of the Program of Study**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2.2.1	The course curricula clearly define the expected learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the method of assessing student performance.			x		
2.2.2	The European Credit Transfer System (ECTS) is applied and there is true correspondence between credits and workload per course and per semester for the student either he / she studies in a specific program or he/she is registered and studies simultaneously in additional programs of studies			x		

		1	2	3	4	5
	according to the European practice in higher education institutions.					
2.2.3	The program of study is structured in a consistent manner and in sequence, so that concepts operating as preconditions precede the teaching of other, more complex and cognitively more demanding, concepts.	x				
2.2.4	The higher education qualification awarded, the learning outcomes and the content of the program are consistent.		x			
2.2.5	The program, in addition to the courses focusing on the specific discipline, includes an adequate number of general education courses.				x	
2.2.6	The content of courses and modules, and the corresponding educational activities are suitable for achieving the desired learning outcomes with regards to the knowledge, skills, and abilities which should be acquired by students.		x			
2.2.7	The number and the content of the program's courses are sufficient for the achievement of learning outcomes.		x			
2.2.8	The content of the program's courses reflects the latest achievements / developments in science, arts, research and technology.	x				
2.2.9	Flexible options / adaptable to the personal needs or to the needs of students with special needs, are provided.		x			

2.2.3: Issues with multiple admission dates are not properly addressed.

2.2.8: The program is recycled from an old proposal.

2.3	**Quality Assurance of the Program of Study**	1	2	3	4	5
2.3.1	The arrangements regarding the program's quality assurance define clear competencies and procedures.			x		
2.3.2	Participation in the processes of the system of quality assurance of the program, is ensured for					
	2.3.2.1 the members of the academic personnel			x		
	2.3.2.2 the members of the administrative personnel			x		
	2.3.2.3 the students.			x		
2.3.3	The guide and / or the regulations for quality assurance, provide detailed information and data for the support and		x			

		1	2	3	4	5
	management of the program of study.					
2.3.4	The quality assurance process constitutes an academic process and it is not restricted by non-academic factors.	x				

2.3.4: Academic considerations are subordinate to business decisions.

2.4	**Management of the Program of Study**	1	2	3	4	5
2.4.1	Effective management of the program of study with regard to its design, its approval, its monitoring and its review, is in place.				x	
2.4.2	It is ensured that learning outcomes may be achieved within the specified timeframe.			x		
2.4.3	It is ensured that the program's management and development process is an academic process which operates without any non-academic interventions.	x				
2.4.4	The academic hierarchy of the institution, (Rector, Vice-Rectors, Deans, Chairs and Programs' Coordinators, academic personnel) have the sole responsibility for academic excellence and the development of the programs of study.			x		
2.4.5	Information relating to the program of study are posted publicly and include:					
	2.4.5.1 The provisions regarding unit credits					
	2.4.5.2 The expected learning outcomes					
	2.4.5.3 The methodology					
	2.4.5.4 Course descriptions					
	2.4.5.5 The program's structure					
	2.4.5.6 The admission requirements					
	2.4.5.7 The format and the procedures for student assessment					
2.4.6	The award of the higher education qualification is accompanied by the Diploma Supplement which is in line with the European and international standards.				x	
2.4.7	The effectiveness of the program's evaluation mechanism, by the students, is ensured.			x		

2.4.8	The recognition and transfer of credit units from previous studies is regulated by procedures and regulations which ensure that the majority of credit units is awarded by the institution which awards the higher education qualification.		X		

2.4.3: Academic considerations are subordinate to business decisions.

2.4.5 is not applicable

2.5	**International Dimension of the Program of Study**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2.5.1	The program's collaborations with other institutions are compared positively with corresponding collaborations of other departments / programs of study in Europe and internationally.					
2.5.2	The program attracts Visiting professors of recognized academic standing.					
2.5.3	Students participate in exchange programs.					
2.5.4	The academic profile of the program of study is compatible with corresponding programs of study in Cyprus and internationally.		X			

AC has a list of Erasmus partners. However, this is not applicable to this program yet. So, 2.5.1, 2.5.2 and 2.5.3 are not applicable.

2.6	**Connection with the labor market and the society**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2.6.1	The procedures applied, so that the program conforms to the scientific and professional activities of the graduates, are adequate and effective.			X		
2.6.2	According to the feasibility study, indicators for the employability of graduates are satisfactory.			X		
2.6.3	Benefits, for the society, deriving from the program are significant.			X		

3. RESEARCH WORK AND SYNERGIES WITH TEACHING						
3.1	**Research - Teaching Synergies**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3.1.1	It is ensured that teaching and learning have been adequately enlightened by research.	x				
3.1.2	New research results are embodied in the content of the program of study.	x				
3.1.3	Adequate and sufficient facilities and equipment are provided to support the research component of the program of study, which are available and accessible to the personnel and the students.	x				
3.1.4	The results of the academic personnel's research activity are published in international journals with the peer-reviewing system, in international conferences, conference minutes, publications etc.	x				
3.1.5	External, non-governmental, funding for the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.	x				
3.1.6	Internal funding, of the academic personnel's research activities, is compared positively to the funding of other institutions in Cyprus and abroad.	x				
3.1.7	The policy for, indirect or direct, internal funding of the academic personnel's research activity is satisfactory.	x				
3.1.8	The participation of students, academic, teaching and administrative personnel of the program in research activities and projects is satisfactory.	x				
3.1.9	Student training in the research process is sufficient.	x				
See Section 3.						

4. ADMINISTRATION SERVICES, STUDENT WELFARE AND SUPPORT OF TEACHING WORK						
4.1	**Administrative Mechanisms**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4.1.1	There is a Student Welfare Service that supports students with regards to academic and personal problems and difficulties.		x			

		1	2	3	4	5
4.1.2	Statutory administrative mechanisms for monitoring and supporting students are sufficient.			x		
4.1.3	The efficiency of these mechanisms is assessed on the basis of specific criteria.		x			

4.2	**Infrastructure / Support**	1	2	3	4	5
4.2.1	There are suitable books and reputable journals supporting the program.		x			
4.2.2	There is a supportive internal communication platform.			x		
4.2.3	The facilities are adequate in number and size.			x		
4.2.4	The equipment used in teaching and learning (laboratory and electronic equipment, consumables etc) are quantitatively and qualitatively adequate.			x		
4.2.5	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are adequate and accessible to students.			x		
4.2.6	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) are updated regularly with the most recent publications.		x			
4.2.7	The teaching personnel are provided with training opportunities in teaching method, in adult education, and in new technologies on the basis of a structured learning framework.		x			

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4.3	**Financial Resources**	1	2	3	4	5
4.3.1	The management and allocation of the financial resources of the program of study, allow for the development of the program and of the academic / teaching personnel.	x				
4.3.2	The allocation of financial resources as regards to academic matters, is the responsibility of the relevant academic departments.	x				
4.3.3	The remuneration of academic and other personnel is analogous to the remuneration of academic and other personnel of the respective institutions in Cyprus.					

4.3.4	Student tuition and fees are consistent to the tuition and fees of other respective institutions.				x	

Academic considerations are subordinate to business decisions from AC owners.

4.3.3 not applicable

The following criterion applies additionally for distance learning programs of study.

5.	DISTANCE LEARNING PROGRAMS	1	2	3	4	5
5.1	Feedback processes for teaching personnel with regards to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.					
5.2	The process and the conditions for the recruitment of academic / teaching personnel, ensure that candidates have the necessary skills and experience for long distance education.					
5.3	Through established procedures, appropriate training, guidance and support, are provided to teaching personnel, to enable it to efficiently support the educational process.					
5.4	Student performance monitoring mechanisms are satisfactory.					
5.5	Adequate mentoring by the teaching personnel, is provided to students, through established procedures.					
5.6	The unimpeded long distance communication between the teaching personnel and the students, is ensured to a satisfactory degree.					
5.7	Assessment consistency, its equivalent application to all					

	students, and the compliance with predefined procedures, are ensured.					
5.8	Teaching materials (books, manuals, scientific journals, databases) comply with the requirements provided by the long distance education methodology and are updated regularly.					
5.9	The program of study has the appropriate and adequate infrastructure for the support of learning.					
5.10	The supporting infrastructures are easily accessible.					
5.11	Students are informed and trained with regards to the available educational infrastructure.					
5.12	The procedures for systematic control and improvement of the supportive services are regular and effective.					
5.13	Infrastructure for distance education is comparable to university infrastructure in the European Union and internationally.					
5.14	Electronic library services are provided according to international practice in order to support the needs of the students and of the teaching personnel.					
5.15	The students and the teaching personnel have access to the necessary electronic sources of information, relevant to the program, the level, and the method of teaching.					
5.16	The percentage of teaching personnel who holds a doctorate, in a program of study which is offered long distance, is not less than 75%.					

Not applicable

If the following apply, note "√"in the appropriate space next to each statement. In case the following statements do not apply, note what is applicable:

The maximum number of students per class-section, should not exceed 30 students.	
The conduct of written examinations with the physical presence of the students, under the supervision of the institution or under the supervision of reliable agencies which operate in the countries of the students, is compulsory.	

The number of long distance classes taught by the academic personnel does not exceed the number of courses taught by the teaching personnel in conventional programs of study.	

Not applicable

The following criterion applies additionally for doctoral programs of study.

6.	DOCTORAL PROGRAMS OF STUDY	1	2	3	4	5
6.1	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through Doctoral Studies Regulations.					
6.2	The structure and the content of a doctoral program of study are satisfactory and they ensure the quality provision of doctoral studies.					
6.3	The number of academic personnel, which is going to support the doctoral program of study, is adequate.					
6.4	The doctoral studies' supervisors have the necessary academic qualifications and experience for the supervision of the specific dissertations.					
6.5	The degree of accessibility of all interested parties to the Doctoral Studies Regulations is satisfactory.					
6.6	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the academic personnel, is apt for the continuous and effective feedback provided to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.					
6.7	The research interests of academic advisors and supervisors are satisfactory and they adequately cover the thematic areas of research conducted by the doctoral					

students of the program.				

Not applicable

FINAL REMARKS – SUGGESTIONS

As currently proposed, the program has several significant weaknesses that all realte to the fact that academic considerations are subordinate to business decisions:

- The BSc program is designed as a two-year extension of a diploma program. The two first years of the BSc education are the diploma education;
- The BSc program is recycled from an old proposal with few changes to the major requirements and addition of electives;
- The entire BSc program relies on five (four already employed to the best of our understandings) IT teachers, leaving no opportunity for research or research-based teaching;
- Issues associated with multiple admission dates or Greek and English language courses that may require a significant increase in teaching staff are not properly addressed.

The subordination of academic considerations to business decisions is not specific to AC, it is a systemic problem for colleges in Cyprus, as far as we can tell. Establishing a much higher academic independence from financial considerations is a must for any program that issues academic degrees. The suggested program would mislead international students that would get in Cyprus, a lower than expected education, below the minimum of the state of the art for BScs.

Names and Signatures of the Chair and the Members of the External Evaluation Committee:

Name:	Signature:
Philippe BONNET	
Schahram DUSTDAR	
Yehuda AFEK	
Nikolas MIKANNOS	

Date: March 7th 2019

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