

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 26/08/2022

Higher Education Institution's Response

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

In Greek:

Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων (4 Έτη / 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

In English:

Business Management (4 Years / 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Arts)

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

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].

A. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p><i>More explicit input from local practitioners could have enhanced the practical nature of the programme and the potentially employability prospects of its graduates</i></p>	<p>Through this programme of study, KES College aims to promote and foster experiential learning and a lifelong learning mindset, as a basis for positive societal impact. Apart from the courses that embed the environmental and social impacts of business processes, this programme of study will enhance the experiences of learners, through their active participation in lectures by industry professionals that have been arranged for the forthcoming Academic Year, (Please see Annex 4). Students of the programme of study (as all other of the college's students) have the opportunity to attend trainings and workshops organised by the KES Professional Training Centre.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><i>Feasibility of changing to Greek in terms of getting enough students is a questionable one. This is not just a challenge with regards to recruiting students, but also with regards to the effort required by the teaching team to produce/refresh materials in a given language in what appears to be a short time window between recruitment and the start of term.</i></p>	<p>KES College has a clear strategy, with regards to ensuring the sustainability of the bilingual provision for this programme of study. As part of our strategic review during the design and development process, and the identification of the gaps and areas for improvement, the conclusion was clear that this programme of study has to be offered in both Greek and English as the market has a significant potential. On a micro-strategic basis, critical issues were identified, to address the smooth implementation of this programme of study, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bilingual design and development: The syllabi have been developed with the participation of teaching staff, in both Greek and English, and are available since the third Quarter of 2021. Therefore, the teaching staff has already had the opportunity to become familiar with the course materials, relevant bibliography and all associated resources in both languages needed for the delivery of the courses. • Market segmentation: A thorough analysis has been performed regarding the market segments of most interest. The analysis has shown that our main focus should be given to the domestic market (Greek speakers), while the overseas students are expected to show increased interest at a later time. 	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><i>It would be useful to consider how to best position the courses so that stages 1 and 2 are more diverse and engaging to ensure that students develop and maintain an interest in the</i></p>	<p>In order to achieve a smooth student progression, we employed "The Funnel Approach" which was adapted for the courses of this programme of study. Each year only has compulsory courses, where on the first year we begin with a slow introduction to business and management and proceed further to the broader</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p><i>programme. In turn, such a reshuffling could help address the imbalance that currently exists when it comes to practising and assessing the learning outcomes. Courses dealing with contemporary issues, e.g. the courses on Business & Society, Global Environment Problems, and Business & Management in a Global Context could be used to give the programme an edge and a more explicit differentiation from other institutions' similar programmes, if they were positioned in earlier stages.</i></p>	<p>managerial scope of the courses. As the courses fulfil specific Learning Outcomes and the student progression requires prior prerequisites, in order for the students to be able to attend later courses, drastically re-positioning them will have an impact on the functional and performance requirements of the programme of study. Given the opportunity for improvement, in accordance with the EEC commentary, we carried out a very careful course repositioning exercise, in order to ensure student interest and give to the programme a more explicit differentiation from other similar programmes. The revised Programme Structure is presented in Annex 2 (see Annex 2a), and a detailed index of programme revisions is also provided in Annex 1.</p>	
<p><i>Courses that are more relevant to the research/thesis could be positioned later in the programme.</i></p>	<p>During the programme design and development, our overall consideration was the students' transition from "high school graduates" to "higher education students" and all the obligations associated with their new role. Wanting to maintain a high level on the assignments, create opportunities for micro-research projects, to intentionally address the societal impact on their research, and to align it with the College's mission and values, we used a 2-Tier approach on "how – to" conduct research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 1st Tier is an introductory course (<u>RESE100 - Introduction to Research Methodology</u>) 1st Semester, aiming to introduce students to academic research fundamentals, best practices and resource allocation in order to be able to carry out by themselves an adequate literature review and undertake proper assignment writing during their courses. • The 2nd Tier aims to provide a thorough and comprehensive insight into Research, including their "Thesis Statement", and Proposal. This course is delivered on the 7th Semester as a preparatory for the course "Thesis" which students will take on the final (8th) semester. 	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><i>All courses are compulsory. There are no electives. This appears to contract the ambition of the programme team to not follow a "one-approach-fits-all".</i></p>	<p>This Business and Management programme offers a holistic approach to business education, building a strong foundation for long-term career agility. We present a uniquely-crafted programme, with a curriculum mapped against the World Economic Forum's 16 future-focused skill sets that have been widely endorsed by industry-leading companies. Therefore, also taking into consideration that, for the development of the programme, we used "The Funnel Approach", having</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>elective courses would, in essence, hinder the students' ability to fully accomplish the Programme's Intended Learning Outcomes as laid out.</p> <p>Regarding the remark concerning the "one-size-fits-all" approach, a thorough explanation on this should be given. During the design and development process, we took careful considerations for the programme's delivery in a way that encourages students to take an active role in creating the learning process, so the student-centred learning approach seemed to be a one-way and the only way for this programme of study. Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.</p> <p>The statement "one-size-fits-all" has been featured in our application but with a different meaning of the title itself, causing a misunderstanding. It was used in the SWOT analysis, along with other teaching methods, but with the purpose to demonstrate that this method is not aligned with the College's overall mission and strategy and the major consideration that all teachers are different, all students are different. This programme of study, maintains suitable teaching methodologies for adults, their learning needs and diversity, with the use of different modes of delivery, active student participation, and flexibility on the variety of methods and approaches.</p>	
<p><i>A mapping of assessment against the courses (similar to the one used for the learning objectives) could help provide a high level perspective as to how knowledge and skills are assessed.</i></p>	<p>We would like to note that the mapping of assessments has been conducted and recorded on the relevant forms as mandated by the CYQAA, as part of the development of the individual course syllabi.</p> <p>We welcome the remarks of the EEA as an opportunity to further develop the competitiveness of our programme of study, and will give due consideration to this suggestion upon the next opportunity for programme review and update.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<i>Some of the syllabi would benefit from being revised with up-to-date material, e.g. newest editions of textbooks.</i>	Revised course curricula with updated bibliography are included in Annex 2 (see Annexes 2b and 2c), and a detailed index of programme revisions is also provided in Annex 1 .	Choose an item.
<i>The extent to which the students are ensured to engage with practitioners, e.g. through guest lectures and company visits, could be more explicitly described.</i>	Through this programme of study, KES College aims to promote and foster experiential learning and a lifelong learning mindset, as a basis for positive societal impact. Apart from the courses that embed the environmental and social impact of business processes, this programme of study will enhance the experiences of learners with their active participation in lectures presented by industry professionals, that have been arranged for the forthcoming Academic Year and with networking opportunities through company visits (Please see Annex 4). Students' of the programme of study (as all other of the college's students) have the opportunity to attend trainings and workshops organised by the KES Professional Training Centre (Please see Annex 4).	Choose an item.

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p><i>The EEC was provided with an outline of a workload policy that only outlines teaching duties and leaves much to interpretation. Instead, a more comprehensive approach was necessary. This would have ensured that there is a fair and transparent sharing of workload that is conducive to individual development. Such a workload policy could also be a useful support mechanism for realising the research aspiration of the institutions. The workload policy could be integrated in the staff handbook that appears to be sufficiently comprehensive.</i></p>	<p>The recommendation of the EEC has been adopted by the College management and the relevant information is now incorporated into the Faculty Handbook (Section 3.2). Please see Annex 3.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><i>It was positive to see that there are regular meetings about teaching matters and practice with the educational officer. Still, it would be useful if such processes involved more direct engagement among teaching staff and not through a proxy (e.g. through peer observation).</i></p>	<p>KES College highly recommends and promotes participation to trainings, workshops and seminars for the teaching staff, to develop their teaching methods, learn best practices and share these practices amongst them and with others.</p> <p>We will also recommend to the teaching staff to directly engage with their peers during the delivery of courses in the forthcoming semester and subsequently discuss the overall process, as well as other useful matters on a win-win basis.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><i>Students could potentially be more actively involved in the KES Research Centre (e.g. through their thesis) which can help provide further support for research active staff, enhance the student experience and scale up the number of outputs.</i></p>	<p>One of our main considerations during the design and development process for this programme of study was the need for impactful research output and the development of the knowledge, skills and behaviours required out of future societal leaders.</p> <p>Thus, we concluded on a binary system of incentives for students to develop research and their thesis, aligned with the programme's objectives.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The 1st option of incentives is directly afforded through the KES Research Centre, where students are informed on the availability of funding for research projects and/or proposals through their Thesis supervisor in order to participate accordingly, with a grant to support them, upon the successful completion of it. • The 2nd option is whereby the students, having attended and successfully completed the course "RESE 	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>401 - Research Process & Thesis Writing”, prepare and submit their “Thesis Statement” for approval. At this stage, the members of the KES Research Committee may review the students’ proposals and select those, that fulfil specific requirements for granting and development of the project, according to the KES Research Centre specifications.</p>	
<p><i>The EEC notes that during the pandemic engagement with practice and practitioners may have been more a challenging proposition. Still such engagement (e.g. through guest talks, visits, student projects) could help enhance the programme and become a distinctive feature. Similarly, student research could become a conduit for engaging with practice.</i></p>	<p>Through this programme of study KES College aims to promote and foster experiential learning and a lifelong learning mindset, as a basis for positive societal impact. Apart from the courses that embed the environmental and social impacts of business processes, this programme of study will enhance the experiences of learners, through their active participation in lectures by industry professionals, that have been arranged on the forthcoming Academic Year, along with networking opportunities through company visits (Please see Annex 4). Students’ on this programme of study (as all other students of the College) have the opportunity to attend trainings and workshops organized by the KES Professional Training Centre (Please see Annex 4). Through engagement with the KES Research Centre, students have the opportunity to conduct research in real world conditions through participation in funded research projects (e.g. the STAFTRACT project) and by taking advantage of Innovation Vouchers that can be obtained through IDEK. Also, students are guided by their supervisors to think strategically and are encouraged to intentionally address societal impact in their research during their thesis, engage with complex challenges and find solutions to business situations, particularly from a social impact lens.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p><i>Potentially the student team could introduce a course such as “consultancy project” that aims to put theory into a practice by tackling a real-world problem.</i></p>	<p>We believe this is covered through the novel introduction in this programme of study of a comprehensive 2-stage project regarding the Strategy of Organisations and Competition Analysis. During the course “MGMT212 - Strategic Management I”, students have to prepare and present an assignment. The assignment consists of an in-depth strategic analysis of organisations, written according to relevant guidelines, using a minimum of 1.500 words, giving the opportunity for students to define business problems with the evidence available, discern fact from opinion, determine underlying causes, and formulate and evaluate potential solutions. At the next stage, during the course “MGMT321 - Strategic Management II”, the students have to also prepare and submit an assignment that consists of the in-depth strategic decision making of organisations through the application of game theory,</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>written according to relevant guidelines, using a minimum of 1,500 words by analysing the organisation on the previous assignment and the competitors in the competitive environment. Students will be assessed in the form of strategic plans and tools they used that employ strategic thinking, their vision and the development of strategies intended for organisational improvement and growth within a competitive environment.</p>	
<p><i>The EEC understands that there are opportunities for staff development through internal seminar series. External opportunities for staff development could also be explored.</i></p>	<p>We would like to take the opportunity to reiterate that KES College highly recommends and promotes the participation to trainings, workshops and seminars for its teaching staff. Furthermore, teaching staff also has access to opportunities through mobility projects via Erasmus+ and other co-funded projects that KES College is participating in.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p><i>As pandemic restrictions are eased more opportunities to engage with practice and practitioners to help enhance the employability prospects of students should be encouraged</i></p>	<p>KES College pays great attention on its “students’ life cycle”, not only in terms of their academic journey within the college but also for their career prospects. We do that by raising awareness among industry professionals for employment opportunities for our graduates, with the selection of teaching staff combining both academic qualifications and professional experience that can be shared with students, and by introducing them to the market (when there is such an opportunity) or through the Student Affairs and Welfare Services. Also, as previously noted, a series of guest lectures from invited industry professionals along with networking opportunities through company visits has been arranged for the forthcoming Academic Year (Please see Annex 4).</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p><i>Currently the student numbers in the programme are small. Some additional investment in Sales and Marketing to recruit a larger student cohort needs to be considered. At the same time, the College needs to have regard to resource implications of scaling its enrollment so that resources continue to be adequate and appropriate. This is also the case if it proceeds with having both an English language and Greek language version of the programme.</i></p>	<p>With regards to sales and marketing, KES College utilises a wide range of resources and available media for its promotional activities in order to reach the targeted audience. Furthermore, prior to the development of this programme of study, we carried out a comprehensive feasibility analysis in the local market. According to the previous study published by the Cyprus Directorate of Higher Education, there is an increasing number of interested applicants in the country willing to study Business and Management (at degree level), as it ranks first between the other programmes (data for 2019 – 2020), with a percentage of 50.5% on total and 1.583 enrolled students (table 15 of the report). Also according to CEDEFOP’s report (Cedefop (2020), Skills Forecast 2020: Cyprus), the second fastest growing sector for the years 2018-2030 will be business and other services with an annual growth of 2.4%. Another interesting key fact in this report is the projection of the highest in demand occupations, where for Business and Administration there is an expectation of 35.000 total job openings 2018 – 2030, while the 52% of the total job openings (by 2030) will require a high qualification level. The demand is also determined by the prospective candidates composed of those who already have enrolled and attend the college’s other programs, and external interested groups from both public and private sectors, with their reasons for enrolling in the program varying from the possibility of promotion in key positions, to altering their employment situation and professional orientation.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>



6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
N/A	N/A	Choose an item.



7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
N/A	N/A	Choose an item.

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p><i>As stated in the report, the EEC believes that most of the standards of CYQAA are met by the revised BA Business Management and that a few of the standards are partially met. This reports details and justifies the grounds of such an assessment. The report also provides a number of suggestions as to how improvements can be potentially implemented.</i></p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for its input and commentary. The associated responses to each point and details of actions taken by the College have been recorded in the preceding sections of the document.</p> <p>We also attach the following Annexes, as cited throughout our response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annex 1 - Detailed Index of Programme Revisions and Updated Course Bibliography Annex 2a - Revised Programme Structure (EN and GR) Annex 2b - Updated Course Curricula with Revised Bibliography (EN) Annex 2c - Updated Course Curricula with Revised Bibliography (GR) Annex 3 - Updated Faculty Handbook Annex 4 - List of Industry Engagement Opportunities 	<p>Choose an item.</p>



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Petros Stylianos	Director General	
Dr Vassias Vassiliades	Director of Academic Affairs	
Dr Konstantinos Dedes	Programme Coordinator	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

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