

Doc. 300.1.1

Date: 05/08/2020

External Evaluation Report (Programmatic)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Cyprus Institute of Marketing
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):** School/Faculty
- **Department/ Sector:** Department/Sector
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

ΔΙΟΙΚΗΣΗ ΕΠΙΧΕΙΡΗΣΕΩΝ ΜΕ ΕΠΙΛΟΓΗ
ΕΠΙΚΕΝΤΡΩΣΗΣ ΣΤΟ ΜΑΡΚΕΤΙΝΓΚ (4 ΧΡΟΝΙΑ,
ΠΤΥΧΙΟ)

In English:

BUSINESS MANAGEMENT WITH AN OPTIONAL
CONCENTRATION IN MARKETING (4 YEARS,
BACHELOR OF ARTS)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status**
New programme: No
Currently operating: Yes



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 visit took place on 03 August, 2020 in a virtual format via Zoom. The Committee met with members of the Governing and Academic Committees of CIM (members included Yangos Hadjiyannis, Dr Christos Hadjiyannis, Dr Myria Kkali, Marios Charalambides, Dr Maria Socratous, Dr Christiana Charalambidou, Dr Evie Michaelides, Dr Fotis Pavlou, Dr Haris Machlouzarides, Dr Katerina Pavlou, Elena Makedona, Dr Marios Georgiou, Dr George Zachariades, Nicol Lakatamitou, Anna Demetriadou, Pantelitsa Michael, Khaldoun Sallom. The documents that were provided and examined included the Application for Evaluation-Accreditation, presentations by the Governing/ Academic Committee Members, and a further range of supporting documents and online demonstrations.

Furthermore, our committee interviewed members of a group of students, administrative personnel and teaching staff. Whilst an on-site visit of facilities was not possible due to current Covid19 travel and access restrictions, the committee members had paid a visit in November 2019 and were thus familiar with the institute infrastructure and its offerings.

The internal evaluation 'Application for Evaluation-Accreditation' and associated documents, which were submitted by CIM and examined by us were considered complete and detailed.



B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Pavlos Dimitratos	Professor (Chair)	University of Glasgow
Stratos Ramoglou	Associate Professor (Member)	University of Southampton
Jan Breitsohl	Associate Professor (Member)	University of Glasgow
George Panayiotou	Student (Member)	University of Cyprus
Name	Position	University
Name	Position	University

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.**

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)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
 - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
 - *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*

- *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*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *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*
- *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:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *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.

Most of the students in the specific CIM programme are Cyprus residents. The students are made up of a group of more senior working professionals with an established career path, and younger students at the beginning of their

career. The annual intake of the programme is predicted to be around 10-20 students over the course of five years. The programme seeks to prepare students for leadership roles in profit and non-profit organizations in the local competitive business environment, with a global orientation.

The programme is exceptionally well crafted. The programme objectives are in line with the institution's strategy and have clearly specified learning outcomes. Overall, the purpose, objectives, and learning outcomes are clearly communicated and well-justified. The intended learning outcomes spring clearly from the mission statement of the programme. The structure and content include appropriate core courses that reflect typically taught modules on comparable Business Management degrees internationally. The programme consists of 24 courses over a period of 4 years. Students who choose to concentrate on Marketing will select 8 electives (4 in year 3, and 4 in year 4), whilst those choosing not to follow the Marketing specialisation can select 4 out of 6 elective courses. The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance are clear, adequate and effectively communicated to the students. The course content and the assessment system are uploaded to an online platform that was developed in-house and represents state-of-the-art online learning and engagement opportunities. The expected learning outcomes of the programme are known to the students from the first week of the semester through the course syllabuses, the course outlines, the web site of the Institute, the online platform, and communication from the instructors. The learning outcomes mapping matrix provided is particularly useful and offers a good overview of the skills provided within each course across the programme, allowing students to easily decipher their learning targets and achievements.

All of the required quality assurance mechanisms and formal policies for the development and the management of programmes of study are in place, with participation of all the relevant stakeholders. These processes have been developed and successfully utilised for many years within CIM, giving vast confidence in offering the same standards for this particular degree. In general, quality assurance mechanisms are very well aligned with international standards. Both the administrative and teaching staff are very capable, professional, driven and committed to the success of the programme.

Moreover, the programme of study reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe that is, 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.

Strengths

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

The programme of study has a multitude of strengths. It is a very well designed, managed and implemented programme that provides a significant value-added to students and Cyprus at large.

The students have considerable exposure to different industries of Cyprus economy that allows them to gain first-hand knowledge of the operations of different firms and establish valuable industry contacts. There is also significant participation of industry leaders in the programme (invited speakers for all of the courses, networking events, and

many others). Another distinguishing characteristic is the online (IT) system that was developed in-house, and uses the strengths of the basic common software such as Moodle and blackboard, on top of which CIM specific tools and functionalities are added, to make it particularly relevant to the context of this degree. There is a well-balanced mix of practice- and research related activities.

The information related to the programme of study is publicly available and effectively disseminated to the general public. The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance are clear, adequate and well-communicated to the students. The course syllabuses and course outlines clearly define the expected learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the method of assessing student performance. The structure of the program follows the European Credit Transfer System (ECTS).

It is highly commendable that content of the Marketing specialisation reflects recent developments in Marketing (e.g. social media and digital strategies), and that the teaching staff all have a background that ensure scientific and professional quality. Together, this offers a substantial rationale for the optional addition of a Marketing specialization as part of the Business Management Bachelors of Arts.

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.

Based on conversations with students and our own assessment, we do not see general areas that require significant improvement. All key quality metrics are met. We would like to make some optional, minor recommendations however that may allow some further refinements:

It would be good to have a list of administrators who can be contacted in relation to typical student queries. This list may exist already but it would be useful to have to easily accessible to all students.

Given that the concentration in Marketing is a spotlight feature of this programme, it might make sense to actually define what Marketing is (and what it is not) at the outset of the programme. For instance, the definition from the AMA could provide a meaningful starting point. Such a definition would also allow a clear communication of the added value gained for students when choosing to opt for the concentration in Marketing.

It would be useful to ensure that textbooks are up to date. Whilst most content from older versions of textbooks is still applicable, it is an option to renew some materials (e.g. the textbook in the BCS112 course is dated 2014, and for BMS114 the key reading is from 2008 and 2012 for example)

It would be good to go beyond general descriptors in the assignment section and outline what type of assignment exactly is conducted for each module (e.g. most courses just state “*Assignments may take the form of a case study, group project/presentation or individual report*”). This will also help to ensure a good spread of different assessment methods and learning activities, and a mix of formative and summative types of testing.

Perhaps some titles of topics could be modified, to make it more clear how its' delivered content will differ (e.g. the 'Consumer Behaviour' course, week 13 and 15, looking at the title, and week 22 and 23 seem similar).

As to the 'Public Relations' module, some of the topic titles would benefit from specification (e.g. the topics titled 'Management', 'Communication', and 'Research') to allow students a better orientation and possibility of preparation.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	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

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 and 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?*
- ***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.

We met most of the teaching staff and had the opportunity to discuss aspects related to teaching in considerable depth via Zoom. Overall, we were pleased to document that there are high quality teaching and learning processes in place. In fact, most of the processes in place give us great confidence that the effective teaching,

learning and student support are closely aligned to what is widely considered as “best practice” in British Higher Education Institutions (HEIs). In addition, it is important to remark that all staff subscribed to the mission of delivering high quality, rigorous and relevant business education and demonstrated commitment and passion for the pedagogical cause.

We were also pleased to note that teaching is closely aligned with learning outcomes. In fact, there is the laudable expectation that learning outcomes are outlined before the delivery of each lecture. Moreover, it appears that the balance between theory and practice is quite good, since we could verify (in discussions with students) the significant use of case studies and enhanced assignments meant to enhance student autonomy and strengthen their independent and critical thinking skills. In-class discussions, moderated by the course convenor, seem to bring impressive benefits to the learning journey of students, within and between cohorts. The standards of evaluation are also quite rigorous, the marking process transparent, feedback given sufficient (in quantity and quality) and there are also processes of feeding student comments into the module content (or aspects associate with its delivery). In addition, there is a self-evaluation report process and a staff-student communication committee designed to enhance the quality of teaching and education delivered.

All stakeholders involved reported that staff are available to students in an extraordinary dedicated fashion, allowing for personalised feedback outside of the classroom and trust relationships that are considered essential in modern, professional (diploma) education.

Strengths

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

We found the staff profiles and the way in which they brought their scientific and professional backgrounds into the classroom highly commendable. Both students and staff coherently reported that knowledge exchange was greatly enriched by staff research background, as well as industry insights. This was further enhanced by innovative teaching methodologies and pedagogic innovations such as the flipped classroom and self-reflective components in group-work tasks. The pedagogical methodology followed is very closely aligned to the methodology underpinning the delivery of BA education at leading business schools in the UK. As such, there is no great scope for improvement in terms of processes.

As aforementioned, we found the IT (online) infrastructure which is tailor-made in order to meet the needs of students admirable. It is an evolution of standard educational platforms (such as Blackboard) that nevertheless seemed more user-friendly and well-organised.

The Bachelor of Arts should also be commended for the flexibility it provides in order to accommodate the needs of its students. We verified through our discussions with students that their concrete needs in terms of flexibility are taken into consideration.

Another strength of the programme is its close links with local businesses and stakeholders. This is very important for the effectiveness of BA since it is crucial that students are exposed to the intricacies of the local economy and develop understanding of the latest trends of the Cypriot business landscape.

Also the student/staff ratio is low, which excellent for allowing a closer relationship with academic staff.

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.

We do not see any particular need for improvements as quality criteria meet all expectations.

There is one aspect which perhaps could be further strengthened, relating to the details provided on how research influences the students' learning experience and the particular research skills acquired.

Discussions with students and staff reassured as that the expertise and resources available are of the highest level, and students had a clear understanding of the value of various research methods and criteria. Given this, it would be good to make this more prevalent in the descriptors for each module. We suggest this to be made explicit since it actually presents an additional indicator of quality for this degree.

Students also reported that they would like to see an increase in practical, applied activities, in particular visiting corporations, face-to-face networking and shadowing internal business processes. This request is probably owed to the current Covid19 situation, during which physical site visits and interactions need to be limited for safety purposes. We feel that the general provision of hands-on experiences for this programme has been adequate and is sufficient as long as it retains the original format once it becomes safe to do so again

It might also be an idea to link the GPI450 Graduate project to the newly set up CIM journal, which looks like a very promising research outlet and opportunity for student co-creation.

The strong brand reputation of CIM in Nicosia forms another major factor that will warrant success of the suggested programme in the Nicosia campus.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	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.

We can confirm that the staff teaching at the programme possess the right qualifications (academic & professional). They also seem very motivated to teach in the programme. In this regard, it should also be noted that they include experienced practitioners participating in the delivery of teaching and mostly hold a PhD degree. The recruitment processes of teaching staff is also transparent and fair, and staff receives adequate opportunities for professional development. There is also a noteworthy effort in the direction of strengthening research-led teaching through the pursuit of innovative research activities initiated at CIM. It is remarkable that the research orientation has recently materialised into a new academic journal (Market: International Journal of Business), which has launched a high-quality inaugural issue. This is compatible with past recommendations of ours to CIM management and it is a commendable point to note.

Strengths

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

Staff appear highly committed to the delivery of high-quality business education and through our discussions with CIM students we could indeed corroborate that staff are approachable and supportive. It should also be stressed that staff receive strong support during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their needs are taken into consideration and have been suitably accommodated in light of the challenging requirements created in this new pedagogical landscape. In this respect, CIM should be commended for implementing the latest innovations in the domain of online education, and providing the necessary training to staff. There is no challenges to the pedagogical process from part time or adjunct staff teaching in the programme.

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.

We have no particular recommendations in this respect. Everything is in order and well-aligned with best practices carried out by UK HEIs. CIM has a long tradition in delivering business education, in particular in marketing, and this shows in the staff resources and status of the programme.

Perhaps the programme could be enriched with short term visiting staff who will deliver courses in blocked teaching modes, according to the interviewed students. However, CIM management are aware of this and are working on this area too.

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

Sub-area	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i></p>
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3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

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

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*
 - *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.

We met (online) two students from the Nicosia campus and two of the Limassol campus. We had an open discussion about their experiences and thoughts about the programme. All the students were very positive. They felt that the programme was an excellent return on their investment, and content with the support they received during the COVID-19 crisis. This is particularly important given that the delivery of online teaching is particularly challenging and it is genuinely hard to keep students satisfied without face-to-face interaction. Students are also quite confident about employment opportunities. It is telling that 90%+ of students are employed within 12 months following their graduation. Student responses seemed genuine.

Last, it should be noted that CIM will provide at least 20 merit-based scholarships for the 2020-21 academic year; and students experiencing financial hardship due to the pandemic have already postponed the payment of tuition fees. This constitutes another commendable effort on behalf of CIM.

Strengths

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

CIM is clearly a student-oriented institution and this student-centric approach should be commended. There is a long tradition in offering superior student value to the Cypriot market. The small cohorts and class sizes guarantee close interaction and personal knowledge of student strengths. It is also important to remark that this proposed Bachelor degree is excellently positioned in the Cypriot market, as evidenced by the particularly high recruitment numbers of

the programme's past graduates. What is also quite innovative is the manner in which IT is used in order to enhance student employability prospects.

The emphasis on the Cypriot market for the proposed programme constitutes another strength.

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.

According to the responses by the interviewed pupils, the social experience of students could be improved, but this cannot be realistically happen during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	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

- *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.)?*

- *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.

We have previously inspected the facilities that are apparently unchanged (as evidenced in the online material we received). From previous inspections, we can confirm that resources are excellent and perfectly suited for the needs of the programmes offered by CIM. We nonetheless had the opportunity to witness the further development of the online facilities. CIM is equipped with an impressive IT platform, that is arguably on par with the most advanced online support systems of UK HEIs. This is a key step in enhancing the pedagogical experience of the suggested programme.

Strengths

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

The suggested BSc is very well-resourced. CIM has all key physical and human resources to effectively run the Bachelor programme evaluated. And even though CIM is a for-profit organisation it is noteworthy that it continuously invests in both physical and human resources. A prime example of this is the continuous development of the online platform.

Moreover, the online library contains many relevant scholarly resources, giving CIM students and staff good access to state-of-the-art developments from the world of business and academia. To this end, CIM has greatly benefitted from the academic longstanding collaboration with the University of West London.

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.

No particular area for improvement is identified. The resources are just suitable for the smooth delivery of the Bachelor programme under evaluation.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant



5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

6. Additional for distance learning programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 6.1 Distance learning philosophy and methodology
- 6.2 Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF
- 6.3 Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities
- 6.4 Study guides

6.1 Distance learning philosophy and methodology

Standards

- *The distance learning methodology is appropriate for the particular programme of study.*
- *Feedback processes for students in relation to written assignments are set.*
- *A complete assessment framework is designed, focusing on distance learning methodology, including clearly defined evaluation criteria for student assignments and the final examination.*
- *Expected teleconferences for presentations, discussion and question-answer sessions, and guidance are set.*

6.2 Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF

Standards

- *Twelve weekly interactive activities per each course are set.*
- *The distance learning material and activities take advantage of the capabilities offered by the virtual and audio-visual environment and the following are applied:*
 - *Simulations in virtual environments*
 - *Problem solving scenarios*
 - *Interactive learning and formative assessment games*
 - *Interactive weekly activities with image, sound and unlimited possibilities for reality reconstruction and further processing based on hypotheses*
 - *They have the ability to transfer students to real-life situations, make decisions, and study the consequences of their decisions*
 - *They help in building skills both in experiences and attitudes like in real life and also in experiencing - not just memorizing knowledge*
- *A pedagogical planning unit for distance learning, which is responsible for the support of the distance learning unit and addresses the requirements for study materials, interactive activities and formative assessment in accordance to international standards, is established.*

6.3 Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities

Standards

- *A specific plan is developed to safeguard and assess the interaction:*
 - *among students*
 - *between students and teaching staff*
 - *between students and study guides/material of study*
- *Training, guidance and support are provided to the students and teaching staff focusing on interaction and the specificities of distance learning.*

6.4 Study guides

Standards

- *A study guide for each course, fully aligned with distance learning philosophy and methodology and the need for student interaction with the material is developed. The study guide should include, for each course week / module, the following:*
 - *Clearly defined objectives and expected learning outcomes of the programme, of the modules and activities in an organised and coherent manner*
 - *Presentation of course material, and students' activities on a weekly basis, in a variety of ways and means (e.g. printed material, electronic material, teleconferencing, multimedia)*
 - *Weekly outline of set activities and exercises and clear instructions for creating posts, discussion, and feedback*
 - *Self-assessment exercises and self-correction guide*
 - *Bibliographic references and suggestions for further study*
 - *Number of assignments/papers and their topics, along with instructions and additional study material*
 - *Synopsis*
- *Study guides, material and activities are appropriate for the level of the programme according to the EQF.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Is the nature of the programme compatible with distance learning delivery?*
- *How do the programme, the material, the facilities, and the guidelines safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff, students and the material?*
- *How many students upload their work and discuss it in the platform during the semester?*
- *Are the academics qualified to teach in the distance learning programme?*

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Distance learning philosophy and methodology	Choose answer
6.2	Distance learning material at the appropriate level according to EQF	Choose answer
6.3	Interaction plan and Interactive weekly activities	Choose answer
6.4	Study guides	Choose answer

7. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

7.1 Selection criteria and requirements

7.2 Proposal and dissertation

7.3 Supervision and committees

7.1 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:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

7.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *the minimum word limit*
 - *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.*

7.3 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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
7.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Choose answer
7.2	Proposal and dissertation	Choose answer
7.3	Supervision and committees	Choose answer

8. Additional for joint programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

8.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement

8.2 The joint programme

8.1 Legal framework and cooperation agreement

Standards

- *The joint programme is offered in accordance with legal frameworks of the relevant national higher education systems.*
- *The terms and conditions of the joint programme are laid down in a cooperation agreement. The agreement in particular covers the following issues:*
 - *Denomination of the degree(s) awarded in the programme*
 - *Coordination and responsibilities of the partners involved regarding management and financial organisation, including funding, sharing of costs and income, resources for mobility of staff and students*
 - *Admission and selection procedures for students*
 - *Mobility of students and teaching staff*
 - *Examination regulations, student assessment methods, recognition of credits and degree awarding procedures*
 - *Handling of different semester periods, if existent*

8.2 The joint programme

Standards

- *The partner universities apply joint internal quality assurance processes.*
- *The joint programme is offered jointly, involving all cooperating universities in the design, delivery and further development of the programme.*
- *Aims and learning outcomes are clearly stated, including a joint syllabus, language policy, as well as an account of the intended added value of the programme.*
- *Study counselling and mobility plans are efficient and take into account the needs of different kinds of students.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- Does the joint study programme conform to the requirements of a study programme offered at the specific level?
- Is there a system that assures the quality of joint provision and guarantees that the aims of the programme are met?
- Do the mechanisms for ensuring the quality of the joint study programme take into consideration the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)? Are they adopted by all the universities involved?
- Is the division of responsibilities in ensuring quality clearly defined among the partner universities?
- Is relevant information about the programme, e.g. admission requirements and procedures, course catalogue, examination and assessment procedures, well documented and published by taking into account the specific needs of students?
- What is the added value of the programme of study?
- Is there a sustainable funding strategy among the partner universities? Explain.

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Click or tap here to enter text.

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.

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
8.1	Legal framework and cooperation agreement	Choose answer
8.2	The joint programme	Choose answer

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.

Major points:

A strong programme with a robust quality assurance process.

A very vigorous learning process with identifiable links to the learning outcomes.

Experienced and committed staff eager to deliver the programme.





Students are dedicated and enthusiastic to the programme. They are attracted to CIM and the offered programme given the Institute's long-standing tradition in Marketing education in Cyprus.

The programme is exceptionally well resourced. The recent commitment to the online education further constitutes a major step in delivering high quality education.

There is clear correspondence with the EQF.

In conclusion, we have no reservations that the suggested programme will be an innovative and significant success in the Cypriot market. As to the Nicosia campus, the strong focus on the Cypriot market and the brand reputation of CIM in that market form two other factors of success of the programme under evaluation in the Nicosia campus.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Pavlos Dimitratos	
Stratos Ramoglou	
Jan Breitsohl	
George Panayiotou	

Date: 07 August 2020