ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

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

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Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 15/04/2022

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
  University of Central Lancashire Cyprus
  (UCLan Cyprus)

- **Town:** Larnaca

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

  In Greek:

  Μεταπτυχιακό (Μάστερ) στην Εκπαιδευτική Ηγεσία

  (1 ακαδημαϊκό έτος, 90 ECTS, Master of Arts, Εξ

  αποστάσεως)

  In English:

  MA Educational Leadership (1 year, 90 ECTS, Master

  of Arts, Distance Learning)

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

- **Programme's status:** New

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  In Greek: N/A
  In English: N/A

ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

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 300.1.1/2 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.*

- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, <u>without changing the format of the report</u>:*

  - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*

- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4).*

- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA

ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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The MA Educational Leadership DL team would like to thank the External Evaluation Committee for all their valuable suggestions and recommendations that we believe will help our programme as well as our academic staff to grow and develop. The recommendations have been very insightful and helpful in strengthening our programme structure with more taught modules as they are presented in the sections that follow. Adding certain modules that have been recommended by the Committee is giving our potential students the opportunity to gain a more in-depth and specialised theoretical knowledge in the specific areas that add to the personal development of the educational leaders as professionals. In addition, the recommended changes in our programme structure will help us further develop our research interests and link our research output with a larger pool of academically robust modules. Further, and as part of the insightful discussions with the External Evaluation Committee, we offer our response to the valuable guidance received and which focuses on devoting more time and resources for research and staff research development respectively. Focussing on research that is related to the specific modules delivered by each member of academic staff will be highly beneficial both for our staff as well as for our students. To this end, we have taken into due consideration the EEC report, the suggestions and recommendations included thereto, and the constructive feedback. In the following sections, we respond in detail to all the Committee's findings, comments and recommendations concerning the further development of our master's programme.

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

EEC REPORT

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.

The proposed Masters programme in Educational Leadership through Distance Learning (DL) is practically a replica of a similar programme that used to follow the conventional model but has not been running for the past two years. The University wishes to reintroduce the conventional programme as well as this 'new' one.

1.1 Policy for quality assurance
The MA in Educational Leadership is a 1 calendar year full-time programme or a two-year part-time programme developed round 90 ECTS. Given the unique legal status that UCLan Cyprus enjoys it builds round the quality assurance provision of the UK. In fact, UCLan Cyprus offers to all its graduates a double-awarded degree – a degree from UCLan UK and a degree from UCL Cyprus, both accredited by the UK Quality Assurance Agency and by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education.

As described on page14ff of the Application, and as we were told during our online visit, a Quality Assurance Policy is in place. There are a number of quality assurance mechanisms and formal policies in place for the development, management and review of the programme of study. Teaching staff and administrative staff are assigned with the responsibilities of quality assurance. Students are also encouraged to review each study unit through an online survey. The programme ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud, guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff. This section is well developed.

The support of critical friends to help gain a fresh outlook to the academic side of the programme should be explored. This together with the involvement of educational stakeholders (e.g. potential employers, the education authorities) to ensure that the programme keeps up to date by providing study units that directly address the needs of school leadership.

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review
This masters programme in Educational Leadership is well designed in so far as it is well structured, and in accordance with the strategy of the University of Central Lancashire Cyprus (UCLan UK). The programme is designed round 5 modules of 10 ECTS each; the opportunity to choose one elective from two study units each of 10 ECTS; and the allocation of 30 ECTS for conducting a Triple Research Project. This programme of studies 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. According to the Application "the programme's purpose and objectives are formulated in terms of expected learning outcomes as any British Higher Education programme does in response to the academic quality requirements of the UK Quality Assurance Agency (QAA). This is achieved by way of a validated process by the UCLan UK Academic Quality and Compliance Unit Programme Specification, which stipulates, amongst others, not only the programmes

structure but also its purposes, learning aims and expected learning outcomes …" (p.144).

The EEC expresses serious concern that this programme of studies no longer exists in UCLan UK and therefore we cannot understand how this programme is on offer in UCLan Cyprus and has actually gone through the UCLan UK quality assurance process. More so, when a double-degree is awarded. We do acknowledge that a degree of independence is allowed and necessary but we are deeply concerned as to the level of depth and engagement that students experience. The EEC also expresses concern regarding the way the actual study units have been developed and the intellectual input across a number of study units given that there is no expertise in the areas. The teaching team may have expertise in relation to some of the modules but the modules themselves are inappropriate for a MA in Educational Leadership. In relation to this, we were also told during the online visit that the design and content of the courses was developed by external "experts", but we received no clear answers regarding who they were and what expertise they possessed, only that they were UK-based researchers.

It is not clear whether this is a full-time or part-time course. This is articulated in some Study Unit descriptions. However, this must be clarified and presented in the introductory Profile and on the University website. Only staff and students seemed to indicate that there is both a FT and PT programme that can be pursued.

The Chair of the School of Business and Management and the Programme Co-ordinator of this course note that the move towards an online programme could be more attractive to students given both the pandemic and the opportunity to study from home.

The *Application for Evaluation - Accreditation* notes that the university has set up internal quality assurance mechanisms – regulations and procedures (see pages 15-16 of the Application) - to ensure that self-evaluations are conducted. Three main procedures are mentioned, namely Continuous Enhancement Process, Periodic Course Review (this also includes external examiners reports), and Annual Monitoring (see page 19 of Application) There are no reports annexed to this report to attest to this. One document that has been presented presents Student Feedback. According to this document, 'students are encouraged to respond to the Module Feedback Questionnaire (MQF) twice a year whilst making sure that student anonymity and transparency is respected. Items covered in the MQF Teaching Experience, Assessment Feedback, Module Organisation and Learning Resources.

Concerns raised for the accreditation of the conventional programme apply here given that no reviews have been undertaken to make substantive changes to the course proposal. Three of the EEC members who teach and research educational leadership are fully in agreement that the programme content does not reflect the field's latest research, and in this respect, the course programme is not up-to-date. This may also be due to the limited expertise of the teaching staff in the areas of educational leadership and management. This is a point we will come to later. Furthermore, whilst the aims and objectives of the course are clearly articulated, and the learning outcomes respect the various course outlines and developments, we feel that they are overly ambitious and cannot be developed within such a short span of time. The course study units are indeed quite comprehensive and we are not so confident that such work can be covered within the time limits set, also because many of the students have regular jobs and undertake their studies late afternoon or in the evening. Given that this course is DL it will allow for students to engage with the programme at their own pace. We also note that the Learning Outcomes of two study units, namely *Strategic Leadership in Education* and *Leading People and Teams in Education* are identical.

1.3 Public information

The programme of study presents clear, accurate, up to date and readily accessible information that is published. The objectives, intended learning outcomes, qualification award, teaching and learning assessment procedures are clearly articulated and presented. The admission requirements are too broad and do not actually point out that it is intended only for educators. There are then conflicting messages in other parts of the document. This needs to be clarified.

The course "is designed for those practitioners working or intended to work in education and who seek an educational leadership position …." (p. 25). Whereas the Admission Requirements state that "Participants in this masters level programme will have demonstrated an ability to cope with masters level study either through APEL or previous qualifications, e.g. PG Diploma and have an IELTS score of a minimum 6.5" (p.10).

In the Application it is further stated that "the programme is specifically designed for graduate students who are looking to pursue a career in education leadership or to advance their careers within these fields …" (p. 28). Therefore, this course can be offered to candidates who may not come from a teaching background or have experience in the field of education.

The EEC sees a contradiction between the content aims and objectives of the course and the potential students that may enrol or are eligible to enrol for this study programme.

During the meetings it was stated that the course is open to anyone coming from any discipline and wants to move into the field of education. A person who has no background of the education field just cannot engage with the context of education unless the course engages at the superficial level and expects the candidate to address the contextual issues on his/her own. The level of depth of critique will not happen if people enrolled in the course (and teaching in the course) do not have an educational background. We were told that some participants work in business or banking. When we asked about whether this is appropriate, we were told that this was OK because the companies were 'learning organisations'. We do not accept that it is appropriate to recruit candidates from outside education for a specialist MA in Educational Leadership.

The Study Guides are well thought out, highly structured and well developed. They help to introduce and guide the student as an active participant in the learning process. It is evident that a lot of thought, research and work has been put into the compilation of these guides. Good work. The EECs main concern is that each session requires a weekly commitment of an average of 20 hours. A person who is studying full-time should be able to commit her/himself to such an engagement. As noted above, someone studying on a part-time basis would find this quite demanding. It is only in our deliberations with the students that it was stated that students opting for a part-time course would be engaged for two years and not one calendar year. This needs to be clearly presented in the course information.

Another matter that needs to be addressed are the references. There are more recent publications that can be cited for a number of areas. Whilst a certain element of duplication is evident and to be expected then more focus will need to be given to the reading assignments. For example, with reference to educational leadership and management theories the text by Professor Tony Bush entitled *Theories of Educational Leadership and Management* (5th edn) is a must. This text is cited in another Study Guide which does not really tackle the theoretical dimension of the course.

The Study Guide EH4112 *Triple Research Project* is estimated to be covered in 36 weeks. How are students actually coping? Another 16 weeks are dedicated to ED4995 *Designing and Planning Your Research Project*. We are not sure where the time is found to cover this in one calendar year? Again, those following a part-time course would have more time.

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

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Another study unit – MD4061 *Management Coaching Skills* is a study unit that does not seem to have any reference to the educational context. This unit should be focused specifically on coaching by and for educational leaders, with relevant education-specific literature. Consideration should be given to also including mentoring for school leaders.

1.4 Information management
The Application and the complementary documents describe key indicators that provide knowledge of the programme and its various components. Regarding the student profile, the Application together with the online visit gives us a (general) picture of the current student group and how they complete the courses.

However, it may be worth noting (once again) that the programme has not been running since 2019 and that up-to-date data are therefore missing. We also believe that there is a system for analysing throughput and dropouts, even if they are rare. The same applies to student satisfaction, learning resources, and to career opportunities, both during and after the programme has been completed. However, we have a somewhat vague image whether the students, after completing this programme, are applying leadership assignments in, for example, schools and preschools. We also consider that it is unclear if or how teachers and students are involved in the systematic quality work, for example in the analysis of the data collected and in the design of revisions that are made.

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

The programme of study is designed so that it enables smooth student progression. In summary the main strengths or the programme are the following:

1. The full-time staff are PhD holders and well experienced in their respective fields but no one has a qualification in educational leadership and management.
2. The structure of the programme follows the European Credit Transfer System.
3. The modules are well designed at a structural level (even though we feel that, in places, their content needs to be updated).
4. The information related to the programme of study is publicly available. The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance are clear, adequate and well-communicated in advance to students.
5. The course outline and course content clearly present the learning outcomes, the teaching and learning approaches and the methods of assessment.

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

1. The MA in Educational Leadership is not built on an established programme prepared by UCLan UK. If it is a double-award then this matter has to be clarified.
2. There is no full-time member of staff who comes from the education ranks and no one is in possession of a postgraduate degree in educational leadership. This is then reflected in the course delivery and the courses actually being taught. The video lesson that we were presented reinforces our concerns on a number of levels. The content, for example, did not have any reference to education and at no stage were examples cited from the educational context. This is actually

reinforced by the Study Guide that speaks about coaching in a generic sense. Another concern relates to the pedagogy used. A rather clinical approach was adopted with the lecturer merely going through a series of slides. No attempt was made to get feedback or interact with the participants.

3. Whilst certain information is readily available not all information is cited or updated. For example, we do not see any reference to duration of the course and the options available re full-time or parttime studies. Nor are we informed that the course is currently not on offer.

4. The Admission Criteria need to be reviewed. The university should consider ways and means of attracting foreign students given that the programme is taught in English. It should also be clear that the target audience comprises education professionals.

5. The various study units seem to be taught by one or two persons. With programmes running for 10 ECTS this is far from healthy and more adjunct staff should be sought. Practitioners in the field of education will help bring out the link between theory and practice which is one of the main objectives stated by this course.

6. We propose study units that address the following areas: Instructional leadership, distributed leadership, leadership and/for school improvement, leadership and gender, leadership preparation. These should replace the current modules that are not focused on educational leadership.

7. There is no international dimension to a programme that is taught in English. To enrich the programme the EEC recommends that the School of Business and Management invites visiting professors to give input in particular study units.

8. It is not clear how the skills identified by employers are all related to the role of school leaders (see page 27 of Application).

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

"1/9 The MA in Educational Leadership is not built on an established programme prepared by UCLan UK. If it is a double-award then this matter has to be clarified."

"The EEC expresses serious concern that this programme of studies no longer exists in UCLan UK and therefore we cannot understand how this programme is on offer in UCLan Cyprus and has actually gone through the UCLan UK quality assurance process. More so, when a double-degree is awarded. We do acknowledge that a degree of independence is allowed and necessary but we are deeply concerned as to the level of depth and engagement that students experience."

"The EEC also expresses concern re the way the actual study units have been developed and the intellectual input across a number of study units given that there is no expertise in the areas. Whilst the teaching team may have expertise in relation to some of the modules but the modules themselves are inappropriate for a MA in Educational Leadership. In relation to this, we were also told during the online visit that the design and content of the courses was developed by external "experts", but we received no clear answers regarding who they were and what expertise they possessed, only that they were UK-based researchers."

The MA in Educational Leadership programme, submitted for CyQAA re-accreditation and subjected to the review of EEC, was built on a structure initially designed and developed by an experienced academic UCLan UK team (Professor Ebrahim Adia, Pro-Vice Chancellor (Academic Leadership), Dr Joanne Doherty (Educational Leadership), Dr Paul Doherty (Educational Research), Dr Ruth Pilkington and Dr Clare Louise Winder (Initial Teacher Education). The programme shares modules with the Master's in Education that is currently on offer at UCLan, UK. The MA in Educational Leadership has been re-validated in 2020 for UCLan Cyprus-only delivery by a University Review Panel assigned by UCLan UK under the QAA framework.

During the re-validation event both delivery modes (conventional and distance learning) have been considered and approved for UCLan Cyprus delivery. In appendix I, you can find the notification of approval by UCLan as part of the double-awarded degree process. All programmes of study offered at UCLan Cyprus are double awarded with the degrees validated under QAA and accredited by CYQAA. It is worth noting here that the University and the School of Business and Management are offering other programmes of study not running at the UCLan main campus in the UK for which though all QAA control provisions, e.g. the annual monitoring process as well as the periodic review, are in force and fully aligned with the QAA framework and UCLan UK procedures.

"2/10. There is no full-time member of staff who comes from the education ranks and no one is in possession of a postgraduate degree in educational leadership. This is then reflected in the course delivery and the courses actually being taught. The video lesson that we were presented reinforces our concerns on a number of levels. The content, for example, did not have any reference to education and at no stage were examples cited from the educational context. This is actually reinforced by the Study Guide that speaks about coaching in a generic sense. Another concern relates to the pedagogy used. A rather clinical approach was adopted with the lecturer merely going through a series of slides. No attempt was made to get feedback or interact with the participants."

"5/13 The various study units seem to be taught by one or two persons. With programmes running for 10 ECTS this is far from healthy and more adjunct staff should be sought. Practitioners in the field of education will help bring out the link between theory and practice which is one of the main objectives stated by this course."
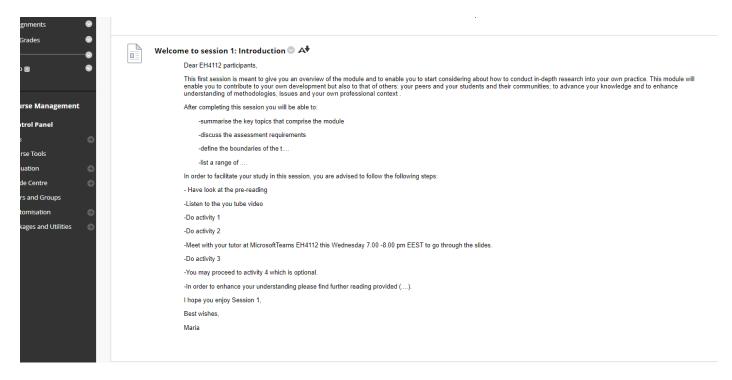
We agree and appreciate the Committee's remark that our full-time academic members do not formally have a postgraduate degree in Educational Leadership. Nevertheless, we would like to emphasise that our team is academically well established, and it is coordinated by Dr Maria Zeniou, who holds a PhD in Education and is also a Senior Fellow of the Higher Education Academy (see Maria's SFHEA certificate in appendix II). Recently, the academic team has been enhanced with the appointment of three associate lecturers: Dr. Constantinos Michael, PhD in Educational Leadership, Dr Maria Hadjieleia Drotarova, PhD in Educational Research and Dr. Maria Nicolaidou, PhD in Education, Educational Leadership and School Improvement (see their profiles in Appendix III). Further to the constructive feedback received by the EEC, the University is actively looking to enhance the academic team by employing additional full-time members of staff and visiting staff with expertise in educational leadership and more specifically, in the areas of Instructional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Participatory Leadership and Leadership and Gender (A relevant job advertisement has been posted in the University's website as well as in local and regional media – see Appendix IV).

The School of Business and Management at UCLan Cyprus carefully considers the good balance between the ratio of faculty vs students, as well as the academic staff's workload. The following principles aim at developing the full potential of academic staff across teaching and research, while also enhancing their course management leadership skills and keeping them up-to-date to the most innovative tools, industry development and market and society needs. The allocation of teaching load is in line with CYQAA regulations and follows the University workload model policy varying with the academic rank, research portfolio, involvement in the University's committees and, of course, administrative responsibilities that come with course leadership.

During the yearly appraisal process, the Head of School and each member of the academic staff work together to balance the workload to 40:40:20 benchmark so that faculty can spend 40% of the workload on teaching, 40% on research activities and the remaining 20% in administrative tasks and university committees.

We would like to thank the EEC for their feedback with regards to the structure of the study guides available for the evaluation of the programme in distance learning delivery mode. The MD4061 module '*Management Coaching Skills*' has been removed from our programme structure, while additional modules that focus on specific areas of educational leadership have been introduced (see appendices V and VI).
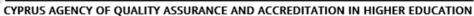
Furthermore, the programme's team has worked on the re-structuring and enhancement of the DL environment to ensure it is student-centred, while allowing for further academic skills development. Please find screenshot below concerning the DL environment of module EH4112 '*Triple research Project'*, Session 1. For each weekly session per module, we have developed interactive material with guidance as follows:
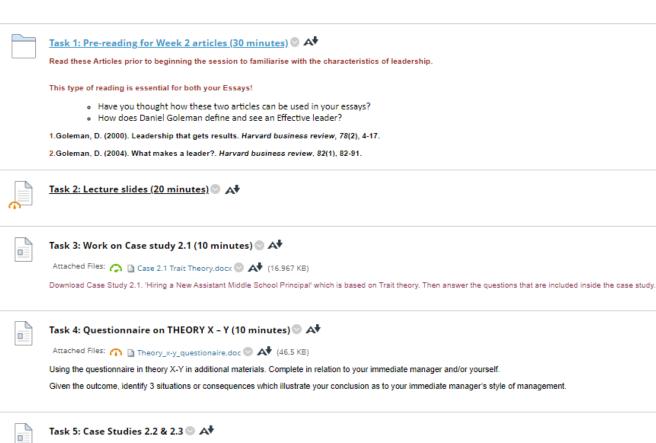

Please find below two additional screenshots from the DL environment of the EH4116 module '*Leading People and Teams in Education',* Session 2:

Task 1: Pre-reading for Week 2 articles (30 minutes) A

Read these Articles prior to beginning the session to familiarise with the characteristics of leadership.

This type of reading is essential for both your Essays!

- Have you thought how these two articles can be used in your essays?
- How does Daniel Goleman define and see an Effective leader?

1. Goleman, D. (2000). Leadership that gets results. *Harvard business review*, 78(2), 4-17.

2. Goleman, D. (2004). What makes a leader?. *Harvard business review*, 82(1), 82-91.

Task 2: Lecture slides (20 minutes) A

Task 3: Work on Case study 2.1 (10 minutes) A

Attached Files: Case 2.1 Trait Theory.docx A (16.967 KB)

Download Case Study 2.1. 'Hiring a New Assistant Middle School Principal' which is based on Trait theory. Then answer the questions that are included inside the case study.

Task 4: Questionnaire on THEORY X – Y (10 minutes) A

Attached Files: Theory_x-y_questionaire.doc A (46.5 KB)

Using the questionnaire in theory X-Y in additional materials. Complete in relation to your immediate manager and/or yourself.

Given the outcome, identify 3 situations or consequences which illustrate your conclusion as to your immediate manager's style of management.

Task 5: Case Studies 2.2 & 2.3 A

Attached Files: Case 2.2 Behavioural Approach.docx A (16.819 KB)
Case 2.3 - Path Goal Theory.docx A (16.996 KB)

The two case studies are examples of the Behavioural theory and Path-Goal Theory, in education settings.

Access the Case Studies and attempt to answer the questions, which are inside the files.

Access the Case Studies and attempt to answer the questions, which are inside the files.

Task 6: Assessing Your Leadership Style (5 minutes) A↓

Attached Files: 📄 Assessing Your Leadership Style.doc (56.5 KB)

This test is designed to help determine your personal leadership style.

Task 7: Discussion Forum (20 minutes) A↓

Please post your own paragraph on the following questions and then respond to at least one other student's post.

- *What do you think educational organisations want/need? Managers or leaders? Give reasons for your views.*
- *Which types of leadership are most likely to produce positive outcomes?*
- *Do you think any manager can be a leader?*

Further Reading (Optional) A↓

Attached Files: 📄 Engaging Leadership CIPD (2008).pdf (1,008.55 KB)
📄 Further Reading on Trait Leadership - Do Traits Mattter.pdf (1.05 MB)

CIPD report provides excellent overviews of how leadership thinking has developed.

Engaging Leadership By Alimo-Metcalfe, B. CIPD (2008)

In particular read the section "It's time for a leadership to take a new direction" page 6-10

We have followed a similar structure across modules to ensure interaction with students as part of structured activities.

"3/11 Whilst certain information is readily available not all information is cited or updated. For example, we do not see any reference to duration of the course and the options available re full-time or parttime studies. Nor are we informed that the course is currently not on offer."

"It is not clear whether this is a full-time or part-time course. This is articulated in some Study Unit descriptions. However, this must be clarified and presented in the introductory Profile and on the University website. Only staff and students seemed to indicate that there is both a FT and PT programme that can be pursued."

We appreciate the EEC comment that some specific information related to the duration and mode of study is not included in the application. The documentation submitted followed the template 200.1 provided by CyQAA and the specific guidelines indicated. Taken advantage of the opportunity given by the above-mentioned EEC remark, we would like to clarify to the Committee that the programme submitted for

evaluation considers the standard duration of a full-time study, a period of 12 months, where 30 ECTS are covered in semester 1, 30 ECTS are covered in semester 2 and 30 ECTS are covered by the Dissertation in line with CyQAA guidelines (Table 1 - https://www.dipae.ac.cy/index.php/el/nea-ekdiloseis/anakoinoseis-el/179-2018-10-25-pliris-foitisi-metaptychiako-diarkeia-2-3-examina)

TABLE 1

	1st Semester	2nd Semester	Summer Period	Total
Modules	30 ECTS	30 ECTS		60 ECTS
Dissertation	30 ECTS			30 ECTS
Total				90 ECTS

According to our University academic regulations (C8.1), students who would like to study in part-time mode, may exceed the full-time duration by 2 years.

The programme will be on offer following CyQAA accreditation and its further validation by UCLan under the QAA framework.

"The Study Guide EH4112 Triple Research Project is estimated to be covered in 36 weeks. How are students actually coping? Another 16 weeks are dedicated to ED4995 Designing and Planning Your Research Project. We are not sure where the time is found to cover this in one calendar year? Again, those following a part-time course would have more time."

The students' workload is fairly distributed during the calendar year according to the ECTS credits allocated per semester (please see Table 2 in appendix V) for a standard 90 ECTS Master programme. This distribution of student workload is in line with the above model proposed by CyQAA (see table 1 above).

"4/12 The Admission Criteria need to be reviewed. The university should consider ways and means of attracting foreign students given that the programme is taught in English. It should also be clear that the target audience comprises education professionals."
"The admission requirements are too broad and do not actually point out that it is intended only for educators. There are then conflicting messages in other parts of the document. This needs to be clarified.
The course "is designed for those practitioners working or intended to work in education and who seek an educational leadership position ...." (p. 25). Whereas the Admission Requirements state that "Participants in this masters level programme will have demonstrated an ability to cope with masters level study either through APEL or previous qualifications, e.g. PG Diploma and have an IELTS score of a minimum 6.5" (p.10).
In the Application it is further stated that "the programme is specifically designed for graduate students who

are looking to pursue a career in education leadership or to advance their careers within these fields ..." (p. 28). Therefore, this course can be offered to candidates who may not come from a teaching background or have experience in the field of education.
The EEC sees a contradiction between the content aims and objectives of the course and the potential students that may enrol or are eligible to enrol for this study programme."

"During the meetings it was stated that the course is open to anyone coming from any discipline and wants to move into the field of education. A person who has no background of the education field just cannot engage with the context of education unless the course engages at the superficial level and expects the candidate to address the contextual issues on his/her own. The level of depth of critique will not happen if people enrolled in the course (and teaching in the course) do not have an educational background. We were told that some participants work in business or banking. When we asked about whether this is appropriate, we were told that this was OK because the companies were 'learning organisations'. We do not accept that is appropriate to recruit candidates from outside education for a specialist MA in Educational Leadership."

The admission criteria for the MA Educational Leadership programme have been revised as following:

"The minimum requirements are:
> Bachelor's degree, with at least Lower Second-Class grade or equivalent.
> Proof of English Language knowledge to a score of at least IELTS 6.5, or other equivalent according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).

Admission is based on a holistic review of each candidate's work experience in the educational setting and educational qualifications in order to assess their ability to benefit from the Programme."

UCLan Cyprus is a young University in the Republic of Cyprus that celebrates its 10th year of operation in October 2022. The initial goal of UCLan Cyprus was to get well-established in the Cyprus market first as an excellent provider of high quality of learning and student experience. One of the University's objectives for the next decade is to expand and reach international markets. This new recruitment strategy has been already initiated by the appointment, in January 2022, of a new UCLan Cyprus Head of Recruitment with vast experience in the international market and a new UCLan UK International Recruitment team that will deal with international recruitment for UCLan Cyprus. Moreover, we believe that the UCLan Cyprus double-awarded degree offering may appear rather attractive to all those prospective students who are interested in receiving a UK degree, but who cannot afford the steep increase in the UK tuition fees for international students.
"6/14. We propose study units that address the following areas: Instructional leadership, distributed leadership, leadership and/for school improvement, leadership and gender, leadership preparation. These should replace the current modules that are not focused on educational leadership."

"The course study units are indeed quite comprehensive and we are not so confident that such work can be covered within the time limits set, also because many of the students have regular jobs and undertake their studies late afternoon or in the evening. It is only when we met the students that we were informed that part-time students cover the course in two academic years and not one calendar year. More so, given the focus on reflection and research time is really limited. We also note that the Learning Outcomes of two study units, namely Strategic Leadership in Education and Leading People and Teams in Education are identical."

"Another study unit – MD4061 Management Coaching Skills is a study unit that does not seem to have any reference to the educational context. This unit should be focused specifically on coaching by and for educational leaders, with relevant education-specific literature. Consideration should be given to also

including mentoring for school leaders."

We would like to thank EEC for their valuable feedback on the structure of the programme. We have taken their insightful recommendations on board and have reshaped the programme (see Table 2 – CYQAA format in appendix V). As such, we have replaced the module entitled: "Strategic Leadership in Education" with the module entitled: "Contemporary Issues in Educational Leadership" and we have amended the learning outcomes to have a clear distinction from "Leading People and Teams in Education" module. The module "Management Coaching Skills" has been replaced with more subject specific units. Furthermore, we have started developing units that address all the areas which were proposed: Instructional Leadership, Distributed Leadership, Leadership for School Improvement and Leadership and Gender.

Effectively, three brand new compulsory modules have been designed and incorporated in the new programme structure

a) Instructional Leadership

b) Leadership for School Improvement

c)Contemporary Issues in Educational Leadership (to incorporate the following: Distributed Leadership and Leadership and Gender). This module replaces EH4015: strategic leadership)

The main objectives of the three new modules are summarised in the below table and could be consulted in detail in appendix VI.

Modules	Indicative Content
EH_ Instructional Leadership	This module supports participants to develop and refine their leadership skills and identify evidence-based techniques in order to enhance the school learning environment through the development of projects that can be applied within the school community. It also helps enables to reflect on how students learn and how their beliefs impact on the delivery on learning,
EH_ Leadership for School Improvement	This module enables learners to develop evidence-based techniques that support them in identifying areas for school improvement and to discuss theoretical models and existing practices as to be able to develop and implement school improvement projects in their settings.
EH__ Contemporary Issues in Educational Leadership	This module enables learners to develop knowledge and understanding of education leadership and reflect upon its interpretation and application in different contexts. It also enables learners to engage critically with models of educational leadership and understand research traditions and methodologies in educational leadership

"7/15. There is no international dimension to a programme that is taught in English. To enrich the programme the EEC recommends that the School of Business and Management invites visiting professors to give input in particular study units."

We would like to thank once again the EEC for their feedback and recommendations that allow the programme team to enrich the provision of the programme MA Educational Leadership. As a first step, towards the enhancement of the international dimension, the School has appointed Dr. Marilena Antoniadou, a Reader at

the Manchester Metropolitan University, Senior Fellow of the UK Higher Education Academy and an expert in leadership in Higher Education as a Visiting Professor.

Following the re-accreditation of the Master's programme, the team will investigate academic collaboration in the field of education and educational leadership with other Universities specialising on this subject, something which will allow for future mobility.

"8/16 16. It is not clear how the skills identified by employers are all related to the role of school leaders (see page 27 of Application)."

Employers in the education environment have urged universities to cater for the development of lifelong learning skills, teamwork abilities, communication skills and technologically adept professionals. Here is why we feel education leaders of the 21st century need to be able to continuously develop new knowledge and skills in order to be able to respond to the competing demands of their role within diverse communities. Building, managing and sustaining cohesive teams is a key skill for school leaders. Besides, the ability to harness new, 21st century, technologies is also useful in the practice of school improvement. For example, school leaders may support staff in using technology as a means of instruction and engage parents and other stakeholders through creating online pedagogic platforms.

"The support of critical friends to help gain a fresh outlook to the academic side of the programme should be explored. This together with the involvement of educational stakeholders (e.g. potential employers, the education authorities) to ensure that the programme keeps up to date by providing study units that directly address the needs of school leadership."

As part of the QAA-adopted QA process, External Examiners act as critical friends in helping keep the programme up-to-date, while at the same time ensure consistency in the application of academic standards in curriculum changes and development, e.g. as part of a Continuous Course Enhancement process and a 5-year Period Course Review process. Further, the programme went through a University Review Panel in 2020 at UCLan UK comprised by Dr Carol Thompson Dr. Carol Thompson from the University of Bedfordshire, Dr. Darell Brooks and Dr. Richard Davies from UCLAN. In addition, the programme team benefit from the feedback offered by the CyQAA External Evaluation Committee, during the periodic (5 years) re-accreditation process.

Furthermore, the programme team has established a strong partnership with the Unions/Associations of School Teachers of Cyprus (OELMEK, POED, OLTEK), who act as advisors in ensuring the relevance of the programme in Cyprus's educational needs. As such, the School will develop an Advisory Board comprising representatives from the aforementioned Unions/Associations as well as other key stakeholders such as educational practitioners and directors/owners of private education providers in Cyprus.

"This course has been running since 2014. It is not clear what course enhancement or course review has been undertaken. For example, it is not evident that external expertise – whether from UCLan UK and ideally from other institutions – has been sought in the internal review process. The external examiners' reports that were presented, from academic years 2015/2016 and 2017/2018, seemed to be of several programmes and made few comments about the MA EL. The external examiners are not specialists in educational leadership. The Application for Evaluation - Accreditation notes that the university has set up internal quality assurance mechanisms – regulations and procedures (see pages 15-16 of the Application) - to ensure that self-evaluations are conducted. Three main procedures are mentioned, namely Continuous Enhancement Process, Periodic Course Review (this also includes external examiners reports), and Annual Monitoring (see page 19 of Application) There are no reports annexed to this report to attest to this.

No mention is made of how external stakeholders are involved in the review process."

The programme MA Educational Leadership DL is not currently on offer. This is the first time we are applying to accredit this DL programme.

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In line with UCLan regulations and practices, external examiners are appointed for each programme of study or each group of modules, covering similar expertise.. At the end of each academic year, as part of the annual monitoring process (currently named Continuous Course Enhancement), each course leader prepares a course self-evaluation report including a range of information related to the delivery of the programme, statistics on student profile, recruitment and progression, feedback of students, feedback from the academic team, feedback from the external examiner and any stakeholders, learning resources, etc. Good practices are highlighted in the annual report and an action plan is put in place on any issues identified during the revision of the information included in the report. Some examples of annual course leader reports (including feedback from external examiners as well as external stakeholders) are available in appendix VII.

"Another matter that needs to be addressed are the references. There are more recent publications that can be cited for a number of areas. Whilst a certain element of duplication is evident and to be expected then more focus will need to be given to the reading assignments. For example, with reference to educational leadership and management theories the text by Professor Tony Bush entitled Theories of Educational Leadership and Management (5th edn) is a must. This text is cited in another Study Guide which does not really tackle the theoretical dimension of the course."

We would like to thank the committee for its valuable comment on the updating of the Library resources and references. It would have been an omission to not include the newest publication of Tony Bush's book, *Bush, T. (2020) Theories of Educational Leadership and Management, London: Sage*. Nevertheless, this was not intentional as this application was submitted in early 2020 just before the book publication took place. The book is now part of our core recommended readings along with many other books and journal articles including:
Bezzina, C. (2006). "The road less travelled": Professional communities in secondary schools. Theory Into Practice, 45(2), 159–167.
Pashiardis, P. (2012) International journal of educational management / Volume 26, no. 5, International and comparative studies in successful school leadership. Bradford, England: Emerald Group Publishing.
Pashiardis, P. and Johansson, O. (2021) 'Successful and effective schools: Bridging the gap', Educational management, administration & leadership, 49(5), pp. 690–707. doi:10.1177/1741143220932585.
Pashiardis, P. and Kafa, A. (2022) 'Successful school principals in primary and secondary education: a comprehensive review of a ten-year research project in Cyprus', Journal of educational administration, 60(1), pp. 41–55. doi:10.1108/JEA-04-2021-0081.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment
(ESG 1.3)

EEC REPORT

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.

The various documents made available show that a lot of consideration is put into establishing clear guidelines and support structures for students. The university is committed to the wellbeing of the student and aims to ensure that they are adequately supported both prior and during their engagement with the course. Suffice to mention that a lot of support is given to potential students who may wish to follow the APL system that allows potential candidates approval of their previous learning experiences. This is a demanding process and this is a well explained and a detailed part of the Application. Students remark that teaching staff are accessible and spoke of meaningful relationships being established throughout the whole course. This was identified as the best feature of the course.

Is the nature of the programme compatible with e-learning delivery?
Support systems within the University exist to facilitate student use of a range of ICT supported learning opportunities including: VLE, Blackboard, Library Platforms, and Asynchronous discussion platforms. However, the DL programme has not been developed as a specific DL programme: it is similar to the regular programme with the addition that you can follow the course through digital media. This is similar to the strategy many schools and universities have taken to bring their regular programs online during the COVID lock-downs. Most universities and students have experienced that this approach is suboptimal, e.g., sitting behind a computer to follow lectures is very tiring and not motivating. Collaborating with peers is hard. DL universities have learned in the past that the delivery of DL courses should follow a specific designed and support. In this programme the video lecture provided was – not only from a content perspective – not adequate in its didactic design to attract students' attention, to promote active participation and to build in sufficient variance in delivery to prevent cognitive overload and concentration concerns.

As a panel we could not assess current work in the learning environment. As stated before, is became clear to us later the courses were not running at all since 2019, so it was impossible to see current work and discussions in the platform. This also makes it impossible to assess how online curriculum, the online material, the ICT facilities, the assessments, the feedback and the digital pedagogy guidelines together safeguard the interaction between students, students and teaching staff and students and the material in the DL programme.

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).
The documentation reviewed, including the background information provided that make up each study unit description, indicate an awareness of the need to link teaching and assessment methods with the overall programme objectives and learning outcomes. Throughout the various study unit descriptions one can see the emphasis on the link between what is being learnt and what is then assessed. The link between theory and practice is sought. This desired link helps the student, or prospective student, to see what and how the course will unfold. The emphasis throughout is to provide adequate personalised support to the students as they engage with the various components of the course. This aspect of the course can happen when course participants are actually engaged as educators. Assuming that the course can be attractive to anyone coming from any background shows a lack of understanding of the field as a discipline and thus engagement can remain at a very superficial level rather than going into the theoretical underpinning of educational

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development.

Naturally, one of the challenges here is to ensure that the skills that the course candidates are addressing are actually achieved. Whilst there tends to be a focus on student/peer engagement as parts of the course unfold there is limited to no mention of group presentations for which students would be expected to engage, research, reflect and present together. With a focus on skills development, especially team work skills, this would be expected. There is too much emphasis on examinations. At this level one can question the role and validity of holding examinations. More so, in an area like leadership the EEC would argue that contact between students is paramount and should be encouraged, for example through seminars held as the course unfolds.

How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?

The documentation provided suggests an awareness of the need to tailor the teaching and learning activities to the diverse range of experiences brought by an experienced student body undertaking this master's programme. The EEC acknowledges the intent of the programme designers/implementers to promote learning experiences and assessments that allow participants to integrate their personal and professional experiences into their engagement with the theory and practice within the respective modules. This is reinforced by the Research module that focuses on exemplars from practice and depends on the research interests of the students.

The general pedagogic structure appears to take account of the particular needs of a diverse student body with a commitment to a relatively small cohort (10 students) supported by a designated staff member is laudable. In addition, the regular engagements between staff and students focusing on assessment activities, structured feedback and what might be described as a 'student at risk' policy focusing on contact in the event of students failing to engage appears to be important in this context. It shows the University's commitment to providing ongoing support, and different forms of support when needed.

The formal support structure, consisting as it does of academic and peer elements, indicates an understanding of the need to create an environment that takes account of the needs of a diverse student population at postgraduate level. This commitment was noted by student representatives with staff representatives also highlighting support and communication as being key features of the programmes under discussion.

How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?

The programme at its core, as described in the documentation and by the staff in the course of the evaluation discussions, views itself as having an applied, professional development focus. Each of the study units is intended to examine a different aspect of the professional reality of school leaders working in a range of educational settings. As such, the activities, assessments and content are designed to enhance the participants' capacity to deal with an evolving organisational landscape by focusing on the development of a number of key competencies.

The additional work undertaken in the Research Project is explicitly linked to the enhancement of research and practice competences. Whilst The Triple Research Project reinforces the commitment of the School of Business and Management to ensure that the course participants engage in action research and hence approach their research project from a very practical angle, the EEC recommends that one needs to see if candidates who wish to eventually pursue further studies (i.e. doctoral studies) may be able to proceed with

There is a case to be made for a more explicit identification of competences relating to culture and cultural context as a determinant of organisational leadership and evaluation. The need to provide students with a capacity to critique, adapt and perhaps adopt the different models of leadership and evaluation presented from a culturally responsive viewpoint would appear to be important. This is an aspect that should be covered in the study unit currently entitled *Strategic Leadership in Education*.

How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?

Learning support is provided on the course learning platform. Interactions on the VLE is encouraged and naturally through the use of emails and face-to-face meetings. However, the teaching methods for the DL programme are not innovative at all (e.g. use of modern teaching and learning technologies like serious games and automated formative assessments).

Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?

The technology is only used to try to provide the regular, residential programme through the available distance teaching technologies that are available. This will not make the teaching process more effective.

How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?

As has already been mentioned, at its core the School of Business and Management see this course as an applied programme that explicitly seeks to use the professional practice experiences of the student cohort as a basis for class discussion, assessment and feedback. The centrality of the practice context is confirmed both by the programme documentation and the input of the teaching staff during the online visit who emphasise the relevance and rooted nature of the theoretical inputs to their professional lives. However, much of the theory offered by the programme is unconnected to the field of educational leadership, making theory-practice links problematic. Furthermore, the video clips we were shown do nothing to engage, challenge or debate educational issues. Hence, our concern as to the level of engagement that will take place.

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?

There does not appear to be any practical component within the course. although arguably the applied nature of many of the assessment activities, allows course participants to engage with various skill sets. Through the study unit *Leading People and Teams*, for example, offers an excellent opportunity for course participants to engage in groups, develop group dynamics, handle case studies, develop intra and inter personal skills that can be applied. Such learning opportunities would allow participants to demonstrate their mastery of identified skills and competencies within an educational setting. So, whilst the University may be here proposing a purely online DL programme we would seriously recommend going for a blended approach as particular skills, attributes, etc., need an environment that a DL will not ensure.

Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?

The research component represents a substantial part of this course, i.e. 44% of the course weighting. There is a formal research study unit entitled *Designing and Planning your Research Project* that introduces the course participants to the area of identifying, designing and undertaking a research project that directly addresses a need identified by the different candidates. The study unit description makes reference to exposure to 'traditional and alternative research approaches' but there is no mention as to whether

qualitative and quantitative research methods would be discussed and explored. One only finds these in the Study Unit Guide Books. The References recommended in the study unit a vast selection of books related to such research methods is made.

The Study Guide itself shows that the students need to engage themselves solidly for a whole semester to go through the varied readings and activities and finally work and submit a Research Project within the stipulated time. It is only through the discussions with the students that we came to know that the students who are on part-time studies get to cover the course in two academic years. We assume that a DL programme would work round the students' personal itinerary. However, if this happens then it would be difficult for the course participants to engage in group activities.

How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?
One assumes that the current provision that was in use for the conventional programme would be made available to those following the DL programme.

Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?
There is an explicit link between EQF and the programme at all levels.

How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?
The University has robust procedures to ensure fairness in the assessment system. The Academic Regulations issued by UCLan UK is the one adopted by UCLan Cyprus and presents a clear outline of what students need to do if they feel grieved in any way. No mention has been made as to whether appeals have been sought, whether appeals have been granted and re-marking facilitated.

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

1. Quality of some course descriptions which have clearly articulated LOs, assessment criteria and the benefits to be accrued.
2. The applied nature of many of the study units and the assessment practices that encourage course participants the opportunity to link theory with practice.
3. There is a strong emphasis on developing and maintaining a strong rapport with the students throughout the course. Meaningful relationships are aimed to ensure that helps students settle and feel safe, facilitating their improvement.
4. A practical and project-based approach to this masters.

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 concerns raised for the conventional programme apply here, namely:
1. The DL programme needs to be redesigned in its teaching approach, using the principles for effective online course design in order to provide an attractive, motivational, inspirational and activating learning experience for distance learning students.
2. There is an evident need to review the way the study units have been identified and developed. They are not in line with international best practice.
3. Broadening the curriculum focus beyond Anglo-American literature.

4. Assessment activities need to see students practising and engaging with the knowledge and skills being experienced as the course unfolds.

5. Consider whether the Research approach adopted in this master's degree is leaving its desired impact on students/graduates.

6. At this level and in an area like leadership the EEC would argue that contact between students should be encouraged such as through occasional seminars.

7. The Triple Research Project should have clear guidelines for the students to follow to ensure that the template is respected. Set guidelines should be made available. This will help to set standards and express the professionalism required at this level of study.

8. There is a clear need to enhance the focus on educational leadership, including greater attention to the education context, throughout the programme, reflected in content, readings, and assessment.

9. Ensure that the Research work undertaken by students address the current gap in that research and literature based on the Cypriot context does not appear to feature in the course. Given that Cyprus has world leaders researching on this area, their work should be included.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

"*1. The DL programme needs to be redesigned in its teaching approach, using the principles for effective online course design in order to provide an attractive, motivational, inspirational and activating learning experience for distance learning students.*"

In order to make the DL student experience more interactive, we have introduced certain collaboration tools, i.e. Blackboard Collaborate, Trello and Slack. In addition to the above, we have incorporated virtual worlds, i.e. SecondLife as a collaborative learning tool as well as wikispaces to engage students into project work. We have also developed asynchronous online discussions i.e. discussion forums and online journals on Blackboard and Storybook as tools for reflection. We have also used Kahoot as an automated formative feedback and assessment tool in order to promote online classroom participation. We have also incorporated backchanneling and polling through Mentimeter and Padlet and Flipgrod for the development of learning communities online. We will also employ XR (extended reality) tools through Civilisations AR and CoSpaces EDU. Pixton and Bookcreator are also used as media in promoting group work and creativity online. The use of Canon Interactive Simulators will be employed for stimulating reflection on professional practice. For the *Triple Research Project* module, we will use Online survey tools such as SurveyMonkey and Qualtricks and form creation tools, i.e. Google forms as well as live polls and sli.do for interactive presentations and online meetings.

The screenshots provided earlier (pages 10-12) provide examples of collaborative tools.
Please also find further examples from Blackboard screenshots below:

This should take 20 min (including considering the aims of the group)

Activity 3: Discussion Board

Set one of the following questions for discussion:

A. How you may engage students in learning through the use of technologies?

B. How do you convince your head of school that technology can be beneficial for student learning?

Then try to respond to your colleagues questions by raising your own concerns and posting your ideas.

Allow 30 min for this activity.

Activity 4: Wiki creation (optional)

Create a wiki around the topic: Assessment and technology

Add your contributions to the wiki

Try not to repeat what is already said by your peers.

Allow 30 min for this activity

Activity 4 - journal writing (week 4)

What have you learnt today?

Based on what you have learnt today, is there anything that you will do differently in order to engage your students?

Allow 30 min.

Week 5 discussion

Dear all,

Consider the following statement:

"Each of the leadership models or theories is partial. Applicability vary with the event, the situation and the participants".

What do you think?

What does this statement mean to you? Do you agree? Justify your answer.

Week 5 journal: styles of leadership

What have you learnt so far about styles of leadership?

Which one in your opinion is the most effective?

Can you apply it in your school? To which extend? Justify.

Allow 30 min

"2. There is an evident need to review the way the study units have been identified and developed. They are not in line with international best practice."

"8. There is a clear need to enhance the focus on educational leadership, including greater attention to the education context, throughout the programme, reflected in content, readings, and assessment."

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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The structure of the programme of study has been revised taken into account the insightful recommendations of the EEC and the international best practice in the field of educational leadership. The revised version of the programme is available in appendix V (see pages 12-13 for more information).

"3. Broadening the curriculum focus beyond Anglo-American literature."
"9. Ensure that the Research work undertaken by students address the current gap in that research and literature based on the Cypriot context does not appear to feature in the course. Given that Cyprus has world leaders researching on this area, their work should be included."

The Library resources has been enhanced with local bibliography and publications outside the Anglo-american sphere.

Examples of Local bibliography:

Kafa, A. and Pashiardis, P. (2019) 'Exploring school principals' personal identities in Cyprus from a values perspective', International journal of educational management, 33(5), pp. 886–902. doi:10.1108/IJEM-03-2018-0102.

Pashiardis, P. and Johansson, O. (2021) 'Successful and effective schools: Bridging the gap', Educational management, administration & leadership, 49(5), pp. 690–707. doi:10.1177/1741143220932585.

Pashiardis, P. and Kafa, A. (2022) 'Successful school principals in primary and secondary education: a comprehensive review of a ten-year research project in Cyprus', Journal of educational administration, 60(1), pp. 41–55. doi:10.1108/JEA-04-2021-0081.

Examples of Publications outside the Anglo-american sphere:

Bezzina, C., Paletta, A. and Alimehmeti, G. (2018) 'What are school leaders in Italy doing? An observational study', Educational management, administration & leadership, 46(5), pp. 841–863. doi:10.1177/1741143217694896.

Kairys, M.R. (2018) 'The influence of gender on leadership in education management', International journal of educational management, 32(5), pp. 931–941. doi:10.1108/IJEM-04-2017-0094

Tony Bush (2013) Instructional leadership and leadership for learning: global and South African perspectives, Education as Change, 17:sup1, S5-S20, DOI: 10.1080/16823206.2014.8659862.

"4. Assessment activities need to see students practising and engaging with the knowledge and skills being experienced as the course unfolds."

We agree with the Committee's feedback that the assessment activities should engage the students to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. Assessments that include oral presentations enable students to develop a practical application of leadership skills (Modules: *Planning and Designing your Research Project* and *Triple Research Project*). Assessments that include problem solving exercises and written analysis of context enable students to apply theoretical context into practice and provide creative solutions into leadership contexts (all remaining modules).

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"5. Consider whether the Research approach adopted in this master's degree is leaving its desired impact on students/graduates."

The educational leadership research modules are design to equip the students with a thorough understanding of qualitative methodological approaches and research paradigms. Students are immersed into inductive approaches for the development and generation of theory. A range of methods are introduced, e.g. action research, participatory action research, qualitative case study and grounded theory. Deductive approaches in testing theory through the quantitative approach are also introduced with familiarisation with the SPSS data analysis software. The design and the development of a research proposal is a core aim of the module ED4995. Ethical procedures are given appropriate attention according to the university procedures and Cyprus follows the EU legislation on this matter and holds strict ethical standards for researchers through the Cyprus National Bioethics Committee which the course leader has served as a member and reviewer. The Triple Research Project module provides an opportunity for participants to respond to challenges within their environment and to undertake in depth research into their practice in order to contribute to their own development but also to that of others: their peers and their clients; to advance their knowledge and to enhance understanding of methodologies, issues and their professional context. This opportunity has been welcomed by the course participants and one alumni member has been appointed to work for the Cyprus Pedagogical Institute in supporting on-going research following the experience she gained in the programme.

"6. At this level and in an area like leadership the EEC would argue that contact between students should be encouraged such as through occasional seminars."

The interaction between the students is vital in the educational environment and occasional seminars are part of the ethos of the programme and they are organised following a presentation by a guest lecturer. We have included for example this year the following seminars (see appendix VIII) organised for the students registered on the conventional delivery :

28/2/22: Dr Constantinos Michael gave a seminar entitled: Positive School Culture and Climate: what's in them for schools.

7/3/22: Dr Maria Nicolaidou gave a seminar entitled: Exploring the impact of professional development and professional practice on school leaders' self-efficacy: a quasi-experimental study.

14/3/22 Mr Panikos Sardos have a seminar Introduction to theory and practice of distributed leadership. Images and materials are available.

23/3/22 PhD (c) Eftychia Xerou gave a seminar on The Role of Technology in Educational Leadership.

Dr Marilena Antoniadou will provide a seminar on Education Leadership in Disruptive times (planned for 2/7/22, relevant materials are available)

Some conferences, seminars and workshops organed in the previous years may include:
Conference: Adaptation of Leadership across Schools. Speakers included: Professor Leonidas Kyriakides from the University of Cyprus, Mrs Ariana Todorovic from PASCAL School, Ms Antonia Psalti from the American Academy, Larnaca, Mr George Fylaktou from Xenion and Dr (c) Constantinos Georgiou from the Ministry of Education and Culture, 22/5/2015.

Seminars:

The Emotional Geographies of Exclusion in Schools: An Ethnographic Case Study from Cyprus, Prof. Michaelinos Zembylas, Open University of Cyprus, 25/1/2016.

Curriculum Design Concerns, Dr Stavroula Philippou, University of Cyprus

The Evolution of UK Secondary School model -Lessons for Cyprus Education, Mrs Maria Ullman, Director, American Academy, Date: 25/1/2017

History teaching in Cyprus schools, Dr Petros Kimitris, Pascal School, 1/3/2017

The difference between theory and practice- how ready are you to enter the business of Education? Director, Pascal School, Ms Denise Michael

Entrepreneurial learning, Dr Celia Hadjichristodoulou, GrantXpert

The purpose of the above-mentioned events is to bring local Schools, government officials, professionals, students, alumni and the academic community together.

Activities such the ones mentioned above could be also organised online for students who will study on the DL programme.

"7. The Triple Research Project should have clear guidelines for the students to follow to ensure that the template is respected. Set guidelines should be made available. This will help to set standards and express the professionalism required at this level of study."

We would like to thank the EEC for pointing our attention to this issue. In addition to the 'Triple Research Project' module handbook, we have developed a detailed guide on the format of the dissertation and details on how to start developing the research study, what is to be discussed in each section of the dissertation, and what is expected from the student, including clear format. The detailed guide and template for the dissertation unit are available in appendix IX.

"Naturally, one of the challenges here is to ensure that the skills that the course candidates are addressing are actually achieved. Whilst there tends to be a focus on student/peer engagement as parts of the course unfold there is limited to no mention of group presentations for which students would be expected to engage, research, reflect and present together. With a focus on skills development, especially team work skills, this would be expected. There is too much emphasis on examinations. At this level one can question the role and validity of holding examinations. More so, in an area like leadership the EEC would argue that contact between students is paramount and should be encouraged, for example through seminars held as the course unfolds."

We agree with the EEC remark on the importance of the teamwork skills and group presentations in a programme such us MA Educational leadership. Student group presentations are part of formative assessment throughout the programme. Students are required to conduct group projects and then present as a group the results of their study (e.g. how to use action research as a methodology to achieve school improvement). Furthermore, we would like to inform the Committee that the presence of an examination as assessment method in the majority of the units of study is a requirement of CyQAA (https://www.dipae.ac.cy/index.php/el/nea-ekdiloseis/anakoinoseis-el/179-2018-10-25-pliris-foitisi-metaptychiako-diarkeia-2-3-examina) for Master programmes.

"There is a case to be made for a more explicit identification of competences relating to culture and cultural context as a determinant of organisational leadership and evaluation. The need to provide students with a capacity to critique, adapt and perhaps adopt the different models of leadership and evaluation presented from a culturally responsive viewpoint would appear to be important. This is an aspect that should be

covered in the study unit currently entitled Strategic Leadership in Education"

The module *Strategic Leadership in Education* has been amended and enhanced to better suit the needs of students for an Educational Leadership study and has been replaced by the new unit *Contemporary Issues in Educational Leadership*. The content of the new syllabus is designed to enable all students to develop their awareness of research and narrow down their area of enquiry into an actionable project and it will include:

- leadership, management and strategy
- organisational and leadership theory in educational settings
- models, stakeholders and the policy and social context
- distributed leadership
- leadership and gender
- systems and cultures
- problematising our practice

The new module encompasses case studies that will discuss this set of topics in various school settings and cultures.

"Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?
The technology is only used to try to provide the regular, residential programme through the available
distance teaching technologies that are available. This will not make the teaching process more effective."

We would like to inform the EEC that the following new technologies are used in the conventional programme virtual worlds, i.e. SecondLife as a collaborative learning tool, as well as WikiSpaces and StudyBlue. Moreover, asynchronous online discussions and journals on Blackboard have also been implemented in the teaching methodology, as well as interactive tabletops and Storybook as tools for reflection. We have used Kahoot as an automated formative feedback and assessment tool. On the current cohort, in addition to the above, we are using backchanneling and polling through Mentimeter and Padlet and Flipgrod for the development of learning communities. We are also introducing students to XR (extended reality) through Civilisations AR, CoSpaces EDU and also Pixton and Bookcreator. We are using Scratch to teach robotics and programming in education.

3. Teaching staff
(ESG 1.5)

EEC REPORT

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.

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development
The School of Business and Management employs three full-time and two part-time academic members of staff that deliver the whole programme. However, there are no senior members of staff holding Associate Professor or Professor status. During our meeting we met all the teaching staff. Whilst all of them have a PhD, and are research active, the EEC has major concerns about their background and the contribution that they can make to fulfilling the aims and objectives set by a number of study units. A review of the academic profile involved in the implementation of the course shows that none of the five candidates have studied at postgraduate level in the area of educational leadership. While these staff are research active, their activities and publications are not related to the espoused focus of the MA Educational Leadership course. This connects to the EEC's concerns about the structure and content of the course. The modules do not fit contemporary views about educational leadership in the 21st century, internationally and in Cyprus.

Their areas of interest are also limited in input, these mainly being in the area of adult learning and online learning. Most of the staff are experienced teachers of e-learning programmes. The one study unit that the EEC feels confident that the staff can fulfil the objectives and learning outcomes set is *Learning Technologies in Education* but this is not an appropriate module for a programme on educational leadership at Master's level. The latest publications of the academic staff confirm the concerns of the EEC. The legitimacy of postgraduate courses in educational leadership depends on staff being well qualified in this specific field, with relevant research and publications. The EEC does not believe that education is simply another setting to which general management principles can be applied.

The Application notes that all 'special teaching personnel' employed for teaching this degree are in possession of a PhD, have adequate teaching experience, and are provided with the opportunity to attend Teaching Toolkit Training so as to achieve the Fellowship of the UK Higher Education Academy.

3.2 Teaching staff numbers and status
Full time academic staff have teaching, research and administrative responsibilities. UCLan Cyprus establishes that in average time full-time professors are expected to invest 40% of their time teaching, 40% in research activities and 20% in managing tasks. The maximum teaching load is 12 hours per week but this very much depends on the other responsibilities assigned they might not reach the maximum. Two of the full-time members of staff have reached their maximum. During the meeting with teaching staff, they confirmed that they are able to focus on research for 40% of their time. They have a research day each week and also utilise less busy periods (notably the summer period) for research activities.

The number of FT professors is in accordance with the regulations. The EEC considers that five staff members are sufficient to the course given its small cohort. The staff referred to 'experts' (academics and practitioners) who contributed to the course. The EEC was unable to establish the scale and nature of such contributions.

ΔΙΠΑΕ
CYQAA

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

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3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

There is evidence that both FT and PT staff involved in implementing this programme have a varied research background. Quite a number have presented recent research publications. They are engaged in scholarly activity with the intent of extending their profile in their respective disciplines. However, as noted in other sections, the EEC main concern is that this research and involvement in various projects are not at all related to the main area of educational leadership. Whilst the Application states that teaching staff offer 'tailored knowledge and skills in the area of educational leadership' (p. 25), the EEC questions this assertion since none of the teaching staff have the theoretical background or experience themselves, and it is therefore rather difficult to 'bridge theory with practice' (p.26).

As noted above, newly-appointed staff and current staff are provided with the opportunity to attend Teaching Toolkit Training so as to achieve the Fellowship of the UK Higher Education Academy.

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

1. Among the teaching staff that met with the EEC there was evident enthusiasm, high morale and satisfaction, and a good sense of team spirit. The students we met collaborated this positive feeling, indicating high levels of satisfaction with their teaching staff. Above all, they emphasised the teaching staff's supportive attitudes and their availability to address their needs be they personal or professional. It is evident that teaching staff are committed to providing students with an engaging and worthwhile experience whilst they are at UCLan.
2. The teaching staff are research active, but not in educational leadership.
3. Most of the teaching staff are experienced teachers of e-learning programmes.

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

1. The limited specific educational leadership expertise of the teaching staff makes it vital that appropriately qualified and experienced adjunct staff are employed to enrich the students' experience. There appear to be such colleagues but we cannot ascertain the extent and nature of their contributions. If this course is to remain an important part of the University's profile, as stated by several people interviewed by the EEC, additional staff, qualified at masters and doctoral level in leadership, are required to teach this programme of studies.
2. The EEC is rather concerned by much of the content of the programme, as indicated in study guides. In particular, there are significant omissions of topics and issues that reflect up-to-date discourses in the field, and which have been current for around the last decade or more, while very dated issues and perspectives dominate the content of the study guides. Whilst a number of concerns have been addressed within section 1 of this report, it also reflects the issues covered in this section, for the EEC feels that this apparent out-datedness of course content reflects the research activity, foci and expertise of teaching staff. The EEC is concerned that those members of the programme teaching team who hold professional posts may simply not have the background or had the time or opportunity to keep up with the most up-to-date research in the field, and, as a result, the research upon which they base course content is not state-of-the-art. To address this problem, if the UCLan Cyprus wants this programme to truly reflect the most up-to-date research and the areas pertinent to school development and school improvement, it would benefit greatly from the involvement of

overseas-based teaching staff and researchers in the field of (educational) leadership and related areas (e.g. professional learning) as visiting professors.

3. During the meeting with teaching staff, the EEC's comments about the inappropriate content of the MA in Educational Leadership were rebutted. Staff asserted that the modules are all relevant to educational leadership. The EEC cannot agree with such comments. The course structure, content, and readings are not 'fit-for-purpose'.

4. This means reviewing the university's policy on employing visiting academics. Such visiting professors' involvement might initially be confined to a small number of guest lectures within an existing study unit thus adding value to the student experience.

5. The above points also reflect on the staff recruitment policy, a policy which states that it is aimed at ensuring the highest of standards.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

The constructive and valuable feedback provided by the Committee with regards to the expertise of our academic team and its impact on the programme structure has been seriously taken into consideration and as indicated in page 9 (section 1) above, additional academic staff has been appointed from January 2022 (see also appendix III), colleagues who would be complemented by new appointments (see job advertising in appendix IV) of Faculty with specialisation in specific areas of educational leadership. Further, we would like to re-emphasise that the School and the programme team organise seminars and guest lectures, as has been presented in section 2 (pages 26-27) and appendix IX.

Moreover, the structure of the programme (see pages 10-13 and appendices V and VI) has been revised and amended to fit contemporary views about educational leadership in the 21st century, internationally and in Cyprus and pay attention to transformational and distributed models of leadership that are oriented towards the enhancement of learning in schools. The set of relations that comprise schools, including links between students, teachers, parents and learning resources are considered as paramount in leadership conceptualisation and practice.

ΔΙΠΑΕ CYQAA
ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification
(ESG 1.4)

EEC REPORT

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.

The admission criteria are in place. The MA in Educational Leadership aims to attract 'graduates from any discipline who are working in schools and/or have a teaching role,' and must demonstrate a good command of the English language as stipulated by the Academic Regulations and Assessment Handbook issued by UCLan UK. Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently.

Regulations regarding student progression are in place. The processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information pertinent to student progression exist.

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. The Application presents a detailed approach to the Accreditation of Prior Learning. Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on: the 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.

Information and published regulations related to student certification are in place. Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, the level, content and status of studies that were pursued and successfully completed. The certificate of the University is accompanied by a diploma supplement which is in line with European and international standards.

An appeals process is in place for addressing any issues that may arise with the intention of providing a fair and transparent hearing. Student-centredness is a key tenet of the University's espoused culture and principles, making sure that students' individual needs are seriously addressed. The intent is to provide the same service to the students following the distance learning programme.

Through the remote visit, together with the study of the material provided by the School of Business and Management, it seems that student access policies are implemented consistently. Any students who want to pursue the APL route can do so. It was reported that at masters level no one has pursued this route to access the programme. Students' degrees/background are taken into consideration for admission. They need to be in possession of a first degree (i.e. a Bachelors degree) from an accredited university or tertiary institution; have very good knowledge of the English language – written and verbal; this is essential since the programme is offered in English.

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

The conventional programme had the following strengths which we assume the School of Business and

Management will do its utmost to ensure that they are able to adequately support the DL students.
1. The University's electronic system seems to work pretty well and so according to the different stakeholders interviewed, namely students, teaching staff and administrators. These monitoring processes are in place to address students' progress, requests and/or concerns of both students and staff.
2. Offering a double-awarded degree supports students' employment opportunities in Cyprus and academic mobility to other European countries. However, as noted above, one has to note the EEC's concern about this.

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

The University needs to ensure that there is clear explanation provided of the different courses available and how they operate, whether a student is full-time, part-time or following a distance learning programme. At the moment this is not clearly articulated neither on the University website nor in the documentation. However, we assume that this matter would be resolved once the programmes are approved and up and running.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

In line with the CyQAA regulations and guidelines, specific information, related to each of the modes of delivery: conventional face-to-face and distance learning and duration of study: full-time/part-time will be available on the University/ School of Business and Management/ Programme webpage following (re-)accreditation of the programme.

5. Learning resources and student support
(ESG 1.6)

EEC REPORT

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.

Overall, the programme is well structured with sufficient attention to detail in terms of learning and teaching resources with a variety of tools and approaches used as the course unfolds. We assume that provision for student support will be in place. Feedback from the students that had followed the conventional programme was very positive with tutor support identified as the best feature of the course. The teaching and administrative staff will need to engage in a different manner to ensure that good levels of support exist as the engagement required for a DL programme will be different.

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

Organisation
The material that we were shown is of the distance learning programme that is also being accredited for the first time. We do feel that most of the samples viewed showed a didactic approach to teaching with no engagement with the students as active participants. However, the documentation highlights that there is a lot of interaction taking place.

Programme design and delivery
In addition to the face to face interaction, there are some established mechanisms and technologies that support interaction between staff and students, mainly through Blackboard and the use of computer mediated communication.
The Blackboard offers opportunities for interaction predominantly through the use of discussion for a and a chat function.

Staff and student support
Teacher training is offered on the specificities of technology and distance learning.
Support is provided to students from both academic and administrative staff.
There is evidence in the documentation that we have seen that the University provides support to students with special needs. The virtual session of the University premises highlighted the accessibility of the various centres and halls that have all been made accessible.

Resources
The library offers both hard and electronic copies of academic texts and research literature. We were not able to visit the University consequently we did not manage to have a hands-on experience of assessing the full extent of the physical resources and the teaching materials available to support the programme. From discussions we had with the Programme Team and the Administrative staff, and the documentation that we were shown, it appears that these seem to be adequate.

Human Resources
Academic staff are either permanent or part-time lecturers. The number of administrative staff appears to be adequate for delivery of this 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.

1. The virtual learning environment offers opportunities for further interaction in addition to face to face sessions. However, the EEC has not seen examples of innovative use of technology such as computer simulations, virtual or augmented reality embedded in the programme online environment.
2. The EEC recommends that there is a clear student facing narrative on how the learning environment of the conventional programme integrates face to face and online components so that students truly benefit from a blended learning environment.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

"1. The virtual learning environment offers opportunities for further interaction in addition to face to face sessions. However, the EEC has not seen examples of innovative use of technology such as computer simulations, virtual or augmented reality embedded in the programme online environment."

A series of innovative tools have been incorporated in the Blackboard environment as presented previously in section 2 (pages 23-24) and described in detail in appendix X.

"2. The EEC recommends that there is a clear student facing narrative on how the learning environment of the conventional programme integrates face to face and online components so that students truly benefit from a blended learning environment."

We wish to thank EEC for this suggestion as we are in full agreement that a blended learning experience would favour both programmes. We will articulate this recommendation based on the profiles of our DL students and their geographical location. For example, concerning our home-based students that are located in Cyprus and who study online, we can organise joint face-to-face meetings along with the conventional programme students e.g. seminars, guest speaker lectures, research group discussions. Further, the following actions are proposed in order to enhance the provision of a blended learning environment:

- A mini conference will be organised to showcase achievement in which all participants from both programmes could present their final theses. Participation can be face-to-face or online, all in real time.
- "Flipped classroom" practices with online activities set up for the face-to-face students will be organised, i.e. asynchronous online discussions, access to expanded learning resources and opportunities for reflection will be provided.
- Educational visits and trips that are relevant to Educational Leadership will be organised: e.g. visit to local Primary School Hatzigeorgakis Kornesios, Nicosia, which has a reputation for being one of the national model schools for creativity and experiential learning. The visit will include presentations by the school director to discuss educational leadership in action.
- Development of a learning community which connects the participants of the programmes with pioneer school leaders and principals from public and private schools, as well as teachers. All could benefit from the exchange of ideas on classroom management, school leadership practices and teaching materials. This community could be enabled by networked technology which is accessible and freely available e.g. Trello.

Such developments will bring cohorts from the conventional and DL programmes together and enable both to benefit from a blended learning environment

6. Additional for doctoral programmes
   (ALL ESG)

NOT APPLICABLE

7. Eligibility (Joint programme)
(ALL ESG)

NOT APPLICABLE

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Please provide constructive conclusions and final remarks which may form the basis upon which improvements of the quality of the programme of study under review may be achieved, with emphasis on the correspondence with the EQF.

The EEC is appreciative of the warm welcome received from the University of Central Lancashire, Cyprus rector and staff, and of the time taken to prepare and present us with extensive information on this programme, and to address our questions.

The Committee finds that the proposal to introduce a Masters in Educational Leadership Distance Learning programme that is practically identical to a conventional programme that has not been running for two academic years without taking the necessary steps to address issues related to quality assurance, improved course design and development, and the engagement of teaching staff qualified in educational leadership as serious matters and therefore we cannot support or recommend that it is approved.

The recommendations and conclusions drawn for the conventional programme apply here.

The committee concludes that the notion of a master's programme in educational leadership delivered in English is sound. It covers an area of knowledge and study that features as the subject of hundreds of taught programmes in universities worldwide including Cyprus which has a strong history in this area. However, the current course design leaves much to be desired as the areas that have been presented do not take into consideration content that is internationally recognised as central to a master's in educational leadership programme. Furthermore, the School of Business and Management does not draw on a range of research and teaching expertise that would help design a programme that would entice and provide prospective students with an in-depth postgraduate engagement with a wide range of challenging and interesting subject specialism. The lack of focus in the programme in both the application of theory to practice, and the provision of high-quality teaching and research experiences in contextually appropriate areas of studies is disconcerting.

The current teaching staff, whilst having the expertise in various professional areas, do not have the right credentials to develop an engaging and cutting-edge programme that would be able to compete with other courses offered in other Cypriot institutions and compete in the international arena. This is especially so given the desire of the University to attract foreign students.

Of particular note is the focus on applying research-derived knowledge to professional practice, even though this is marred by the lack of academic staff that can adequately address this link in the field of education in general and educational leadership in particular. This is a point that the EEC recommends to the University authorities to address to enhance the quality, relevance, impact in Cyprus and beyond.

All the evidence that the EEC gleaned suggests that the University has an extremely strong record of student nurturing and emotional support, and this programme follow this well-established model of excellence in student welfare.

In terms of the programme's design and delivery the EEC urges the University/ School of Business and Management to extend its teaching team to include tutors (whether of adjunct, visiting or even permanent status) who undertake, and could disseminate, through the courses, cutting-edge research in the field that incorporates consideration of critical leadership studies, and different models of leadership presented from a culturally responsive viewpoint. Such recruitment of additional teaching team members could make

significant contributions towards transforming what is in many respects a 20th century curriculum (as it is currently proposed) into one that reflects 21st century research and scholarship that is global in focus, rather than narrowly Anglo-American, in the (educational) leadership field.

Issues relating to the nature and number of assessments also need to be considered by the programme team.

Whilst the proposed online MA in Educational Leadership builds on the existing conventional programme and may be a welcomed approach to potential candidates, the EEC recommends that a more blended approach is adopted. The area of leadership requires more interaction amongst course participants that a fully online approach does not allow.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

We would like once again to thank the EEC for their thorough and constructive feedback and recommendations.

Following discussions with the Committee during the evaluation event, while also taking into serious consideration the report received, the content and the structure of the programme have been vastly revised and enhanced to include more relevant, focused and updated material on Educational Leadership (see response on section 1 appendix).

Our tutors' team has been expanded and enlarged. A Visiting Professor from another institution, as well as educational leadership experts with extensive practical experience were recruited to enrich our teaching and learning strategy, adding an expert perspective and international outlook to our programme. Besides, academic staff are continuously informed of current and best practices in teaching and learning. Further, and in line with embedded University policy, any newly appointed academic member of staff (at this and any other programme of study) is requested to engage with a rigorous Teaching Toolkit training programme, which enables them to reflect on their practice and stay up-to-date with developments in teaching and learning pedagogy. We would also like to emphasise that he use of research in feeding into our teaching and facilitating the learning of students is an indispensable part of the Teaching Toolkit curriculum. Through the Teaching Toolkit, academic staff become Associate Fellows, and then Fellows of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA/FHEA). Two members of the academic team has reached Senior Fellow status which demonstrates leadership in academia (M. Zeniou Senior Fellowship Reference number PR224159)

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	*Position*	*Signature*
Assist. Prof. Maria Zeniou	**Course Leader for MA Educational Leadership**	
Assos. Prof. Loukas Glyptis	**Head of School of Business and Management** **Chair of the School Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee**	
Dr. Cosmina Theodoulou	**Chair, University Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee**	

Date: 15/04/2022