Doc. 300.3.1/1

Date: Date.

External Evaluation Report

(Programmatic within the framework of Departmental Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
American University of Cyprus (AUCY)

- **Town: Larnaca**

- **School/Faculty: Faculty of Sciences and Technology**

- **Department: Computer Science**

- **Programme(s) of study - Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**
Programme 1 – BSc in Computer Science
In Greek:

Πληροφορική

In English:
 BSc in Computer Science
Language(s) of instruction: English

Programme 2 – BSc in Management of Information Systems

In Greek:
Διοίκηση Πληροφοριακών Συστημάτων

In English:
 BSc in Management Information Systems (MIS)
Language(s) of instruction: Language(s)

Programme 3 – [Title 3]
In Greek:

In English:

Language(s) of instruction:

ΚΥΠΡΙΑΚΗ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΙΑ
REPUBLIC OF CYPRUS

A. Introduction

This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.

Due to covid-19 pandemic, the whole evaluation took place remotely and online. The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) was briefed online by Mr. George Aletraris, from the Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education on December 16th 2020. Mr. Aletraris attended the online meeting.

The online visit took place on December 16th, 2020. The day was split in four sessions: a meeting with the Rector of AUCY and the director of admissions and marketing, a meeting with the dean of the faculty of sciences and technology and the head of the computer science, a meeting with over twenty academics, ready to join the department, and a meeting with the head of the IT department and 6 members of the administrative service.

Members of the External Evaluation Committee were able to ask questions throughout these sessions. There was a thoughtful and informative dialogue. During the evaluation process, the EEC had access to the Application for Evaluation – Accreditation – New Program of Study document as well as a video presenting the new campus and the building facilities prior to the online meeting. Additional material was provided during the online meeting about admission criteria, the business advisory council as well as faculty improvement and assessment. The EEC considered all aspects of the submitted documentation and the site visit discussions. The EEC would like to acknowledge the quality of the organizational arrangements.

B.   External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

Name	Position	University
Philippe Bonnet	Professor	IT University of Copenhagen
Ioannis Ivrissimtzis	Associate Professor	Durham University
Phivos Mylonas	Associate Professor	Ionian University
Christodoulos Hadjichristodoulou	Student	University of Cyprus

C.   Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas.*

- *At the beginning of each assessment area there is a box presenting:*
  (a) sub-areas
  (b) standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)
  (c) some questions that EEC may find useful.

- *The questions aim at facilitating the understanding of each assessment area and at illustrating the range of topics covered by the standards.*

- *Under each assessment area it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements of each sub-area. In particular, the following must be included:*

  ### *Findings*

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

  ### *Strengths*

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

  ### *Areas of improvement and recommendations*

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

- *The EEC should state the compliance for each sub-area (Non-compliant, Partially compliant, Compliant), which must be in agreement with everything stated in the report. It is pointed out that, in the case of standards that cannot be applied due to the status of the HEI and/or of the programme of study, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted.*

- *The EEC should state the conclusions and final remarks regarding each programme of study as a whole.*

- ***The report may also address other issues which the EEC finds relevant.***

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

Sub-areas

1.1. **Policy for quality assurance**
1.2. **Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review**
1.3. **Public information**
1.4. **Information management**

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
  - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
  - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
  - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
  - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*
  - *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
  - *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
  - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
  - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
  - *benefits from external expertise*
  - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
  - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
  - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
  - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
  - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
  - *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*

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- *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
- *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
- *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
- *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
    - *selection criteria*
    - *intended learning outcomes*
    - *qualification awarded*
    - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
    - *pass rates*
    - *learning opportunities available to the students*
    - *graduate employment information*

1.4 Information management

Standards

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

- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *What is the procedure for quality assurance of the programme and who is involved?*
- *Who is involved in the study programme's design and development (launching, changing, internal evaluation) and what is taken into account (strategies, the needs of society, etc.)?*
- *How/to what extent are students themselves involved in the development of the content of their studies?*
- *Please evaluate a) whether the study programme remains current and consistent with developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.), and b) whether the content and objectives of the study programme are in accordance with each other?*
- *Do the content and the delivery of the programme correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?*
- *How is coherence of the study programme ensured, i.e., logical sequence and coherence of courses? How are substantial overlaps between courses avoided? How is it ensured that the teaching staff is aware of the content and outputs of their colleagues' work within the same study programme?*
- *How does the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies (including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills)?*
- *What are the scope and objectives of the foundation courses in the study programme (where appropriate)? What are the pass rates?*
- *How long does it take a student on average to graduate? Is the graduation rate for the study programme analogous to other European programmes with similar content? What is the pass rate per course/semester?*
- ***How is it ensured that the actual student workload is in accordance with the workload expressed by ECTS?***
- *What are the opportunities for international students to participate in the study programme (courses/modules taught in a foreign language)?*
- *Is information related to the programme of study publicly available?*
- *How is the HEI evaluating the success of its graduates in the labor market? What is the feedback from graduates of the study programme on their employment and/or continuation of studies?*
- *Have the results of student feedback been analysed and taken into account, and how (e.g., when planning in-service training for the teaching staff)?*
- *What are the reasons for dropping out (voluntary withdrawal)? What has been done to reduce the number of such students?*

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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.

Findings for BSc in Computer Science

The aim of the study program is to introduce students to the theories, technologies and applications of the broader Computer Science field. The proposed curriculum concerns the offer of a four-year level curriculum entitled "Bachelor in Computer Science".

Five specialization are proposed starting in the fourth semester of study. Specializations combine electives to form well-defined pathways for students: mobile applications and gaming development, software, hardware, management of information systems and network. The option to focus on hardware in the context of computer science is an element that distinguishes this program.

The curriculum provides the elaboration of a two-part dissertation during the 4th year of study. Nevertheless, the elaboration of works (project type) is foreseen throughout the studies. Especially in the third year, in the elective courses, practical and theoretical work is prepared. The curriculum provides the elaboration of a two-part dissertation during the 4th year of study. Nevertheless, the elaboration of works (project type) is foreseen throughout the studies. Especially in the third year, in the elective courses, practical and theoretical work is prepared.

The programme design is sound, informed by research and based on appropriate preparatory work. It was designed by a small committee of academics. A Business Advisory Council (BAC) has been established. The plan is to establish regular meetings between faculty deans and BAC to follow-up on the establishment of the different programs.

The learning outcomes are described for the entire programme with precision and consistency. The courses are presented with the necessary accuracy, with the exception of the courses of the so-called directions for which there is no clear indication of the actual succession of courses to be followed by the students and the dependencies between the selected courses.

There is a balance between theoretical and applied aspects. The EEC pointed out that the choice of C as first programming language will strongly impact student culture.

A generic policy is described for quality assurance in the department with a a plan for collecting student feedback as well as data about student performance and integrating it in the quality assurance process. Most responsibilities are given to the head of department. The EEC suggests that the department adopts a more collegial approach, where responsibilities are delegated to other faculty members (and possibly committees tasked with managing well defined aspects of the quality assurance process) in the department.

Moodle will be used for course content management. There are clear plans for collecting student feedback and performance indicators and integrating them into quality assurance processes.

As the university is not yet in operations, criterias associated with public communication and operatins are not applicable.

Findings for BSc in Management of Information Systems

The aim of this study program is to provide students a common body of knowledge in managing and utilizing systems development projects within a broad spectrum of business and business-related arenas, to develop analytical skills so as to visualize complex business problems and make informed decisions on planning, initiating, organizing, and controlling the operations of a firm's subsystems, to develop and apply the principles of problem solving and critical thinking skills to model information systems solutions for business problems, and to enhance the understanding of the business and professional responsibilities related to the use of information systems in organizations through the use of a competency-based program. The proposed curriculum concerns the offer of a four-year level curriculum entitled "Bachelor in Management Information Systems (MIS)".

Five specialization are proposed starting in the fourth semester of study. Specializations combine electives to form well-defined pathways for students: computer science, maritime, oil and gas, business and management of information systems. The EEC notes the synergy between the two proposed bachelor programs, as well as the synergy between this program and the department of business that has been accredited.

The curriculum provides the elaboration of a two-part dissertation during the 4th year of study. Nevertheless, the elaboration of works (project type) is foreseen throughout the studies. Especially in the third year, in the elective courses, practical and theoretical work is prepared. The curriculum provides the elaboration of a two-part dissertation during the 4th year of study. Nevertheless, the elaboration of works (project type) is foreseen throughout the studies. Especially in the third year, in the elective courses, practical and theoretical work is prepared.

The programme design is sound, informed by research and based on appropriate preparatory work. It was designed by a small committee of academics. A Business Advisory Council (BAC) has been established. The plan is to establish regular meetings between faculty deans and BAC to follow-up on the establishment of the different programs.

The learning outcomes are described for the entire programme with precision and consistency. The courses are presented with the necessary accuracy, with the exception of the courses of the so-called directions for which there is no clear indication of the actual succession of courses to be followed by the students and the dependencies between the selected courses.

A generic policy is described for quality assurance in the department with a a plan for collecting student feedback as well as data about student performance and integrating it in the quality assurance process. Most responsibilities are given to the head of department. The EEC suggests that the department adopts a more collegial approach, where responsibilities are delegated to other faculty members (and possibly committees tasked with managing well defined aspects of the quality assurance process) in the department.

Moodle will be used for course content management. There are clear plans for collecting student feedback and performance indicators and integrating them into quality assurance processes.

As the university is not yet in operations, criterias associated with public communication and operatins are not applicable.

Findings for [Title 3]

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Strengths for BSc in Computer Science
- Electives grouped in specializations organizing pathways for students
- Four years bachelor program
- Compulsory final project
- Opportunity for CS students to focus on hardware

Strengths for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- Electives grouped in specializations organizing pathways for students
- Four years bachelor program
- Compulsory final project
- Synergy with business department

Strengths for [Title 3]

Click or tap here to enter text.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Computer Science
- Prerequisites are not indicated for all classes. The EEC recommends that prerequisites are explicitly listed for each course.
- Concentration of tasks on the head of department. The EEC recommends a more collegial approach to quality assurance

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- Prerequisites are not indicated for all classes. The EEC recommends that prerequisites are explicitly listed for each course.
- Concentration of tasks on the head of department. The EEC recommends a more collegial approach to quality assurance

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [Title 3]

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant		
		BSc in Computer Science	*BSc in Management of Information Systems*	[Title 3]
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
1.3	Public information	Not applicable	Not applicable	Choose answer
1.4	Information management	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer

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

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

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*
- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*

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- *The criteria for and method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*
- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is it monitored that the teaching staff base their teaching and assessment methods on objectives and intended learning outcomes? Provide samples of examination papers (if available).*
- *How are students' different abilities, learning needs and learning opportunities taken into consideration when conducting educational activities?*
- *How is the development of students' general competencies (including digital skills) supported in educational activities?*
- *How is it ensured that innovative teaching methods, learning environments and learning aids that support learning are diverse and used in educational activities?*
- *Is the teaching staff using new technology in order to make the teaching process more effective?*
- *How is it ensured that theory and practice are interconnected in teaching and learning?*
- *How is practical training organised (finding practical training positions, guidelines for practical training, supervision, reporting, feedback, etc.)? What role does practical training have in achieving the objectives of the study programme? What is student feedback on the content and arrangement of practical training?*
- ***Are students actively involved in research? How is student involvement in research set up?***
- *How is supervision of student research papers (seminar papers, projects, theses, etc.) organised?*
- ***Do students' assessments correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF)?***
- *How are the assessment methods chosen and to what extent do students get supportive feedback on their academic progress during their studies?*
- *How is the objectivity and relevance of student assessment ensured (assessment of the degree of achievement of the intended learning outcomes)?*

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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.

Findings for BSc in Computer Science

Good balance between theory and practice in the curriculum. The choice of which modules would use labs as one of their modes of delivery, and which will be solely based on lecturing, is appropriate.

Other modes of delivery, such as web-supported learning, guest speakers, student presentations, and workshops, are also used. The use of such methods of delivery, where appropriate, should be promoted.

Student learning is supported by technology throughout the duration of the programme, as expected in a Computer Science Department.

The development of digital skills is supported throughout the curriculum.

The development of soft skills, especially communication skills, is supported in some modules through individual and group presentations.

Group projects, part of the two modules, would also promote soft skills.

The procedures for dealing with student grievances are clearly defined and appropriate.

The content of the course is well-thought-out and the strong link between theory and practice should be to the satisfaction of the stakeholders. We note the significant professional experience between the teaching staff, which facilitates that link.

The objectives of student assessment are stated clearly in the form and they are appropriate. But a concrete policy to achieve them has not been formulated yet. That was to be expected at this stage, i.e. before the final approval of the program, but it should be done before the start of the academic year. At the moment we cannot comment on issues such as "assessment is carried out according to the stated procedures" or "assessment where possible is carried out by more than one examiner", or whether student claims of mitigating circumstances are handled appropriately.

Findings for BSc in Management of Information Systems

Most or our findings for the Computer Science programme apply to the MIS programme too. We not however that the two programmes are genuinely different; in their aims, target audience, learning outcomes, and content (even though they share a large number of modules).

The two main modes of delivery are lectures and labs. This is well-aligned with the standard current practice, internationally.

There is greater use of other modes of delivery, such as web-supported learning, guest speakers, student presentations, and workshops, which is appropriate for the subject.

Good balance between theory and practice in the curriculum. The choice of which modules would use labs as one of their modes of delivery, and which will be solely based on lecturing, is appropriate.

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ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
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Other modes of delivery, such as web-supported learning, guest speakers, student presentations, workshops will also be used. More intensive use of such modes of delivery should be promoted, since they encourage more active attitudes towards learning, but the current mixture is satisfactory.

Student learning is supported by technology throughout the duration of the programme, as expected in a Computer Science Department.

The development of digital skills is supported throughout the curriculum.

The development of soft skills, especially communication skills, is supported in some modules through individual and group presentations.

Group projects, part of the three modules, would also promote soft skills. Some assessment in this form is compulsory in this program, which is appropriate for the subject.

The procedures for dealing with student grievances are clearly defined and appropriate.

The content of the course is well-thought-out and the strong link between theory and practice should be to the satisfaction of the stakeholders. We note the significant professional experience between the teaching staff, which facilitates that link.

The objectives of student assessment are stated clearly in the form and they are appropriate. But a concrete policy to achieve them has not been formulated yet. That was to be expected at this stage, i.e,. before the final approval of the program, but it should be done before the start of the academic year. At the moment we cannot comment on issues such as "assessment is carried out according to the stated procedures" or "assessment where possible is carried out by more than one examiner", or whether student claims of mitigating circumstances are handled appropriately.

Findings for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Strengths for BSc in Computer Science
- High quality content of the proposed modules.

- Various and appropriate modes of delivery.

- Development of soft skills supported.

- Very good balance between theory and practice and a strong link between them.

- Technology enhanced learning promoted throughout the curriculum.

Strengths for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- High quality content of the proposed modules.

- Various and appropriate modes of delivery.

- Development of soft skills supported.

- Very good balance between theory and practice and a strong link between them.

- Technology enhanced learning promoted throughout the curriculum.

Strengths for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Computer Science
- The EEC recommend sthat before the beginning of the first academic year of the department, assessment procedures have been formulated and the teaching staff is familiarised with them. Good practices emerging from the collective experience of the teaching staff should be promoted.

- The EEC expects that induction activities will take place at the beginning of the academic year, some of them organised at Faculty or University level. We recommend that the Department gets actively involved with them.

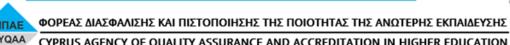### *Areas of improvement and recommendations for* BSc in Management of Information Systems
- The EEC recommends that before the beginning of the first academic year of the department, assessment procedures have been formulated and the teaching staff is familiarised with them. Good practices emerging from the collective experience of the teaching staff should be promoted.

- The EEC expects that induction activities will take place at the beginning of the academic year, some of them organised at Faculty or University level. We recommend that the Department gets actively involved with them.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area	Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant		
	BSc in Computer Science	BSc in Management of	[Title 3]

			Information Systems	
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
2.2	Practical training	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
2.3	Student assessment	Not applicable	Not applicable	Choose answer

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

Sub-areas

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

3.1. Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

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

3.2. Teaching staff number and status

Standards

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

3.3. Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

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

- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

You may also consider the following questions:

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

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

Findings for BSc in Computer Science

As evident by their CV's, the scientific merit of the teaching staff is high, and they are clearly qualified to deliver a high-quality course.

The recruitment process, as described to us during the virtual visit is rigorous, fair and transparent.

There are plans for delivery, at Faculty level, of professional development activities such as seminars and workshops, that will develop the teaching skills of the staff. While both Faculty and Department are still at an embryonic stage, there is some scope for enhancing those activities even at this early stage (when they are needed most), and at a later stage creating a departmental professional development programme.

In the documentation we received there was no clear description of the promotion procedures, but we recognise that usually these are University level issues.

The list of indicators on which the teaching performance criteria will be based is appropriate. We note that for the Special Teaching Personnel in particular, it is not clear what are their paths to promotion, if there are any, that is, it is not clear which of the other ranks are only for staff engaging with research (again, we recognise that usually these are University level issues).

With the caveat that several of the staff have not yet signed final contracts, we note that it is likely that there will be spare teaching capacity in the first years the program will run, and this spare capacity can be significant if student recruitment is below target. We support the plan to use some of this spare capacity to smooth the transition of new staff, which are currently employed on research intensive or professional jobs.

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Appropriate ratio of FT/PT teaching staff.

There are three visiting professors in the programme, which is an appropriate number for the type of the course.

We note the existing wealth of collaborations of teaching staff, both within the University and outside, nationally and internationally.

The academic backgrounds of the staff members are diverse and some of them are not in the areas of Computer Science of Information Systems. This departmental multi-disciplinarity is a disadvantage given the very good much between the areas of expertise of the staff and the modules they are teaching.

The expected teaching load of the staff is not light, but it is manageable and in line with other Universities.

Findings for BSc in Management of Information Systems

As evident by their CV's, the scientific merit of the teaching staff is high, and they are clearly qualified to deliver a high-quality course.

The recruitment process, as described to us during the virtual visit is rigorous, fair and transparent.

There are plans for delivery, at Faculty level, of professional development activities such as seminars and workshops, that will develop the teaching skills of the staff. While both Faculty and Department are still at an embryonic stage, there is some scope for enhancing those activities even at this early stage (when they are needed most), and at a later stage creating a departmental professional development programme.

In the documentation we received there was no clear description of the promotion procedures, but we recognise that usually these are University level issues.

The list of indicators on which the teaching performance criteria will be based is appropriate. We note that for the Special Teaching Personnel in particular, it is not clear what are their paths to promotion, if there are any, that is, it is not clear which of the other ranks are only for staff engaging with research (again, we recognise that usually these are University level issues).

With the caveat that several of the staff have not yet signed final contracts, we note that it is likely that there will be spare teaching capacity in the first years the program will run, and this spare capacity can be significant if student recruitment is below target. We support the plan to use some of this spare capacity to smooth the transition of new staff, which are currently employed on research intensive or professional jobs.

Appropriate ratio of FT/PT teaching staff.

There are two visiting professors in the programme, which is an appropriate number for the type of the course.

We note the existing wealth of collaborations of teaching staff, both within the University and outside, nationally and internationally.

The academic backgrounds of the staff members are diverse and some of them are not in the areas of Computer Science of Information Systems. This departmental multi-disciplinarity is a disadvantage given the very good much between the areas of expertise of the staff and the modules they are teaching.

The expected teaching load of the staff is not light, but it is manageable and in line with other Universities.

Findings for [Title 3]

Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Strengths for BSc in Computer Science
- We note the very good match between the content of the modules and the expertise of the staff that will teach them.

- Many examples of research-informed teaching.

Strengths for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- We note the very good match between the content of the modules and the expertise of the staff that will teach them.

- Many examples of research-informed teaching.

Strengths for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Computer Science
- The EEC recommend that the Faculty Development Centre is deployed as soon as feasible, and that at a later stage the Department creates its own professional development program.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- The EEC recommend that the Faculty Development Centre is deployed as soon as feasible, and that at a later stage the Department creates its own professional development program.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area	Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant

		BSc in Computer Science	*BSc in Management of Information Systems*	[Title 3]
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer

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

> **Sub-areas**
>
> **4.1. Student admission, processes and criteria**
> **4.2. Student progression**
> **4.3. Student recognition**
> **4.4. Student certification**

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
  - o *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
  - o *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Are the admission requirements for the study programme appropriate? How is the students' prior preparation/education assessed (including the level of international students, for example)?*
- *How is the procedure of recognition for prior learning and work experience ensured, including recognition of study results acquired at foreign higher education institutions?*
- *Is the certification of the HEI accompanied by a diploma supplement, which is in line with European and international standards?*

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

Findings for BSc in Computer Science
Well-defined criteria are in place for student admissions. These criteria are aligned with the legislation. The EEC notes that the target number of students admitted in the program is very high. During the visit the trade-off between quantity of students and quality was discussed. The need to establish the reputation of AUCY was articulated by faculty members and management.
The reports and presentation laid emphasis on student welfare and appropriate progression throughout their studies.
The issue of student recognition is not an immediate concern for the program. The EEC noted the focus of the department on academic credentials when considering potential student transfers.
The EEC also noted the efforts to establish tight collaborations with universities in the US and France.
The proposed diplomas conform to Cyprus legislation and international standards.

Findings for BSc in Management of Information Systems
Well-defined criteria are in place for student admissions. These criteria are aligned with the legislation. The EEC notes that the target number of students admitted in the program is very high. During the visit the trade-off between quantity of students and quality was discussed. The need to establish the reputation of AUCY was articulated by faculty members and management.
The reports and presentation laid emphasis on student welfare and appropriate progression throughout their studies.
The issue of student recognition is not an immediate concern for the program. The EEC noted the focus of the department on academic credentials when considering potential student transfers.

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The EEC also noted the efforts to establish tight collaborations with universities in the US and France.

The proposed diplomas conform to Cyprus legislation and international standards.

Findings for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Strengths for BSc in Computer Science
- The program is ambitious in terms of number of students admitted to the program

Strengths for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- The program is ambitious in terms of number of students admitted to the program

Strengths for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Computer Science
- Establishing the reputation of the program will require a close monitoring of the trade-off between quality and quantity of students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- Establishing the reputation of the program will require a close monitoring of the trade-off between quality and quantity of students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant		
		BSc in Computer Science	BSc in Management of Information Systems	[Title 3]
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
4.2	Student progression	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
4.4	Student certification	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer

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

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

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

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

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

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

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

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

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5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *Evaluate the supply of teaching materials and equipment (including teaching labs, expendable materials, etc.), the condition of classrooms, adequacy of financial resources to conduct the study programme and achieve its objectives. What needs to be supplemented/ improved?*
- *What is the feedback from the teaching staff on the availability of teaching materials, classrooms, etc.?*
- *Are the resources in accordance with actual (changing) needs and contemporary requirements? How is the effectiveness of using resources ensured?*
- *What are the resource-related trends and future risks (risks arising from changing numbers of students, obsolescence of teaching equipment, etc.)? How are these trends taken into account and how are the risks mitigated?*
- *Evaluate student feedback on support services. Based on student feedback, which support services (including information flow, counselling) need further development?*
- *How is student learning within the standard period of study supported (student counselling, flexibility of the study programme, etc.)?*
- *How students' special needs are considered (different capabilities, different levels of academic preparation, special needs due to physical disabilities, etc.)?*
- *How is student mobility being supported?*

Findings

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

Findings for BSc in Computer Science

The teaching methodology of each course is considered to be suitable for the teaching of computer science and the individual achievement of the objectives of the courses and is compatible for the teaching of adults.

The curriculum is available in detail and in the course descriptions. However, as far as its implementation by the teachers is concerned, this cannot be judged, since the program has not been put into operation yet. Also, due to the non-operation of the program, no additional teaching material was available, but the infrastructure that will host it has been developed and is available. The program has not yet worked, so whether the teachers of each course provide timely and effective feedback to their students cannot be accurately captured.

For the implementation of the program, current state-of-the-art technologies and applications will be used. Also, a platform for electronic management / support of e-learning and monitoring of the academic profile of the students by themselves will be available. To the extent that this has been established (since this is a new curriculum that has not yet worked) the relevant teaching material included in the application is compatible with the methodology and includes satisfactory literature. However, this bibliography should be available in AUCY's library.

There is a core of full-time academic staff that should be gradually strengthened as the program will evolve over time, something that the administration of the department has assured that it intends to do. Almost all staff are specialized through the possession of a relevant postgraduate degree. In the discussion with the administration of the institution, an individual reference was made to some potential visiting professors.

Finally, the EEC considers that the future ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory during the first years of operation, where the number of students is expected to be rather small. Gradually, however, if there is no recruitment of new teaching staff, this ratio will worsen with an impact on the workload and the final teaching quality, considering also the necessary and highly-desired parallel research activity of the teaching staff.

Findings for BSc in Management of Information Systems

The teaching methodology of each course is considered to be suitable for the teaching of management information systems, as well as the individual achievement of the objectives of the courses and is compatible for the teaching of adults.

Since the program has not been put into operation yet, no additional teaching material was available, but the infrastructure that will host it has been developed and is available. The program has not yet worked, so whether the teachers of each course provide timely and effective feedback to their students cannot be accurately captured.

To the extent that this has been established (since this is a new curriculum that has not yet worked) the relevant teaching material included in the application is compatible with the methodology and includes satisfactory literature. However, this bibliography should be available in the programme's library.

There is a core of full-time academic staff that should be gradually strengthened as the program will evolve over time, something that the administration of the department has assured that it intends to do. Almost all staff are specialized through the possession of a relevant postgraduate degree. The EEC considers the future ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff satisfactory, at least for the first years of the programme's operation. Recruitment of new teaching staff will be mandatory after a couple of years, since the aforementioned ratio will worsen with an impact on the final teaching workload and respective quality.

Findings for [Title 3]

Click or tap here to enter text.

Strengths

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

Strengths for BSc in Computer Science
- From the description of the courses, it is assumed that the evaluation methodology and criteria are satisfactory, clear and the relevant information is given to the students in a timely manner.
- The teaching methodology of the programme allows continuous-formative evaluation and feedback of students.
- Systematic involvement of students in projects under the supervision of teachers during their studies, potentially creates the conditions for effective feedback.
- The teachers' cognitive subjects cover the individual subjects of study.

Strengths for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- From the description of the courses, it is assumed that the evaluation methodology and criteria are satisfactory, clear and the relevant information is given to the students in a timely manner.
- The teaching methodology of the programme allows continuous-formative evaluation and feedback of students.
- Systematic involvement of students in projects under the supervision of teachers during their studies, potentially creates the conditions for effective feedback.
- The teachers' cognitive subjects cover the individual subjects of study.

Strengths for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Computer Science
- The EEC Effective information of students and the facilitation of their participation in the improvement of the educational process should be supported by the appointment of academic study advisors, who will take on the role of informing the students about the possibilities they have in relation to the improvement of educational process.
- No information about the library has been included in Annex 4, despite all related references in the application.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for BSc in Management of Information Systems
- The EEC Effective information of students and the facilitation of their participation in the improvement of the educational process should be supported by the appointment of academic study advisors, who will take on the role of informing the students about the possibilities they have in relation to the improvement of educational process.
- No information about the library has been included in Annex 4, despite all related references in the application.

Areas of improvement and recommendations for [Title 3]
Click or tap here to enter text.

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

Sub-area	*Non-compliant/* *Partially Compliant/Compliant*

		BSc in Computer Science	BSc in Management of Information Systems	[Title 3]
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant	Compliant	Choose answer
5.4	Student support	Partially compliant	Partially compliant	Choose answer

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

Sub-areas

6.1. Selection criteria and requirements
6.2. Proposal and dissertation
6.3. Supervision and committees

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
  - *the stages of completion*
  - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
  - *the examinations*
  - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
  - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
  - *the chapters that are contained*
  - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
  - *the minimum word limit*
  - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*

- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
  - *regular meetings*
  - *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
  - *support for writing research papers*
  - *participation in conferences*

- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

You may also consider the following questions:

- *How is the scientific quality of the PhD thesis ensured?*
- *Is there a link between the doctoral programmes of study and the society? What is the value of the obtained degree outside academia and in the labour market?*
- *Can you please provide us with some dissertation samples?*

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

Not applicable

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

Not applicable

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.

Not applicable

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

Sub-areas		Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
6.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

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D.   Conclusions and final remarks

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

The overall design of the curriculum in both programs is well-structured and scalable, largely oriented towards its purpose and objectives. At the same time, the curricula clearly define the desired learning outcomes, the content, the teaching and learning approaches and the way of evaluating the performance of the students.
The EEC has identified the following areas for improvement:

- Prerequisites should be explicitly listed for each course, also for the specializations.
- A more collegial approach to quality assurance is adopted to alleviate the load on the head of department and engage faculties.
- The criterion of admission of students in relation to the comprehension of the English language should be supported by a better correlation in relation to other international examinations.
- Assessment procedures should be formulated and the teaching staff should be familiarised with them. Good practices emerging from the collective experience of the teaching staff should be promoted.
- Induction activities should take place at the beginning of the academic year, some of them organised at Faculty or University level. We recommend that the Department gets actively involved with them.
- The procedures and the form of examinations and evaluation of students are not fully reflected in the application.
- Effective information of students and the facilitation of their participation in the improvement of the educational process should be supported by the appointment of academic study advisors, who will take on the role of informing the students about the possibilities they have in relation to the improvement of educational process.
- The Faculty Development Centre should be deployed as soon as feasible, and that at a later stage the Department creates its own professional development program.
- A policy of regular and effective teacher-student communication needs to be applied.
- Student performance monitoring and grievance redressal mechanisms should be available in place prior to a fully operational programme state.
- The number of full-time academic staff should be strengthened in order to take on the full academic burden that the final implementation of the study program entails.
- Coverage of cognitive subjects that may not be achieved by the existing staff should be implemented by an adequate number of visiting professors from well-esteemed institutions.

E. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Philippe Bonnet	
Ioannis Ivrissimtzis	
Phivos Mylonas	
Christodoulos Hadjichristodoulou	

Date: 18/12/2020