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Date: Date.

# External Evaluation Report

(Programmatic within the framework of Departmental Evaluation)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
Cyprus University of Technology
- **Town:** Limassol
- **School/Faculty:** Communication and Media Studies
- **Department:** Integrated Marketing Communications
- **Programme(s) of study - Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**  
Programme 1 – PhD

**In Greek:**

Ολοκληρωμένη Επικοινωνία Μάρκετινγκ

**In English:**

Integrated Marketing Communications

**Language(s) of instruction:** Greek

Programme 2 – [Title 2]

**In Greek:**

Programme Name

**In English:**

Programme Name

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

Programme 3 – [Title 3]

**In Greek:**

Programme Name

**In English:**

Programme Name

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



The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws of 2015 to 2019” [N. 136 (I)/2015 to N. 35(I)/2019].



## A. Introduction

*This part includes basic information regarding the onsite visit.*

The External Evaluation Committee (EEC) would like to thank the CYQAA for the invitation to assess and evaluate the Doctoral Programme offered by the Department of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) of the Cyprus University of Technology (CUT), Limassol.

The committee consisted of three academics with relevant disciplinary expertise and doctoral supervision experience and a student representative.

Given the current circumstances, the evaluation took place online, on the 29th of July 2020 between 10am and 2.30pm. The committee had the opportunity to meet with the Rector of the University, the Dean of the School of Communication and Media Studies, academic faculty, doctoral students and administrative staff.

During the online meeting the committee had the chance to attend presentations by the Rector and the academic team and ask questions pertinent to the proposed Department. Although the evaluation committee did not visit in person the University's premises, this was not considered a significant issue as the EEC had visited the campus during the evaluation of the BA in Integrated Marketing Communications.

The external evaluation committee would like to thank all parties involved for their cooperation and support during the evaluation. The committee would also like to thank the CYQAA coordinator for managing the process both efficiently and effectively.



## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Prof Savvas Papagiannidis</b>	David Goldman Professor of Innovation of Enterprise	Newcastle University Business School
<b>Dr Anastasia Veneti</b>	Associate Professor	Bournemouth University
<b>Dr Simos Chari</b>	Associate Professor	Alliance Manchester Business School
<b>Christos Hasapis</b>	Student Rep	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:*
  - sub-areas*
  - standards which are relevant to the European Standards and Guidelines (ESG)*
  - 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.**

## 1. Study programme and study programme's design and development

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

### Sub-areas

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

### 1.1 Policy for quality assurance

#### Standards

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

### 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

#### Standards

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

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

### 1.3 Public information

#### Standards

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

### 1.4 Information management

#### Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed:*
  - *key performance indicators*
  - *profile of the student population*
  - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
  - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
  - *learning resources and student support available*
  - *career paths of graduates*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

*You may also consider the following questions:*

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



## **Findings**

### **Findings for PhD**

The Department follows the established process by the Faculty and the University. In turn, as these follow the established regulatory frameworks, the committee has no reservations towards the process adopted for the development and evaluation of the program in question. When it comes to program development and revisions, the academic team considered a range of information sources to better inform the decision-making process.

The University has the necessary infrastructure to check for plagiarism cases and the processes to deal with such instances. There is also an established process for disputes.

Admissions criteria are suitable for doctoral candidates. There are two main routes for recruiting doctoral students, either by advertising specific topics and recruiting candidates, or with candidates approaching staff with suitable expertise for their topic of interest. Information related to the programme's entry requirements and expectations are available publicly and are in line with expectations.

As this is a new programme and when considering the relatively small numbers of doctoral candidates involved in the Faculty, information management issues are not as critical, as they would have been in undergraduate or postgraduate programmes.

## **Strengths**

### **Strengths for PhD**

Robust processes can ensure that the academic team is focused on the operationalization and delivery of the doctoral supervision and on support the students' academic development.

## **Areas of improvement and recommendations**

### **Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD**

It may be worth offering more guidance as to when a PhD topic falls in the area of integrated marketing communications and when he/she is not (and is more relevant for instance to Communications and Internet Studies) so that candidates have a clearer idea as to what to expect and what their future disciplinary direction will be.

Given the small number of staff, the committee reviewing disputes may need to have wider membership as to avoid conflicts of interest and power struggles between staff and candidates.



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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>PhD</i>	[Title 2]	[Title 3]
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
1.3	Public information	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
1.4	Information management	Compliant	Choose answer	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.*

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

*You may also consider the following questions:*

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

## **Findings**

### **Findings for PhD**

Overall, the structure and approach to undertaking the doctoral program is in line with practices in other institutions the committee has experience of.

The program takes a staged approach that sees students develop their disciplinary knowledge and methodological skills from one stage to another. Each stage is evaluated accordingly before the student can progress to the next one.

The modules on offer help provide the necessary background information so that students have a more structured approach to navigating their doctoral development.

Regular meetings with supervisors offer an opportunity to discuss points of interest and agree ways forward. Having a supervisory team in place can help offer wider advice.

## **Strengths**

### **Strengths for PhD**

The small number of students per supervisor offers an opportunity to develop in-depth working relationships that will be beneficial to the academic development of doctoral candidates.

It is very positive to see the Department considering the students' broader academic development, with a particular focus on teaching.

The financial support provided by the Department, especially when it comes to attending international conferences, should be noted. Such opportunities are invaluable for the candidates' development as they both offer a stage on which to obtain feedback, but also make it possible for the candidates to interact more broadly with their academic community.

The committee notes that willingness of the academic team to offer bespoke training that revolves around the students' specific research requirements.

It is worth noting that students are encouraged and expected to publish their work before completing their studies. This can act as a testimony of the quality of the work submitted towards the award of the degree. At the same time aiming to publish an article in a reputable journal offers students the opportunity to experience the peer-review process and better prepares them for becoming independent researchers.

## **Areas of improvement and recommendations**

Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD

The modules on offer especially the research method and the quantitative methods need to be reviewed to avoid duplications.

The strategic marketing module needs to be replaced/complemented by a module that covers integrated marketing communications.

More regular written feedback would be welcome so that candidates have a clear set of instructions to act upon.

Teaching/administrative duties should be limited and a threshold defined so that such duties do not impose on the doctoral candidates academic progress.

Wider academic development could be facilitated by seminars on academic matters that go well beyond the disciplinary knowledge and methodological competencies. Such seminars can help students develop a wider academic profile.

The 5 ECTS that have been assigned to the examination process do not reflect the amount of work that is typically required for revising and resubmitting a thesis. It may worth increasing ECTS accordingly.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>PhD</i>	[Title 2]	[Title 3]
<b>2.1</b>	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
<b>2.2</b>	Practical training	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
<b>2.3</b>	Student assessment	Compliant	Choose answer	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**

### **Findings for PhD**

The faculty consists of a small number of specialized personnel in the general field of Marketing and more specifically in that of Integrated Marketing Communications. The two permanent members of staff of the proposed Department are highly qualified academics but only one has specialised knowledge in Marketing Communications. The ratio of part-time (specialised) staff to the total number of teaching staff is considered to be on the lower end. With respects to other aspects evaluated here, from the presentation of the proposed Department and its program of study, it became clear that attention is paid on the use of innovative teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged. Moreover, it is obvious that there are various collaborations and synergies between the proposed Department and the Department of Communication and Internet Studies. The teaching staff collaborate extensively in research and teaching as evidenced from the delivery of the courses and the PhD supervision (e.g. most courses are delivered from CIS staff). Although we welcome such collaborations, the external evaluation committee witnessed some overreliance in the other Department that limits the distinctiveness of the proposed Department and as proxy the programmes on offer (such as the doctoral one evaluated here).

## **Strengths**

### **Strengths for PhD**

It is evident from the academic staff CVs and research records, that the current teaching staff (i.e., permanent, and special scientists) have the required qualifications, sufficient professional



experience and expertise to teaching their respective course units. We also welcome the various collaborations between the teaching staff and a number of professional, research and academic institutions in Cyprus and abroad.

**Areas of improvement and recommendations**

**Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD**

More members of staff across various ranks, with teaching and research expertise in Marketing and Integrated Marketing Communication, need to be appointed imminently.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>PhD</i>	[Title 2]	[Title 3]
<b>3.1</b>	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Partially compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
<b>3.2</b>	Teaching staff number and status	Partially compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
<b>3.3</b>	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant	Choose answer	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:*
  - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
  - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

#### 4.4 Student certification

##### Standards

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

*You may also consider the following questions:*

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

##### **Findings**

###### Findings for PhD

In general, student admission, progression, recognition and certification appear to work smoothly and all mechanisms and procedures are in place.

##### **Strengths**

###### Strengths for PhD

Coherent and well-planned procedures for admission, progression (courses to undertake, exams etc.), recognition and certification. The university uses ECTS credits for each course, which evidence its commitment to European standards, and allows for smooth recognition of attended courses outside the Technological University of Cyprus.

##### **Areas of improvement and recommendations**

###### Areas of improvement and recommendations for PhD

We recommend providing PhD students with an informative handbook about all relevant procedures, both printed and online. This might already exist, but we have not been informed about it. Such a document should provide clear guidelines with regards to the composition of the advisory and examination committees, as well as detailed information about the supervision and the expectations from all actors involved.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>PhD</i>	[Title 2]	[Title 3]
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
4.2	Student progression	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
4.4	Student certification	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer

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

### Sub-areas

#### 5.1. Teaching and Learning resources

#### 5.2. Physical resources

#### 5.3. Human support resources

#### 5.4. Student support

### 5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

#### Standards

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

### 5.2 Physical resources

#### Standards

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

### 5.3 Human support resources

#### Standards

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

## 5.4 Student support

### Standards

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

*You may also consider the following questions:*

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

## **Findings**

### **Findings for PhD**

There has evidence of effective use of the available financial resources which have abated in further developing the research faculties of the department. Although physical resources were sufficient the external evaluation committee felt that investment in staff need to be fully operationalized. As it has already been explained and discussed in other section of this document, this issue calls for immediate action. Lastly, the committee felt that there is sufficient student support from the Department.

## **Strengths**

### **Strengths for PhD**

Among the strengths of the resources offered by the University to PhD students are access to exceptional equipment including hard copy resources as well as online publications and software. The University offers funding to students who need access to a specific software in case it is not already made available if it is considered essential for the undertaking of a specific task. There is collaboration between the University with the University of Cyprus in order to ensure the access to books and publications when these are not available in the University library. This ensures the access to an even broader variety of resources to students which is guaranteed through the partnership of the two Universities. The modern facilities combined with the variety offered by the University in hard copy, as well as online bibliography safeguards the proper function of research required by a PhD student. Lastly, the students spoke highly of their supervisors, and that has served as evidence of a good and constructive relationship between the two.

## **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 PhD**

The resources provided by the department were sufficient. Still they need to be operationalised and put in action, especially when it comes to recruitment of new staff members that will be for the benefit of the PhD students.

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

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>		
		<i>PhD</i>	[Title 2]	[Title 3]
5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
5.3	Human support resources	Partially compliant	Choose answer	Choose answer
5.4	Student support	Compliant	Choose answer	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

Based on elements from the application and on findings from the onsite visit, the committee was in position to identify the stages required for completion of the PhD programme, the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree, and the examinations required especially at the taught part (e.g., first year) of the programme. Based on information obtained from the visit (e.g., discussion with three registered PhD candidates), the committee was in position to understand how PhD students are recruited, what are the duties of the supervisor and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student, and the maximum number of PhD candidates each supervisor is allowed to have.

#### Strengths

The committee has observed that there is a strong research culture among the members of the department and that there are both internal and external funds available to support research activities. The synergies between the Department of IMC and the Department of Communications and Internet Studies allow for interesting and multi-disciplinary research projects.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The procedures for accepting a student's proposal needs further clarification. The majority of students are recruited on the basis of an advertised topic and position. There should be more flexibility regarding the topic idea and students should be given the opportunity to adapt the proposed idea/topic. The committee feels that the information on the composition, the procedures, and the criteria for the formation of the advisory and examining committees are not clearly stated in the proposal. Even though the committee has gathered information on site about the duties of the supervisor-chairperson towards the student, we still feel that clearer guidelines and expectations should be provided regarding the frequency of meetings and written feedback provided. In addition, it is not clear how the students are supported for writing research papers and conference submissions. Considering that this is a key requirement for completing the PhD, clarifications are needed. Finally, more specific and clear guidelines for writing the dissertation are required (e.g., chapters that are contained, how to present each chapter, minimum word limit, the binding process, etc).

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

Sub-areas		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Compliant
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Compliant
6.3	Supervision and committees	Partially compliant



#### **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.*

We hope that the University and the academic team find the feedback provided constructive and useful. Overall, the committee believes that the University and new proposed programme are in line with expectations in a number of areas. We advise the faculty to take into consideration the individual areas of recommendations reported in the above six sections.

The committee, however, would like to draw your attention on the issue of staffing and employment. The University has reassured the Committee to sufficiently staff the department. However, the committee remains concerned that since our last evaluation of the BA of Integrated Marketing Communications, the proposed Department has not made any developments in the staffing / employment. It is imperative that the school recruits imminently permanent staff, across all the ranks (i.e., assistant, associate, and full professors), with specialized expertise in Marketing and Marketing Communications. The appropriate staffing of the department is a catalyst for ensuring that the recommended actions can be implemented effectively and be sustained in the long-term.

We wish colleagues all the best in the next steps.

We remain at the disposal of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education for any clarification necessary.



**E. Signatures of the EEC**

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Prof Savvas Papagiannidis</b>	
<b>Dr Anastasia Veneti</b>	
<b>Dr Simos Chari</b>	
<b>Christos Hasapis</b>	

**Date:** 30/07/2020

