

Doc. 300.3.1

Date: 02/09/2020

# External Evaluation Report (Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
American University of Cyprus
- **Town:** Larnaca
- **School/Faculty:** Business Administration and Economics
- **Department:** Management and Marketing
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**  
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

## Programme 1

**In Greek:**

Programme Name

**In English:**

BA in Business Management

## Programme 2

**In Greek:**

Programme Name

**In English:**

Programme Name

## Programme 3

**In Greek:**

Programme Name

**In English:**

Programme Name

- **Department's Status:** New

**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.*

- For the departmental evaluation, we were supplied before our visit with the document 200.3 that runs to 94 pages and we read it thoroughly prior to our arrival in Cyprus.
- Our on-site visit at the premises of the university was scheduled for the 31<sup>st</sup> of August. In the morning we met with the AUCY's team in the president's office and they explained to us during an informal conversation their broader vision and goals for the short-, mid- and long run.
- Next, we moved to the adjacent conference room where we were given a presentation and supporting material for the AUCY in general and the proposed department. The presentation was adequate and very interesting and found the documentation to be informative and helpful in enabling us to understand the place of the department within the proposed university structure and the wider context.
- We had the opportunity to visit the premises of the university and the department. We were guided to the designated places for the libraries that are at the stage of finishing some minor construction, we went to the computer lab that was already equipped with approximately 30 new desktop computers of the latest technology (Intel i9 processors as we were told), the rooms that are going to be converted into classrooms where some desks were already in there, and the various common areas of the building including the nurse's office, the computer infrastructure room, the area to be converted into a cafeteria that is beside the seafront and various other offices of the deans, secretaries and administrative staff.
- Every effort was made by the department's team to help us during the onsite visit and everyone seemed very flexible to accommodate their program to the needs of the EEC.
- Our overall impression of the submitted material is that it conforms to the assessment requirements stated by the agency and contains the all the necessary documentation and information. We acknowledge all the effort that has gone into the production and presentation of the material that was handed to us.
- The faculty, administration and school leadership were generous with their time and engaged with us openly and thoughtfully during the visit. We welcomed the opportunity to have an open and constructive dialogue with the college stakeholders on various issues that are important in our opinion in creating and maintaining a modern, successful and efficient academic department able to adhere to the highest academic standards and flexible to compete in a changing educational environment.

## B. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
<b>Dimitrios Gounopoulos</b>	Professor	University of Bath
<b>Periklis Gogas</b>	Professor	Democritus University of Thrace
<b>Apostolos Christopoulos</b>	Professor	University of the Aegean
<b>Rositsa Rouseva</b>	Student	University of Cyprus
<b>Name</b>	Position	University
<b>Name</b>	Position	University

## C. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The external evaluation report follows the structure of assessment areas and sub-areas.*
- *Under each assessment area there are quality indicators (criteria) to be scored by the EEC on a scale from one (1) to five (5), based on the degree of compliance for the above mentioned quality indicators (criteria). The scale used is explained below:*

1 or 2:	<i>Non-compliant</i>
3:	<i>Partially compliant</i>
4 or 5:	<i>Compliant</i>

- *The EEC must justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.*
- *It is pointed out that, in the case of indicators (criteria) that cannot be applied due to the status of the Department, N/A (= Not Applicable) should be noted and a detailed explanation should be provided on the Department's corresponding policy regarding the specific quality indicator.*
- *In addition, for each assessment area, it is important to provide information regarding the compliance with the requirements. In particular, the following must be included:*

### **Findings**

*A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - 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 followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

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

## 1. Department's academic profile and orientation (ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.4, 1.5, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8, 1.9)

### Sub-areas

- 1.1 Mission and strategic planning
- 1.2 Connecting with society
- 1.3 Development processes

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*  
3: *Partially compliant*  
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
<b>1. Department's academic profile and orientation</b>		
<b>1.1 Mission and strategic planning</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
1.1.1	The Department has formally adopted a mission statement, which is available to the public and easily accessible.	4
1.1.2	The Department has developed its strategic planning aiming at fulfilling its mission.	3
1.1.3	The Department's strategic planning includes short, medium-term and long-term goals and objectives, which are periodically revised and adapted.	4
1.1.4	The programmes of study offered by the Department reflect its academic profile and are aligned with the European and international practice.	3
1.1.5	The academic community is involved in shaping and monitoring the implementation of the Department's development strategies.	4
1.1.6	Stakeholders such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Department's development strategy.	4
1.1.7	The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Department's academic development is adequate and effective.	NA
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies		

1.1.1. The mission statement cannot be accessible to the public yet, since AUCY's licensing from the CYQAA is still pending and thus the university is not allowed to have any publicity.

1.1.6. All current stakeholders, i.e. the owners, administration and current academic staff, seem to participate actively and enthusiastically in the department's development strategy.

1.1.7. The university and as a result the department did not start operating yet pending licencing from CYQAA.

Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.

- The programs of study seem to be academically coherent and compatible. The programs (4 planned at this stage) are standard business school type BA programs of study.
- One suggestion is that the BA in Events Management and Planning may be included in the BA in Business Management. Events Management is normally a part of business management and it may not justify a whole separate program of study as the degree of overlapping classes will be very high.

2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

- There is only one department so far under the Faculty of Business Administration and Economics.
- The proposed structure may be unnecessarily complex for the moment with four faculties overseen by four deans and one department under each faculty as it is reported in page 7 of the 200.2 form and as it was also presented to us during the on-site visit.

Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility.

- Try to create from the day one a simple and flexible administrative structure that is not unnecessarily complex so that bureaucratic problems and administrative inefficiencies will be minimized in the future.

## 1. Department's academic profile and orientation

### 1.2 Connecting with society

1 - 5

1.2.1	The Department has effective mechanisms to assess the needs and demands of society and takes them into account in its various activities.	5
1.2.2	The Department provides sufficient information to the public about its activities and offered programmes of study.	NA
1.2.3	The Department ensures that its operation and activities have a positive impact on society.	5
1.2.4	The Department has an effective communication mechanism with its graduates.	NA

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

1.2.1.

- The staff and all stakeholders seem extremely keen in opening the university premises to the local community for various educational, cultural and athletic events. They enthusiastically talked about an “open university for all” to visit and participate in various activities to be organized in the future within the AUCY’s premises.
- Moreover, the libraries and other facilities like the planned athletic facilities will be made available to the local community. All stakeholders stated their interest and vision in creating such a community hub within the premises of the AUCY.

1.2.2.

- As the university and the department are not licensed yet by the CYQAA, they are not able to advertise so far anything related to the AUCY.
- The stakeholders seem ready and very keen in advertising by any means necessary the university, the department and their programs once they receive the license from CYQAA.
- During the on-site visit they explained to us that they have already prepared a press conference in the past where local community leaders and many others were invited. The event was cancelled at the last minute when they were informed by the CYQAA that they are not allowed to do so until they get the license.

1.2.3.

- All board members and staff that we met gave us the impression that the impact of the AUCY on the local community was seriously taken into account.
- It was explained to the EEC on many occasions that one of the main reasons that they planned to establish the university in the area was that there were no other universities in Larnaca and that this would be important and mutually beneficial to both the AUCY and the local community.

1.2.4. The AUCY is new and therefore this is not applicable here as there are no graduates.

## 1. Department’s academic profile and orientation

1.3 Development processes		1 - 5
1.3.1	Effective procedures and measures are in place to attract and select teaching staff to ensure that they possess the formal and substantive skills to teach, carry out research and effectively carry out their work.	3
1.3.2	Planning teaching staff recruitment and their professional development is in line with the Department's academic development plan.	3
1.3.3	The Department applies an effective strategy of attracting high-level students from Cyprus and abroad.	4



1.3.4	The funding processes for the operation of the Department and the continuous improvement of the quality of its programmes of study are adequate and transparent.	3
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Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

#### 1.3.1.

- At this stage of initial recruitment the stakeholders seem understandably to rely on existing relations and connections with people from academia or not that they already know, trust and in some cases have worked together in the past.
- Pros: This is expected and convenient when an institution is newly founded from scratch and it significantly minimizes the risks involved at the beginning of this project.
- Cons: This procedure of attracting academic staff may be “safe” and low risk at the first steps of the institution but it may lead to introversion and a limited scope of view both professionally and academically in teaching and research.
- We would advice the department, as soon as they are able to do so, to establish proper and internationally accepted in the academic world procedures for recruitment.

#### 1.3.2.

- At this stage of development, the department -understandably- does not seem preoccupied with staff development as an immediate goal. Nonetheless, it is in the department’s plans as it was explained to the EEC.

#### 1.2.3.

- The department stakeholders seem keen in attracting high quality students from Cyprus and abroad. This was emphasized many times during our visit in both formal presentations and informal discussions.

#### 1.2.4.

- The funding process for the department was not very clear at this stage. Again, at this first stage of the project of the AUCY, campus and land developing costs are high and the stakeholders seemed confident and enthusiastic in financing the needs of the project fully in this early stage despite the high costs upfront.

Additionally, write:

- Expected number of Cypriot and international students
- Countries of origin of international students and number from each country
- There was no expected breakdown of students between Cypriots and international students.
- The expected total number of students for the department is between the minimum 150 in the first year of the planned operation (2021-2022) and 200. According to the 200.3 report they expect to have in all the BA programs for the first year 350 students.

- The target markets for international students are Lebanon, Egypt, Greece and other countries in the general region.s

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.*

- The department seems to be adequately designed according to international academic standards.
- All necessary committees and support offices (counselling services, career office, mobility office, student clubs, etc.) are in place.
- The department officials seem to pay particular attention to the career office. The EEC recommended that this is of the outmost interest as placement is an objective and most important indicator of the ability of the department to produce high quality graduates.
- The academic staff seems to have the adequate academic experience from local and international institutions.
- Taking into account the fact that the AUCY has not started its operation yet, the situation is not very clear and this is not due to lack of planning. It is understandable that the stakeholders are preoccupied with finishing all legalities and procedures necessary to be licensed first so that they will be allowed to operate and advertise the AUCY and the department to the local and international students.
- Quality assurance seems to be seriously taken into account for the department and the relative internal mechanisms are planned.
- All stakeholders seem very keen and enthusiastic in creating a unique academic environment that will pay attention to the needs of every student.

### Strengths

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

- The plans both administrative and academical seem well thought and appropriate.
- Attention to actual learning and not just memorizing is set as a goal from the AUCY's stakeholders.
- Apparent enthusiasm from all stakeholders in the AUCY.
- Funding the AUCY and the department in the early stages does not seem to be a problem as the stakeholders seem confident and committed to financial needs of this project.
- The international scope of the AUCY and as a result the department.
- The stakeholders according to their statements have already made agreements (i.e. the Coptic Church of Egypt and others) for promoting their programs of study to outside scholarship recipients.
- We were presented with an email for an apparent MoU from the University of Massachusetts – Dartmouth. According to the AUCY's stakeholders, this will enable the exchange of students and academic staff between the two institutions. This is of course a significant opportunity for the department's international presence and also for the AUCY staff and

students to acquire international experience. According to this, a program of study that includes residence in both universities for some time is scheduled for the future.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

#### *A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

- The EEC stressed many times the importance of research for any successful university.
- The AUCY and the department as a result must make it explicitly clear to all that they aim at producing high quality research. This is essential if their goal is to become a locally leading university.
- As a result, the EEC pointed out that in all future recruitment, the publication record of a candidate must be heavily weighted in the final decision.
- The EEC recommended that in order to improve and be successful in research the department may consider to adopt the following practices:
  - A lighter teaching load for staff members that publish regularly.
  - Hiring two types of academic staff:
    - Research oriented staff that have proved their potential to produce high quality research. These will be assigned with a light teaching load and expected to improve the publication record of the department.
    - Teaching oriented staff, in which case a comparatively heavier teaching load is expected. In this case, these individuals will be hired and be assessed based on their teaching experience and excellence.
  - The department must provide grants to academic staff to participate in quality international research conferences.
  - Subscribe to data bases to facilitate research.
  - Collaborate with other local and international researchers in terms of research and publishing.
  - Create synergies with international academics.
  - Use the comparative advantage of the location of the department in Cyprus to attract even for short (1 to 2 weeks) periods international researchers to present their work in seminar sessions within the department. These must be attended by all staff and potentially even students. The discussions and questions both formally withing the seminar and informally after that may spark ideas for the AUCY staff and possible collaborations between the invited researchers and resident staff.
  - Establish a regular series of internal research seminars where the faculty can present in the department their ongoing research.
- The department staff must apply for research funding from various EU sources. These will provide the necessary funds and opportunity to closely work with researchers possibly more experienced in research from other institutions.
- The EEC stressed the importance of quality instead of quantity in publishing research work.
- We recommended focusing only in well-respected and widely known journals and publishers in academia such as Springer, Elsevier, Emerald, etc, pay attention to only index journals with impact factor as measured by Thompson-Reuters.
- We recommended that the department introduces two new courses:
  - Artificial Intelligence in Economics and Finance
  - Energy Economics

The first, will provide the students with cutting-edge knowledge in current quantitative research and forecasting. The second is an opportunity for the department given the importance of the natural gas deposits recently discovered in the area.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	Compliant
1.2 Connecting with society	Compliant
1.3 Development processes	Compliant

## 2. Quality Assurance

(ESG 1.1, 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.6, 1.7, 1.8)

### Sub-areas

- 2.1 System and quality assurance strategy**  
**2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study**

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: Non-compliant*  
*3: Partially compliant*  
*4 or 5: Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
<b>2. Quality Assurance</b>		
<b>2.1 System and quality assurance strategy</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
2.1.1	The Department has a policy for quality assurance that is made public and forms part of the Institution's strategic management.	4
2.1.2	Internal stakeholders develop and implement a policy for quality assurance through appropriate structures and processes, while involving external stakeholders.	4
2.1.3	The Department's policy for quality assurance supports guarding against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against students or staff.	3
2.1.4	The quality assurance system adequately covers all the functions and sectors of the Department's activities:	
2.1.4.1	Teaching and learning	5
2.1.4.2	Research	3
2.1.4.3	The connection with society	4
2.1.4.4	Management and support services	4
2.1.5	The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		

- The department seems to have planned an internal quality assurance system that is of high standards. All necessary aspects of quality are designed to be monitored effectively and closely by the university administration.

Click to enter text.

## 2. Quality Assurance

2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study		1 - 5
2.2.1	The responsibility for decision-making and monitoring the implementation of the programmes of study offered by the Department lies with the teaching staff.	4
2.2.2	The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Department are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	4
2.2.3	The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective.	3
2.2.4	The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study.	N/A
2.2.5	The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective.	5
2.2.6	The established procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.	4
2.2.7	The Department publishes information related to the programmes of study, credit units, learning outcomes, methodology, student admission criteria, completion of studies, facilities, number of teaching staff and the expertise of teaching staff.	Choose mark
2.2.8	The Department has a clear and consistent policy on the admission criteria for students in the various programmes of studies offered.	5
2.2.9	The Department flexibly uses a variety of pedagogical methods.	5
2.2.10	The Department systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place.	4
2.2.11	The Department analyses and publishes graduate employment information.	N/A
2.2.12	The Department ensures adequate and appropriate learning resources in line with European and international standards and/or international practices, particularly:	
2.2.12.1	Building facilities	5

	2.2.12.2	Library	4
	2.2.12.3	Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	4
	2.2.12.4	Technological infrastructure	5
	2.2.12.5	Academic support	4
2.2.13	There is a student welfare service that supports students in regard to academic, personal problems and difficulties.		4
2.2.14	The Department's mechanisms, processes and infrastructure consider the needs of a diverse student population such as mature, part-time, employed and international students as well as students with disabilities.		5
2.2.15	Mentoring of each student is provided and the number of students per each permanent teaching member is adequate.		4
2.2.16	The provision of quality doctoral studies is ensured through doctoral studies regulations, which are publicly available.		N/A
2.2.17	The number of doctoral students, under the supervision of a member of the teaching staff, enables continuous and effective feedback to the students and it complies with the European and international standards.		N/A
2.2.18	The Department has mechanisms and funds to support writing and attending conferences of doctoral candidates.		N/A
2.2.19	There is a clear policy on authorship and intellectual property.		5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

#### 2.2.4

- There are no such results as the university and the department is not yet in operation.

[Click to enter text.](#)

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.*

Overall, the quality assurance mechanisms seem adequate and well-designed.

[Click to enter text.](#)

### Strengths

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

The academic faculty seems very enthusiastic and keen to work at the department. There is a diverse group of people from various ethnicities and a balanced mix of males and females in the department. Most of the staff has an extensive academic experience in various universities in Cyprus, the United States, Qatar, the United Kingdom, etc.

Click to enter text.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

The department must focus on producing high-quality research in international scientific journals, participate in conferences and seminars both locally and internationally. The only weakness for some members of the academic staff is their short publication record in internationally recognised refereed journals.

The EEC introduced the idea and recommended during the on-site visit that an immediate step after starting operations and admitting the first group of students is that they should concentrate in acquiring some international accreditations (AACSB, EQUIS and AMBA).

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

<b>Sub-area</b>	<b><i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i></b>
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	Compliant
2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study	Compliant



### 3. Administration (ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*  
3: *Partially compliant*  
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
<b>3. Administration</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
3.1	The administrative structure is in line with the legislation and the Department's mission.	5
3.2	The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of specified procedures, in the management of the Department.	5
3.3	The administrative staff adequately supports the operation of the Department.	5
3.4	Adequate allocation of competences and responsibilities is ensured so that in academic matters, decisions are made by academics and the Department's council competently exercises legal control over such decisions.	4
3.5	The Department applies effective procedures to ensure transparency in the decision-making process.	4
3.6	Statutory sessions of the Department are held and minutes are kept.	N/A
3.7	The Department's council operates systematically and autonomously and exercise the full powers provided for by the law and / or the constitution of the Department without the intervention or involvement of a body or person outside the law provisions.	4
3.8	The manner in which the Department's council operates and the procedures for disseminating and implementing their decisions are clearly formulated and implemented precisely and effectively.	4
3.9	The Department applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, teaching and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	5
3.10	The Department has appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints.	5

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

**The administration staff implements formal procedures and effectively deals with the various tasks necessary and noted above.**

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.*

The group of people involved with the department seems well-coordinated and efficient in dealing with all aspects both administrative and academic for the department's operation.

### Strengths

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

The department staff and the administration seem to trust and respect each other and be able to work efficiently in solving any problems that may arise and also work for the further advancement of the department. They were open to listen to new ideas and recommendations from the EEC.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

In the current state the EEC did not find any problem areas in administration. In the future and while the university starts operating and growing, the university must try to maintain the current enthusiasm of the administration staff.

**Please select what is appropriate for the following assessment area:**

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
3. Administration	Compliant

#### 4. Learning and Teaching (ESG 1.2, 1.3, 1.4, 1.9)

##### Sub-areas

- 4.1 Planning the programmes of study
- 4.2 Organisation of teaching

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*
- 3: *Partially compliant*
- 4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
<b>4. Learning and Teaching</b>		
<b>4.1 Planning the programmes of study</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
4.1.1	The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study.	4
4.1.2	Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.	4
4.1.3	The content of the programmes of study, the assignments and the final exams correspond to the appropriate level as indicated by the European Qualifications Framework (EQF).	5
4.1.4	The programmes of study are in compliance with the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable.	5
4.1.5	The Department ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	Choose mark
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>The Department provides an effective system for designing, approving, monitoring and periodically reviewing the programmes of study. The program is designed according to established international standards.</p> <p><a href="#">Click or tap here to enter text.</a></p>		
<b>4. Learning and Teaching</b>		
<b>4.2 Organisation of teaching</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>

4.2.1	The Department establishes student admission criteria for each programme, which are adhered to consistently.	5
4.2.2	Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	5
4.2.3	The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	4
4.2.4	The teaching staff of the Department has regular and effective communication with their students, promoting mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship.	N/A
4.2.5	Student-centred learning and teaching plays an important role in stimulating students' motivation, self-reflection and engagement in the learning process.	5
4.2.6	The teaching staff of the Department provides timely and effective feedback to their students.	N/A
4.2.7	The criteria and the method of assessment as well as the criteria for marking are published in advance.	5
4.2.8	The assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved.	N/A
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p><a href="#">Click to enter text.</a></p>		

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.*

The stakeholders have an ambitious plan for the department. They plan to be a point of excellence in the area.

### Strengths

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

There is a mix of both new and more experienced group of teaching staff that can create interesting synergies and results in the academic process for the students.

The stakeholders aim very high in terms of academic excellence.

There is diversity in academic staff: people from different academic backgrounds, countries and ethnicities create a rich international environment.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

The department must invest in research. The current academic staff must make research a primary goal. This will add significant value to the new department. The EEC during the on-site visit stressed to the faculty and all stakeholders the utmost importance of producing high quality research work. Student participation in this research would be an asset, especially to fourth-year students. High quality research will attract quality staff and students in the future.

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

Sub-area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Compliant
4.2 Organisation of teaching	Compliant

## 5. Teaching Staff (ESG 1.5)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

- 1 or 2: *Non-compliant*  
3: *Partially compliant*  
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		1 - 5
<b>5. Teaching Staff</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
5.1	The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study.	4
5.2	The teaching staff of the Department has the relevant formal and substantive qualifications for teaching the individual subjects as described in the relevant legislation.	4
5.3	The visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Department's programmes of study.	N/A
5.4	The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study.	N/A
5.5	The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is satisfactory.	N/A
5.6	The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught by teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	N/A
5.7	The ratio of the number of students to the total number of teaching staff is sufficient to support and ensure the quality of the programme of study.	4
5.8	Feedback processes for teaching staff in regard to the evaluation of their teaching work, by the students, are satisfactory.	4

Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.

- The department is not yet in operation so the EEC either cannot have an opinion on some of the criteria, or we base our evaluation on the documents provided and the discussion during the on-site visit.

[Click to enter text.](#)

Also, write the following:

- Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work
- Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work

- Number of visiting Professors
- Number of special scientists on lease services
- The current number of teaching staff is adequate for the moment.

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.*

- The current teaching staff is diverse including people with adequate experience from both academia and the business world. This experience is important for the students.
- There is the potential for strong practical emphasis of teaching applied to business.

### Strengths

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

- Interesting mix of teaching staff from academia and business.
- Enthusiastic about teaching.
- Seem to care for the need of students.
- The stakeholders are interested in providing non-degree training to the community as needed in the future.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

*A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation.*

- Some teaching staff members seem to be assigned to teach a lengthy and very diverse set of classes.

**Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:**

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
5. Teaching Staff	Compliant

## 6. Research

(ESG 1.1, 1.3, 1.5, 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*

3: *Partially compliant*

4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
<b>6. Research</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
6.1	The Department has a research policy formulated in line with its mission.	3
6.2	The Department consistently applies internal regulations and procedures of research activity, which promote the set out research policy and ensure compliance with the regulations of research projects financing programmes.	3
6.3	The Department provides adequate facilities and equipment to cover the staff and students' research activities.	4
6.4	The Department has the appropriate mechanisms for the development of students' research skills.	3
6.5	The results of the teaching staff research activity are published to a satisfactory extent in international journals which work with critics, international conferences, conference proceedings, publications, etc. The Department also uses an open access policy for publications, which is consistent with the corresponding national and European policy.	2
6.6	The Department ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	3
6.7	The Department provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researchers.	5
6.8	The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of teaching staff is similar to other Departments in Cyprus and abroad.	4
6.9	The policy, indirect or direct of internal funding of the research activities of the teaching staff is satisfactory, based on European and international practices.	4
Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.		



Click to enter text.

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.*

- The EEC finds that the AUCY and the department needs to put more effort in research in terms of publishing scientific papers to high quality international journals with impact factor or at least index by various journal indexing services or being published by widely respectable publishers, i.e. Elsevier, Springer, Emerald, etc.

### Strengths

- The EEC finds that the facilities in terms of the libraries and the equipment that are either already present or will be installed and used in the AUCY when it will start operating will be helpful to the staff that will engage in research.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The EEC stressed many times the importance of research for any successful university.
- Producing high quality research is the most essential ingredient for a new university.
- Clear goals regarding research must be included in the strategic planning of the department. These must be known to all faculty.
- The publication record of a future candidate faculty member must be heavily weighted in the final decision for employment.
- We recommend a lighter teaching load for staff members that publish regularly.
- We recommend two types of academic faculty:
  - Research oriented staff that have proved their potential to produce high quality research. These will be assigned with a light teaching load.
  - Teaching oriented staff, in which case a comparatively heavier teaching load is expected. In this case, these individuals will be hired and subsequently assessed primarily by teaching excellence.
- The university must provide grants -as much as this is possible- to academic staff to participate in quality international conferences especially in the early stages of operation of the university.
- Subscriptions to data bases to facilitate research is necessary.
- Try to create synergies with other local and international researchers in publishing.
- Try to create internal staff synergies with respect to research.
- Establish a series of internal research seminars. In these, the faculty can present their ongoing research to the faculty and students. This is important to create a research culture within the department. These can be monthly and later weekly seminars lasting a maximum of 45-60 minutes where audience participation and exchange of ideas must be encouraged.
- Use the comparative advantage of the location of the department in Cyprus to attract even for short (1-2 weeks) periods international researchers to present their work in seminar sessions in the department. These must be attended by all staff and potentially students. The discussions and questions both formally within the seminar and informally after that may spark ideas for the AUCY staff and possible collaborations between the invited researchers and resident staff.
- Applying for research grants from various EU and national sources is important.

- These provide opportunities for new collaborations with researchers and other institutions.
- He department must focus on the quality and not in the quantity of the research work produced.
- Nonetheless, it is important that the potential and willingness for research is present.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
6. Research	Non Compliant

## 7. Resources (ESG 1.6)

Mark from 1 to 5 the degree of compliance for each quality indicator/criterion

1 or 2: *Non-compliant*  
3: *Partially compliant*  
4 or 5: *Compliant*

Quality indicators/criteria		
<b>7. Resources</b>		<b>1 - 5</b>
7.1	The Department has sufficient financial resources to support its functions, managed by the Institutional and Departmental bodies.	5
7.2	The Department follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise.	3
7.3	The Department's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.	5
7.4	The Department's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.	5
7.5	The Department carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.	N/A
7.6	The Department's external audit and the transparent management of its finances are ensured.	5
7.7	The fitness-for-purpose of support facilities and services is periodically reviewed.	N/A
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p> <p>Click to enter text.</p>		

### Findings

*A short description of the situation in the Department based on evidence from the Department's application and the site - visit.*

- The people financing the establishment and operation of the university seem confident that there are not going to be any issues with respect to financing and liquidity especially in the first stages of development when inflows from tuition and/or other sources will necessarily be limited.

- According to the discussions with Mr. Zabbal, the financing team has extensive experience in managing and operating academic institutions in Lebanon. Moreover, Mr. Karroulas has extensive business experience in Cyprus.
- Overall, the EEC believes that the team is very capable in finding and providing the resources necessary for the department in the early stages.

### Strengths

- Experienced stakeholders in both academic institutions and business.
- Funding especially for commencing the operations seems available.
- Agreements with external indirect funding sources like the Egyptian Coptic church that will provide scholarships for students to enrol at the AUCY.

### Areas of improvement and recommendations

- The founding team must be sure that the projected cash flows are secured and are adequate to fund the university especially in the early stages.
- We were not provided with any detailed business plan or specific figures and information on the projected cash flows and/or break-even analysis of the project. If the team has not already done so, it must proceed with these analyses immediately and be sure to have a specific enrollment number in mind so that the university's and the department's future will be on the black.
- The evidence coming from all the funds invested so far to create university corroborates the evident confidence of the founding team.
- Nonetheless, the administration of the university and the department must also try to secure external funding to reduce risk. This funding may come from sponsors and maybe the local community.

Please ✓ what is appropriate for the following assessment area:

Assessment area	<i>Non-compliant / Partially Compliant / Compliant</i>
7. Resources	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 the Department under review may be achieved.*

- The EEC has completed its evaluation of the proposed department with the soon to be established American University of Cyprus (Larnaca) and everything has gone according to the plan.
- The EEC received and read the department's application and all the supporting material well in advance at the time they were supplied by the CQAA.
- We started our visit at the department in the morning of the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2020 and we concluded the on-site visit late in the afternoon. People from the founding team and stakeholders welcomed us in the premises of the building located in the eastern suburbs of Larnaca on the beach front.
- The property is spacious and clearly adequate to house the department and the university at least at this stage of its development. There is plenty of parking space, the building is easily accessible to all with ample natural lighting from outside. The main building facilities were in the last stages of renovation in order to be able to accommodate the administration, the academic staff and the students. The founding team seem to have done a very good job in transforming the building in a very short time period as it is evident from the photos we were shown during our visit. They took special pride on how they managed to renovate the building in such a short time.
- We also met all the faculty members, administration and support staff. Moreover, two faculty members participated in the meeting from the UK and the US via teleconferencing as they were not able to travel to Cyprus due to the current Covid-19 pandemic. All were at our disposal throughout the day and seemed genuinely happy to assist us in this evaluation.
- All our questions and requests for additional information were directly addressed in an honest and thorough fashion.
- The documentation that was provided to the EEC by the department was of reasonable quality and sufficient in the depth of the detail covered.
- All people that we met during our visit were open and willing to listen to advice and ideas provided by the EEC members.
- The current faculty and staff seem adequate and experienced enough to successfully undertake the effort required by this endeavor. Also, their academic credentials are, in general, adequate and up to the task.
- We strongly believe that the department must adopt as a priority the cultivation of a research culture as, at this stage, this seems to be latent. The EEC provided above in the report and also during the on-site visit, specific ideas and recommendations in establishing and maintaining a fertile research environment that will benefit, the faculty, the students, the department and the AUCY's reputation as a new university in the area.
- The main **strengths** of the department according to the information provided, the lengthy conversations and the opinion of the EEC members are: the facilities that were leased for 25 years and were renovated very fast and are now available to receive all the staff and the students, the main building that is located in a very convenient place with ample parking spots, the agreements with the Coptic Church of Egypt, the memorandum of understanding (we were presented with a relevant email) with the University of Massachusetts – Dartmouth, for the mutual exchange of students and faculty members, the long business and academic experience

of the founding team and the modern equipment and information technology infrastructure that is being already installed in the university. The observed **weaknesses** at this stage include the not clear (at least to the EEC) projected financial plans that include statements such as the cash-flow, a break-even point analysis, etc., so that there can be a specific student enrollment goal especially for the first 1-4 years of operation. An observed latent concentration on the merits of state-of-the-art research for a university department. The **opportunities** include the lack of other high quality universities in the local area, the opportunity of marketing the institution as “Europe’s southeasternmost university”, the ability to access research grants directly from the EU and also from the local community, the possibility to attract students from the greater region as Cyprus is an EU country with financial stability and a safe social and institutional environment. Although currently the area around the facilities is sub-industrial, we were told that it will soon be re-designated for civilian use. The university is planning, according to the founding team, to purchase or lease some of the privately owned lots adjacent to the main facilities for future expansion. The **threats** include the possibility of any new universities or colleges established in the area, the high concentration of higher education institutions with respect to the population in Cyprus, any future withdrawal of the participating parties in some of the agreements currently made (students from the Coptic Church of Egypt, the MoU with the UMass – Dartmouth, etc.), and finally any adverse economic situation that may impact the ability of the founding team to finance the project especially in the near future where enrollment in the department will probably be below the medium-term goals, and/or the ability of either Cypriot and/or international students to pay the necessary tuition fees to attend the university.

- The people of the department aspire to see the university as a regional scientific and cultural hub that will attract people for classes, scientific events and various cultural and athletic occasions organized by the AUCY.
- All the people of the department and especially the founding members of the team seem keen in providing a “different” and more student oriented with personal touch approach to teaching and dealing with the students.
- The departmental officials and the faculty seem to grasp the gravity of various ethical violations in academics and the importance of intellectual property that should be safeguarded against plagiarism. In this respect, they have adopted the Turnitin plagiarism detection software.
- The EEC members recommend that the department establishes at this stage clear standards with respect to how research performance is assessed for the academic staff and what is the research profile they will seek in future academic staff recruitment and/or staff promotions.

## E. Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Dimitrios Gounopoulos</b>	
<b>Periklis Gogas</b>	
<b>Apostolos Christopoulos</b>	
<b>Rositsa Rouseva</b>	
FullName	
FullName	

**Date:** September 2, 2020

