



*Doc. 300.3.2

Date: 30/3/2021

Higher Education Institution's Response

(Departmental)

- **Higher Education Institution:** University of Nicosia
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **School/Faculty:** School of Business
- **Department:** Management

Programme(s) of study under evaluation

Programme 1

In Greek:

07.14.336.059 Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων (4 έτη , 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο)

In English:

Business Administration (4 years,240 ECTS, Bachelor of Business Administration)

Programme 2

In Greek:

Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων MBA (18 μήνες / 90 ECTS, Μάστερ, Εξ Αποστάσεως)

Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων MBA (18 μήνες / 90 ECTS, Μάστερ)

In English:

07.14.336.066 Master in Business Administration (18 months, 90 ECTS, Master, E-learning)

07.14.336.067 Master in Business Administration
(18 months, 90 ECTS, Master)

Programme 3

In Greek:

Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων (3 έτη , 180 ECTS,
Διδακτορικό)

In English:

07.14.336.068 Business Administration (3 years, 180
ECTS, Doctor of Philosophy)

- **Department's Status:** Existing



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. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.3.1) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the department in each assessment area.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area, the HEI must respond on, without changing the format of the report:*
 - *the findings, strengths, areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
 - *the deficiencies noted under the quality indicators (criteria)*
 - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The HEI's response must follow below the EEC's comments, which must be copied from the external evaluation report (Doc. 300.3.1).*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on a separate document.*

Introduction and overall assessment

We refer to the report of the External Evaluation Committee (EEC) for the assessment-accreditation of the Department of Management, which was prepared following a virtual visit at the University of Nicosia by the members of the EEC on November 13, 2020.

We would like to thank the EEC members for their thorough and insightful work during the evaluation of the Department and their report. We would also like to express our appreciation for the collegial and constructive approach with which they conducted their evaluation. All full-time faculty teaching in the programme were present (on-site or on-line) during the evaluation. Part-time faculty and Special Teaching Staff were also present as well as students and graduates of the BBA, MBA and PhD programs.

The EEC report is extremely positive with very high scores and all assessment areas (11 out of 11) were marked as “Compliant”, overall; a few indicators partially compliant, which are addressed herein.

As reported by the members of the EEC, the Department of Management is innovative in developing its studies and comes across as a unit with high spirits and teamwork that help to lift teaching and administrative burdens.

We do appreciate the committee’s recommendations for improvement, which will enhance the quality of our Department and we will be addressing those in the corresponding section of this response.

In the following sections, we break down the comments and suggestions of the committee and we provide our comments (if any) and the actions taken to address the comments. In order to simplify and make this response report easier to read, we state the EEC findings and strengths for each section together and then we summarise the constructive feedback of the committee and our response.

Based on the EEC evaluation report, we are looking forward to the accreditation of the Department of Management.

Below, the findings and strengths reported by the EEC in its assessment are presented followed by its constructive feedback and our responses/actions.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

We thank the EEC for its positive feedback on the Department's Mission and Strategic Planning. According to the EEC evaluation, there is a strong evidence that the strategic planning and focus revolve around seven strategic pillars that account for a holistic view of the activities necessary to run a successful academic department. Overall, all quality indicators were assessed as compliant.

Below, **Section 1.1** presents the Constructive Feedback for the Department's Mission and Strategic Planning assessed by the EEC and our Action/Responses.

Mission and strategic planning

1.1 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

1.1.1 The strategic planning and focus revolve around seven strategic pillars. These account for a holistic view of the activities necessary to run a successful academic department. However, the strategic statements are not translated into specific action points with specific success measures and the strategic statements are not prioritized nor related to short-, medium- or long-term horizons.

Action/Response:

We thank the EEC members for this comment. Following the comment, we revisited and reviewed the Department's seven strategic pillars and prioritised their strategic statements. We believe that now the strategic statements under each pillar are indeed better organized. The list of prioritised strategic statements is presented below. We also acknowledge the EEC members' comment on strategic statements not translated into specific action points with specific success measures. A careful and detailed analysis of all strategic statements of the seven strategic pillars has been conducted and all the statements have been translated into specific action points with specific success measure. These are presented in **Appendix I**.

Pillar I: Student Learning and Services

- Implementation of student-centered Learning pedagogies
- Continuously review and re-engineer the curriculum of the existing programmes to be fully updated and in line with current developments in today's workplace
- Maintain the department and programmes' accreditation status
- Sustain and expand a selection of online programs
- Improve advising services through online tools
- Increase collaboration with other universities to offer joint programs
- Enhance students' career support services and career prospects

- Enhance placement efforts by increasing both the number and the variety of firms recruiting on campus and encouraging placement/internships

Pillar II: Research

- Encourage faculty members to conduct research and publish in Scopus-indexed journals
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and interdisciplinary approaches to research
- Encourage faculty to seek more research funding
- Encourage faculty members to conduct research and publish in Scopus-indexed journals
- Increase the number of international collaborations with other universities and research institutions.
- Encourage research collaboration between members of the Department and with external partners
- Expand research opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students
- Organize internal (Departmental, School or University wide) research seminars

Pillar III: Administrative

- Retain and increase current administrative support
- Make coordination responsibilities between faculty more balanced

Pillar IV: Work Environment

- Maintain and expand open communication climate between faculty members
- Offer needed facilities for colleagues to work seamlessly

Pillar V: Professional community engagement / External Relations

- Strengthen relationships with external stakeholders (corporate and academic partners, alumni, and community)
- Recruit strategically individuals with confirmed expertise in specific areas.
- Host high-impact community events

Pillar VI: Promotion

- Capitalize on University of Nicosia brand image
- Actively promote the programs of the Department
- Continually update webpages related to the Department

Pillar VII: Revenue generation

- Generate revenue by growing undergraduate and postgraduate enrollment, attracting more local and international students.
- Generate additional revenue from professional trainings in cutting edge areas.

- Encourage staff to apply for funding from a variety of sources including EU and International Projects.

1.1.2 *The presentation made during the onsite visit did clarify and provide explanation in regard to some of these statements and their coherence to achieving the mission.*

However, we believe the Department should clarify their strategic objectives further and most importantly to develop key actions of focus over different time horizons.

☑Action/Response

We welcome this EEC members' comment on further clarifying the strategic objectives and developing key actions of focus over different time horizons. The revised mission statement of the School of Business is as follows: *The UNIC School of Business educates effective leaders who will successfully manage and guide organisations, impacting societies in a sustainable manner, driven by, and contributing to, accelerating technological change.*

A general strategy that supports the mission of the School of Business is: Within the next 5 years the Department of Management aims at establishing collaborations, acquiring resources, involving the community, and working with the industry towards educating individuals who can exercise sustainable leadership in their field.

Appendix I presents Key Action Points. These are phrased in a way that the time horizon for each one is defined.

1.1.3 *A further field of improvement would be to describe how the feedback mechanisms from students and other stakeholders such as industry partners play a role for improving the department's activities, outputs and impacts going forward. While there appeared to be some input from the wider academic and non-academic community the extent of this and the nature it took, along with how it explicitly is used to develop the Department's strategy was not very evident.*

☑Action/Response:

We thank the EEC members for this comment on the importance of the feedback mechanisms from students and stakeholders. Below, we present a number of practices through which we collect feedback from students and other stakeholders. As it may be seen, this is done in a quite systematic manner and the input is considered carefully to develop the Department's strategy. A couple of characteristic examples include, (a) employers' input about the importance of students' critical thinking and problem-based skills which has enhanced the implementation of case-based and problem-based learning practices and (b) student input about the group-work learning benefits on their knowledge acquisition and collaboration skills development which has encouraged faculty members to both do research on this and implement it in more courses.

Practice I: End of module surveys: Students are asked to evaluate the course content, the lecturer and delivery at the end of the module in a quantitative and qualitative manner.

Practice II: End of module survey results are collected and analysed by the University. The results then are sent to each individual lecturer who is responsible to include them in the self-assessment report and reflect on the feedback in relation to future objectives.

Practice III: Departmental Meetings include an evaluation and discussion of end-of-module survey results. The student feedback is utilized for future decision making and future improvement at the level of module delivery, program and department.

Practice IV: Internship program feedback is collected by the students through log books, reporting, survey as well as oral discussions. The feedback is discussed and evaluated by the Academic Supervisor, Organization Supervisor, the Internship Coordinator and Department Head and the University Careers Success Office.

Practice V: Internship program feedback is collected by employers through written reports and in liaison with the Academic Supervisor.

Practice VI: Design Development and Delivery of courses based on industry experts' feedback through meetings. A good example here is the first industry-driven course, titled "MIS-465 Business and Management of Games" which based on the suggestion of a global organization in the field of gaming.

Practice VII: Annual Industry meetings are scheduled to seek feedback as well as collaborations with the government, organizations and employers. Some good examples include the Deputy Ministry of Research, Innovation and Digital Policy and the Cyprus Telecommunication Authority.

Practice VIII: A number of contracts and MoU's are signed by organizations and periodically reviewed. Feedback from organizations is collected regularly.

Practice IX: Feedback from accreditation reports such as CYQAA and AACSB.

We will continue to collect and process data on students' performance and feedback from various stakeholders as outlined in the IPEP Internal programme evaluation process, which also provides valuable feedback to the Department. We have also formulated the Assurance of Learning Process, developed and revised the relevant documentation and continue to update the Department's strategic plan.

1.1.4 Additionally, provide information on the following:

1. Coherence and compatibility among programmes of study offered by the Department.
2. Coherence and compatibility among Departments within the School/Faculty (to which the Department under evaluation belongs).

This will be addressed in the report concerning BBA, MBA and PhD studies but there is good compatibility on an overall level. However, there is much concern over the scope to deliver the breadth of different concentrations within programmes given the current staffing profile.

Action/Response:

We acknowledge the EEC members' comment that the Department offers various diverse programs. We offer a carefully selected portfolio of undergraduate and postgraduate

programs to address the needs of the business world. It should be highlighted that courses which are essential to acquire the necessary knowledge and skills in business may be common for programs. This creates economies of scale for the utilization of human resources. While this reflects on the coherence and compatibility among programmes, there are certainly some benefits in terms of resource utilization, process improvement and synergies between research and teaching. It is significant to note that this conveys the interdisciplinary character of the Department combining Business Administration and Science programs.

In regards to the EEC's concern over the scope in delivering the breadth of different concentrations within the BBA program given the current staffing profile the Department and School, Councils approved the re-engineering of the BBA program. Specifically, six concentrations were proposed initially and those have been reduced to four, taking under consideration EECs concerns. With this change, a better allocation of courses will be enabled given the current staffing mix.

1.1.5 *Provide suggestions for changes in case of incompatibility. Greater refinement and focus of programmes is recommended so that they are more in line with the staffing mix and ensure there is sufficient workload capacity to achieve strategic priorities beyond teaching (e.g. research, outreach activities).*

☑Action/Response:

We comment on the EEC members' advice. An extended discussion has been initiated about programs and staffing mix. Some decisions have already been taken, for example the re-engineering of the BBA program which includes decreasing the number of concentrations from six to four and some modifications in the offerings of the MBA program.

In line with the above changes, a review of staffing mix has taken place at the Department level and an analysis of this review is currently in progress. This is expected to align the new BBA and MBA programs with the staffing mix and ensure there is sufficient workload capacity to achieve strategic priorities beyond teaching.

1.2. Connecting with society

We thank the EEC for its positive feedback for sound course development and improvement processes that follow the overall structure and centralised guidelines of the university. In addition, the EEC commented on the frequently re-engineered programs that ensure their success as well as the strong collaboration of the Department with International Universities. Overall, all quality indicators were assessed as compliant.

Below, **Section 1.2.1** presents the Constructive Feedback for the Department's Connection with the Society assessed by the EEC and our Action/Responses

1.2.1 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

1.2.1.1 *There are sound course development and improvement processes in place that follow the overall structure and centralised guidelines of the university. These are implemented to ensure that programs are continually reengineered and work well. There are no formal measures of societal impact except employment rates of graduates that were measured in 2018, however the department has supplied a number of best-practice cases illustrating how the competences achieved have helped bring about sound careers and entrepreneurial ventures.*

. **Action/Response:**

Societal Contribution is fundamental to the School of Business of the University of Nicosia and the Department of Management. The Department's substantial and varied contribution to society aligns with UNIC's formal effort. Towards this effort, we present below a number of initiatives and projects, clustered under four key areas.

Access to education:

A few initiatives which aim at educational inclusion and promotion of learning among society are presented below.

a) Competitions are organized for high school students, with scholarships (full or partial) as prizes. The most recent competition, organized by the Hospitality Management Coordinator, required from students to submit an essay linking tourism to technology and the future of employment. The winners received scholarships.

b) Another initiative concerns the mentoring program of the Department, where students have the opportunity to start their own company with mentoring from a faculty member.

c) One of the biggest events organized by the Department is '**Handshake with ICT**'. This yearly event was first organized back in 2014 and concerns a collaboration of the Department with the Association of IT teachers. About 350 high school students participate every year and receive prizes and scholarships.

d) The annual event "“ΜΑΖΙ Μαθαίνουμε και Καταπολεμούμε το Ηλεκτρονικό Έγκλημα” (**TOGETHER** We Fight Against Internet Crime) is a series of hands on workshops, based on real scenarios, aiming at parents and children ages 12-16 who come together to learn how to fight against Internet crime. This yearly event runs under the aegis of the Cyprus Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports and Youth, and the Cyprus Commissioner for Children's Rights.

e) The Marketing Event “Μπες στα παπούτσια ενός μαρκετερ για μια μέρα” (Get in the shoes of a Marketing Executive for a Day)” has been running successfully for a few years. The event trains students and teachers, hosts industry specialists and offers scholarships.

Social and Environmental Sustainability:

A number of MoUs have been signed between the Department, the University and external stakeholders aiming to promote social and environmental sustainability, as follows:

- a) An MoU has been signed with the Department, the University and the Cyprus Sustainable Tourism Initiative. Some of the completed actions include cleaning campaigns, where students and faculty collect plastic from beaches and the sea.
- b) 12.000 trees have been purchased to be planted in the University's area.
- c) In addition, a plot of land, which is nearby the University, has been provided by the municipality of Egkomi. Faculty staff and students volunteered to convert it into a public park.
- d) Money is collected and donated on a yearly basis to the Cyprus Anti-Cancer Society. A number of events are organized by faculty and students and funding is collected to support the Anti-Cancer Society's effort.

Economic development:

- a) Gratis courses on financial literacy to people who are not in education employment or training (NEET).
- b) The Center of Economic Development publishes a series of Newsletters on financial analyses on Cyprus economy and provides financial advice on selected topics.
- c) Gratis online courses to Cyprus Municipalities and Communities on topics related to Smart Cities.

Investing in people and the community:

The Department of Management aims at informing and educating members of the community as well as making education accessible to disadvantaged fellow citizens. Some indicative examples are listed below:

- a) offering scholarships to the unemployed
- b) making education accessible to families with low income
- c) participating in a number of projects that target groups of people with special needs. (PEPPY, DEVCULT)

1.2.1.2 *The Department's collaboration with international universities is provided in the form of a very long list. However, there lacks explanation of what the focus is, what the strategy is going forward and what these collaborations are expected to lead to in the future? In regard to industry collaboration, not much information is conveyed on the types of links or how the department intends to build and utilize such relationships in a strategic manner. There is therefore scope for improvement with respect to these domains.*

☑Action/Response:

The collaboration of the Department with international universities falls under three main strategic pillars as outlined below. The main objectives are to offer joint programs, faculty/student/administrative staff mobility, and internship and work placement for students. We intend to maintain these relationships in all the above areas and expand our relations in joint research and funded projects. In the future we envision further internationalization of our Department's strategy especially in relation to pillars I, II, VI and VII.

(1) *International collaborations for potential joint programs:*

ASTON School of Business (QS Top 100 in the world for Business Studies)
Chatham University (Leader in Sustainability)
IUBH University of Applied Sciences (The No 1 German University in online studies)

(2) *Mobility*

Erasmus + Framework agreements with approx. 80 Universities in Europe

(3) *Internship and work placement for students.*

Students participate in internships for the purposes of different programmes. Collaborations are established (e.g. HOSCO, <https://www.hosco.com/en/>) and MoUs are signed for this purpose. Also, students participate in Erasmus programmes. Erasmus + enables students to spend time in another educational institution abroad. Erasmus + offers the opportunity to study or do an internship in one of the hundreds of European and non-educational institutions with which the University of Nicosia has concluded student exchange agreements, Erasmus + offers the following benefits:

- Opportunity to experience life in a different education system and a different culture
- Exemption from paying tuition at the host institution (pay only UNIC tuition)
- Scholarship to fully cover the additional living expenses abroad (housing, food, small expenses)
- Extra impetus to the development of your interpersonal and language skills
- An important experience that when added to your resume, gives you a competitive edge for finding a job

The University of Nicosia accepts more than 120 incoming Erasmus + students every year, enhancing in-class diversity and cross-cultural understanding.

In relation to industry collaboration, we have very strong connections with local organizations. This involves signed agreements for student internships, contribution towards development of industry driven courses, invited guest lecturing and collaboration in funded projects. These relationships are very important for the strategy of the Department. In particular, they relate to Pillars I and VII. We plan to maintain and expand further these relationships, as they constitute a significant of the strategy of the Department and School.

1.3 Development processes

We thank the EEC for its positive feedback and valuable suggestions for the Department's development process. Overall, all quality indicators were assessed as compliant.

Below, in **Section 1.3.1** the Findings, Strengths and Areas of improvement and Recommendations reported by the EEC are presented followed by **Section 1.3.2** the Constructive Feedback and our Action/Responses.

1.3.1 Findings and Strengths reported by the EEC

Findings

“Following a presentation of the re-alignment of the Department within the school (going from 5 to 3 departments), there is no doubt that there is a solid strategic direction set from the Dean. A next step would be to ensure that the results of development and strategic processes are used in a systematic manner to improve the department going forward”.

Strengths

“There are sound procedures relating to for example recruitment of staff from the university level”.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

“The governance structure described on pages 8 and 9 of the Department reports are in some respects problematic. Who is the boss of who? To mention a couple of examples: The Dean is also a head of the MBA program, so both under and over the Head of Department. In addition, most full-time employees figure as a part of the Department Council. The same goes for the Internal Quality Assurance Committee which would appear especially problematic given the remit of the committee. There should be greater transparency depicting the connection between student-numbers and funding levels and a strategy for recruitment: which fields are your priorities for recruitment in the coming 12, 24, 36 months? Overall, in respect to goals and objectives across the Department there would be much benefit from a linked and more defined plan and associated KPIs over different time horizons.

Recruitment process descriptions were described in very detailed manners. But what is the overall strategy of the department, how is it going at the present, and how will you improve in the future? It would be worthwhile considering these points.”

1.3.2 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

1.3.2.1 *All in all, the recruitment processes set out from university level are sound and structured. However, the provision of resources to the department (for example in relation to student numbers) is not transparent and the department seems understaffed. Additionally, write:*

- *Expected number of Cypriot and international students*
- *Countries of origin of international students and number from each country*

☑ Action/Response:

We thank the EEC members for commenting on the sound and structured recruitment processes of the University. In relation to governance structure commented above, please refer to Section 3.2.1.

Following the increase in student numbers the past years, the Department has recruited and internally transferred a total of 5 full-time faculty members since 2018. The University of Nicosia recruits students from around the world. Student recruitment is done through physical presentations, virtual fairs, and marketing communication through traditional and digital media. This is the integrated effort of three different departments within the university, namely: Marketing, Admissions, Recruitment Unit/ International Admissions.

In **Appendix II** we present the number of students by country of origin, per program of study for the academic years: 2016-2017, 2017-2018, 2018-2019. In addition, a summary of the number of students per country and region as well as a summary of the percentages of Cypriot, Greek, EU and International students for Bachelors, Masters and Doctoral programs are presented below:

Number of students per country/major regions			
Origin	No. of Students		
	<i>2016 – 2017</i>	<i>2017 – 2018</i>	<i>2018 – 2019</i>
Cypriot	413	416	438
Greek	314	361	392
Other European	28	25	44
African	81	41	96
Russian	28	21	6
Middle Eastern	31	47	61
Other Asian	19	27	28
American	7	7	4

Percentage Number of students for Bachelor Programs			
Origin	% of Students		
	<i>2016 – 2017</i>	<i>2017 – 2018</i>	<i>2018 – 2019</i>
Cypriot:	50,7	50,6	48,7
Greek:	13,8	17,1	18,6
Other EU:	2,1	2,0	3,0
International:	33,4	30,3	29,8

Percentage Number of students for Master Programs			
Origin	% of Students		
	<i>2016 – 2017</i>	<i>2017 – 2018</i>	<i>2018 – 2019</i>
Cypriot:	30,1	30,8	31,2
Greek:	56,2	53,6	54,9
Other EU:	1,2	2	1,2
International:	12,6	13,6	12,7

Percentage Number of students for Doctoral Program			
Origin	% of Students		
	<i>2016 – 2017</i>	<i>2017 – 2018</i>	<i>2018 – 2019</i>
Cypriot:	30	31,8	36,4
Greek:	26,7	15,9	20
Other EU:	3,3	9,1	7,3
International:	40	43,2	36,4

To estimate the expected number of students in the next few years one needs to use time series analysis (the number of students recruited/ registered in the last few years) along with an analysis of current and future trends both in Cyprus and abroad. This is not easy to do. However, a broad analysis is presented below.

In the next few years because (a) the Cypriot market is not expanding and it is very saturated (b) private universities are likely to be established in Greece and (c) the university is targeting more aggressively the regions of Asia and Africa, we expect that the percentage of international students will increase. Overall, we expect a healthy growth in student numbers.

In relation to recruitment, a new Recruitment Unit Director, assumed duties a few months ago and the recruitment process has been re-engineered. A number of strategic initiatives for advancing student recruitments have already been launched.

1.3.2.2 *A significant focus is on attracting greater numbers of international students and furthering the diversity of the student population. The entry criteria does not appear to place clear emphasis on the level of quality of award in respect to the MBA or PhD which does raise some doubt on the quality of student intake.*

. **☑Action/Response:**

We thank the EEC members for this comment on entry criteria. We would like to note that our entry criteria are aligned with other private universities in Cyprus. The entry criteria for undergraduate, master's and PhD programs are presented below.

Undergraduate Programs' Entry Criteria

Concerning our undergraduate programs, students come to UNIC from around the world, blending a diverse range of academic backgrounds, experiences, interests, talents and cultural heritage. Admission to our University program is granted under different categories, depending on the student's qualifications and educational objectives. The university's general admissions policy relies on the student's previous academic performance, including their high school grades. The minimum admission requirement is a recognized High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC). Students with a lower HSLC grade than 7.5/10 or 15/20 or equivalent, depending on the grading system of the country issuing the HSLC, are provided with extra academic guidance and monitoring during the first year of their studies. Some programmes have higher entry requirements (e.g. the BSc MIS program has minimum entry criteria a High School Leaving Certificate (HSLC) 17/20). It is important to note that admissions requirements used by the University/Department are aligned with the entry criteria followed by all private universities in Cyprus.

Master's Program Entry Criteria

The minimum general requirement for admission to the MBA programme is a Bachelor Degree from a recognised university.

In addition to the above, applicants must also satisfy the following requirements:

- Standardized Test Scores- The Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT) is required of all students with a minimum score of 400. Students with a COA of 2.5 or higher on the 4-point system or 2.2 for UK standards or equivalent, or three years of professional experience, will be exempted from the GMAT. A candidate without the GMAT may be provisionally admitted and allowed to take the foundation courses, but will need to submit their GMAT scores as stated above, in order to be accepted as MBA students.
- A Curriculum Vitae (CV) indicating the applicant's education, academic and professional experience, any publications, awards, etc.
- Letters of Recommendation – Two recommendation letters from individuals who have known the applicant in his/her educational and professional environment are required

- Personal Statement – The applicant is required to submit a comprehensive outline highlighting his or her individual competences and strengths and providing their reflections regarding expectations and the value of the programme to their personal advancement and career development.
- Proficiency in English for the Programme offered in the English Language
- Proficiency in Greek for the Programme offered in the Greek Language

English Language Proficiency

Students satisfy the English requirements if their first degree was taught in English. Otherwise, they would need to present a minimum TOEFL score 550 and above, or Computer-based TOEFL score of 213 and above, or Internet-based TOEFL (iBT) score 79-80 and above, or GCSE (or GCE) English Language “O” Level of “C” or above or IELTS of 6.5 and above or Cambridge Exams (First Certificate with Grade B and above, as well as Proficiency with Grade C and above or a score placement at the ENGL-100 level of the University English Placement Test. The University offers English courses at various levels to help students reach the required standard for admission to a graduate program.

PhD Program Entry Criteria

For the PhD program, the Department follows the Admission Requirements and Procedure below:

- I. An accredited master’s degree.
- II. Very good academic record.
- III. Proof of high English proficiency. This is provided by EITHER a degree from an English-speaking university OR TOEFL (paper-based test 600, computer-based test 250, internet based test 100) OR IELTS 6.5.
- IV. An initial 2000-word research proposal outlining the research theme with relevant literature in the field of proposed study, aim, objectives, specific research questions, possible gap/s and proposed research methodology.
- V. A Personal Statement of 500 – 1000 words outlining applicants’ individual competences and strengths and providing their reflections regarding the expectations and value of the programme as well as to their personal advancement and career development, and a clear commitment and motivation to make a contribution to the field.
- VI. Letters of Recommendation – Two recommendation letters from individuals who have known the applicant in their educational or professional capacity.

In addition to the above requirements, which are all examined carefully giving particular emphasis on the academic background of the prospective PhD student (degrees completed, universities attended, transcripts, quality of proposal), applicants who are shortlisted all pass

through a personal interview with the interested faculty member. Once this process takes place, and if an applicant is considered for an offer, this is taken to the DPPC who approve the offer to be sent to the prospective student. Hence our entry criteria to the PhD program does indeed place clear emphasis on the level of quality of student intake.

2. Quality Assurance

We do appreciate the Committee's positive assessment and feedback for (a) *the system and quality assurance strategy* and (b) *quality assurance for the programs of study*. All sub-areas of this category were considered as compliant.

Section 2.1.1 presents the Findings, Strengths and Areas of improvement and recommendations on the *System and quality assurance strategy* reported by the EEC and followed by **Section 2.121**. the Committees Constructive Feedback and our Responses.

Section 2.2.2 presents the Findings, Strengths and Areas of improvement and recommendations on the *Quality assurance for the programmes of study* reported by the EEC and followed by **Section 2.2.1** the Committees Constructive Feedback and our Action/Responses.

2.1 System and quality assurance strategy

2.1.1 Findings and Strengths reported by the EEC

Findings

"The Department is generally very strong in the quality assurance dimension. In some instances it needs to be more systematic in its analysis, for example relating to graduate employment".

Strengths

"Generally strong procedures in place and in line with the university practices".

Areas of improvement and recommendations

"Consideration should be given to supporting doctoral candidates attend relevant academic conferences".

"Consideration should be given to collecting more systematic and regular data on graduates. The area of workloads and staffing need attention as this could lead to quality assurance issues of programmes".

2.1.2 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

Overall, the quality assurance strategy seems competent. However, it was unclear as to how the Department worked strategically and systematically with the quality of its connections with society. Quality assurance does not cover the connection with society.

. **Action/Response:**

We do appreciate the Committee's positive assessment and feedback on our system and quality assurance strategy. As explained in **Section 1.2.1.1** the Department has very close links with society and consistently and increasingly invests in these relationships. In relation to Quality Assurance more specifically the Department constantly seeks the input of industry experts for program development and offerings. For example, for the external evaluation accreditation of all programs of study, industry experts and other external stakeholders are asked for their input.

Another example is the involvement of Cyprus Game industry leaders in the development and delivery of the MIS 465 Business and Management of Games course. This is actually part of a clear strategy of both the University and the School.

2.2.2 Quality assurance for the programmes of study

2.2.1 Findings and Strengths reported by the EEC

Findings

"The Department is generally very strong in the quality assurance dimension. In some instances it needs to be more systematic in its analysis, for example relating to graduate employment"

Strengths

"Generally strong procedures in place and in line with the university practices".

Areas of improvement and recommendations.

"Consideration should be given to supporting doctoral candidates attend relevant academic conferences. Consideration should be given to collecting more systematic and regular data on graduates.

The area of workloads and staffing need attention as this could lead to quality assurance issues of programmes".

2.2.2. Constructive Feedback by the EEC

While we were given some good examples of the use of different pedagogical delivery methods, the pedagogical reflections were in instances found to be superficial; for example the descriptions of the use of Problem-Based Learning, which is a distinct pedagogical methodology. This is an area that could be improved upon.

. **Action/Response:**

We do appreciate the Committee's comments on the pedagogical methodologies used in the teaching and learning processes. Teaching and learning is the focus of our University's

work, and students are always at the centre of our attention. In line with this, we design Student-Centered Learning (SCL) pedagogies that promote active self-learning and tap into what our students' value. Problem-Based Learning (PBL) is a SCL approach in which students are presented with real-world, multidisciplinary problems that demand critical thinking, engagement, and collaboration. Literature presents evidence that SCL, if properly implemented, could lead to: (a) increase of motivation towards learning with more positive attitudes toward the subject under study, (b) greater retention of knowledge and, (c) deeper understanding.

We agree with the EEC that PBL is a distinct pedagogical methodology that requires a lecturer's intensive and time-consuming preparation to teach using problems and also prepare students to learn how to solve problems. In order to achieve an effective PBL student participation, faculty members implement authentic, real-life contextual problems/cases from various online libraries that the university obtained licenses.

It is significant to note that faculty members of the Department have extensive research publications on SCL pedagogies.

2.2.2.1 Graduates employment could be analysed more regularly and should track the employment trajectory of the graduates of a given program over time especially at the MBA level.

Action/Response:

Analysing and monitoring graduates' employment is of major importance for the Department and the university. We welcome and appreciate the EEC comment on the frequency of analysing the employment path.

Every year, the University's Student Services Office, conducts an alumni employability survey for all students (undergraduate and postgraduate) that have graduated 18-24 months ago. For example, last summer students that graduated in 2018 were surveyed. In the next few months, students that graduated in 2019 will be surveyed as well. The surveys have a relatively good response rate (>50%) and include several employability questions. The Department can have results segmentation by School / Department and Programme. **Appendix IIIa and Appendix IIIb** illustrate the Master's and Bachelor's employability statistics for the period from 2016-2018. This effort by the Student Services Office will continue in the future so we will have a more comprehensive picture about employment paths.

2.2.2.2 PhD students are largely self-funded and appear to be provided limited support in terms of being able to attend conferences.

Action/Response:

We do appreciate the Committee's comment on PhD students funding opportunities and support. The PhD program is a relatively young, very dynamic, and expanding program.

Reviewing its offerings is a continuous process – PhD Coordinators of all Departments meet on regular basis throughout the academic year to discuss and decide about student support. Financial assistance for conferences is provided on an individual basis and one of the main topics that have been extensively discussed and the University examines its inclusion in student offerings.

2.2234 *Given the high teaching loads and administrative responsibilities, there would be some concern over the ongoing capacity of faculty to provide high quality PhD supervision; considering especially the amount of PhD students in relation to the amount of full-time academic staff.*

. **☑Action/Response:**

We do appreciate the Committee's positive assessment and feedback for the system and quality assurance strategy. According to DIPAE regulations, there is a recommendation for a maximum number of PhD students a supervisor may have, a recommendation to which we adhere. For more details about PhD supervision please refer to the Response for the PhD program. Also, in an effort to limit student numbers to the level that faculty feel comfortable with, in the last year we introduced a new process of recruiting PhD students whereby faculty members announce the topic areas and the number of students they can undertake for supervision. Our selection process is thus quite strict so that we can keep our PhD student numbers within this recommendation, but also to retain the quality supervision we seek to provide to our students.

With regards to the high teaching loads and administrative responsibilities, indeed high-quality PhD supervision often requires significant workload. At the moment, there is an allowance for each faculty member who supervises PhD students (fixed fee per year, per student); however, we are looking into offering Teaching Time Release (per faculty member, per student) for those supervisors who would prefer time release rather than a monetary allowance. More details may be found in the PhD program Response.

3. Administration

We do appreciate the Committee's positive assessment and feedback on the Department's Administration. All areas of this category were considered as compliant. The EEC commented on a very efficient Department and a great sense of teamwork between academics and administrative staff. In addition, they were very positive on the very good administrative set-up, which also reflects the advantages of being a smaller Department, and a Department with good co-working.

Section 3.1 presents the Findings, Strengths and Areas of improvement and recommendations on the *Departments Administration* reported by the EEC and followed by **Section 3.1.2** the Committees Constructive Feedback and our Action/Responses.

3.1 Findings and Strengths reported by the EEC

Findings

“The examples of administration indicated a very efficient Department and a great sense of teamwork between academics and administrative staff”.

Strengths

“Very good administrative set-up, which also reflects the advantages of vbeing (sic) a smaller Department, and a Department with good co-working”.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

“The governance structure needs to be looked at. In addition, the descriptions provided in the evaluation material indicate a structure of monitoring, through senate, council and committees, of, for example, quality of teaching, course development, research evaluation etc. that is very complex considering the size of the university. It was also unclear as to whether all of these were working effectively and necessary”.

3.2 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

3.2.1 *As the department council more or less includes all full-time academic staff it is difficult to assess the decision making capabilities of it versus the line-management structure of the university. For this reason, a score of 3 has been entered to represent its presence.*

. Action/Response:

The governance structure with reference to Departmental Council, School Council and the line management structure responsibilities are described in the Internal Regulations of the University (Ch. 3). The Department Council and the School Council have are entitled for ultimate decision-making at Departmental and School level respectively. All new programs and courses are initially discussed and designed at a Departmental level, approved by the Department and School Councils and then are submitted to the Senate for final approval. The process is very transparent; ratified minutes of all bodies are available to faculty.

In addition, faculty design and implement their research, prepare a self-evaluation report every other academic year. These reports are primarily monitored within the Department. When a faculty member applies for a promotion or research time-release, relevant documentation is forwarded to committees formed according to Internal Regulations of the University. The Internal Regulations of the University are being revisited with the aim to revise points that could be further improved.

3.2.2 *There is also a lack of transparency with regard to the feeding of resources from university level to department level.*

. **Action/Response:**

We do appreciate the Committee's comment on the provision of resources by the University. We acknowledge that the University does not allocate dedicated funding at School/Departmental level. However, the process for funds allocation, albeit not so decentralized, is transparent. CAPEX budget Request by Departments are reviewed by the Dean and submitted to the Rectorate to be reviewed by the Rector and Vice Rector for Academic Affairs. The reviewed budget is finally submitted to the University Council for approval. Provisions for funding exist for various categories including, hiring of new faculty, budget for ICT (tools/equipment/software), faculty development including attendance of international conferences, publishing in open-access journals, memberships in professional associations etc.

4. Learning and Teaching

We thank the EEC for its positive feedback. The EEC commented on the Department being very sound in the category of Teaching and Learning. Both areas of this category (a) *Planning the programmes of study* and (b) *Organisation of teaching* reports were considered as compliant.

Section 4.1 *Planning the programmes of study* reports the Committee's Constructive Feedback and our Action/Responses. **Section 4.2.** presents the Findings, Strengths and Areas of improvement and recommendations on the *Organisation of teaching* reported by the EE and the Committee's Constructive Feedback and our Action/Responses.

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.1.1 *Constructive Feedback by the EEC*

While students and other external stakeholders appear to have some input in programme reviews, this didn't appear as an especially strong and structured process.

. **Action/Response:**

We would like to clarify that the Internal Regulations of the University require student representatives' involvement at the Departmental Quality Assurance Committee and the School Quality Assurance Committee. In addition, student representatives participate in the Departmental Council and the School Council with voting rights as per the legislative framework. The Internal Program Evaluation Process (IPEP) that runs through each program/Department/School every 5 years requires student representatives to contribute their input for the update of programs. Representatives of external stakeholders are

involved in the Departmental Quality Assurance Committee and the School Quality Assurance Committee. As shown above the processes are structured and involve students' and external stakeholders' active involvement.

4.2 Organisation of teaching

4.2.1 Findings and Strengths reported by the EEC

Findings

“Student involvement seemed very good and the assessment tasks appeared varied although we didn't receive great detail on specific assessment tasks.”

Strengths

“In general, the Department seemed very sound in this category “

Areas of improvement and recommendations

“It was not entirely clear how the Department ensured a structured, regular feedback from external stakeholders on which it was possible to make decisions for improving the educational activities. Greater clarity on assessments tasks and marking criteria would have been welcomed”

4.2.2 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

4.2.2.1 *the Department provided a very strong case for many of our high ratings. There could be greater clarity on the admission criteria on some programmes (e.g. role of degree award level for PhD programme).*

. **Action/Response:**

We do appreciate the committee's positive comments. Detailed explanations on the Admissions Criteria of the Department's Undergraduate, Masters and PhD programs are presented in **Section 1.3** Development processes in **point 1.3.2.2**.

4.2.2.2 *There could have been some greater granular detail provided on assessments and criteria used in marking.*

. **Action/Response:**

We thank the committee for this constructive and useful comment. While some instructors do use assessment criteria in marking, this is an area we are constantly working on

improvements. To push forward this practice sample marking criteria for assignments and exams have already been prepared and sent to all faculty with the suggestion to use them consistently in their teaching.

Assessment tasks vary by type of course and lecturer preference. They may include, among others, the application of theory in a practical example; the analysis of a case study; the discussion of a specific topic based on research results; the commentary of an online multimedia resource; the outcome of a group work towards a common solution to real-life contextual problem; the presentation of a challenge of an innovation. Marking criteria may also vary somewhat, even though they usually include: Logic and argumentation, critical discussion, oral and written presentation of results, organization of answers, writing style/language and referencing.

5. Teaching Staff

We thank the EEC for its positive feedback. The EEC commented on the Department reports were considered as compliant.

Section 5.1 presents the Findings, Strengths and Areas of improvement and recommendations on the Department Teaching Staff reported by the EEC and **Section 5.2 reports on** the Committees Constructive Feedback and our Action/Responses.

5.1 Findings and Strengths reported by the EEC

Findings

“The processes for allocating teaching staff are well-described, however, there are some concerns as to the understaffing of programs and this may result in too few staff per student”.

Strengths

“The department shows itself as a team-based workplace with a good spirit and very collegial mindset”.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

“Teaching loads should be considered going forward as a poor balance in teaching load versus research time will make it difficult to attract the best candidates for future positions. One example is that there may be potential for creating greater synergies between the MBA programs in order to reduce the direct teaching load per student because it would enable more students per class. It is strongly recommended that consideration is given to workload and staff resource issues”.

5.2 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

Judging from the amount of courses each full-time staff member runs and the amount of degrees, the workload on them is something that needs to be addressed. The continued sustainability of running all module, programmes and being research active are questionable based on current staffing levels.

Also, write the following:

- 1) *Number of teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work*
- 2) *Number of special teaching staff working full-time and having exclusive work –*
- 3) *Number of visiting Professors*
- 4) *Number of special scientists on lease services*

. **Action/Response:**

We do acknowledge the Committee's comments in relation to workloads, and the programmes sustainability as well as on research outcomes. In the last few years, an emphasis was given to research and schemes such as the Research Time Release have significantly reduced the workload. The increasing number of intellectual contributions by faculty members evidences this improvement. It must be noted that an increasing number of publications also appear in highly ranked journals. In relation to this, a major achievement of the School of Business, is that the Times Higher Education (THE) World University Rankings by Subject 2021 ranked the University of Nicosia (UNIC) among the top 301-400 universities in the world in the subject area of Business and Economics. We will continue to review and assess staffing needs and hire talented faculty as needed.

In addition, as per the EEC request, currently in the Department of Management there are: **15** Teaching Staff working full-time and having exclusive work (called Research Teaching Faculty according to the University); **4** Special Teaching Staff working full-time and having exclusive work; **12** Visiting Professors and **14** Special Scientists (adjunct faculty teaching par-time in their areas of expertise).

6. Research

All sub-areas of the category were considered by EEC as compliant and we thank the committee for its positive comments and feedback.

Below, **Section 6.1** presents the Findings, Strengths and Areas of improvement and recommendations on the Department Teaching Staff reported by the EEC and **Section 6.2 reports** on the Committees Constructive Feedback and our Action/Responses.

6.1 Findings and Strengths reported by the EEC

Findings

“The Department staff are overall quite research active. Some of course more than others, but the level of activity is good. The current table distinguishes between the categories 1-10 publications, 11-20 publications and above 20. The table provided could instead depict the number of items published pr. year pr. staff member, but perhaps in an anonymized fashion. Also, an anonymized H-index would be useful to see the breadth and depth of the research activeness in the Department. There are several question marks in the above survey which is due to us not being provided with information in relation to such aspect thus we can legitimately make a determination on level of compliance”.

Strengths

“Increasing research output trajectory as evidenced by substantial positive trend in the number of Scopus indexed publications over the past 5 years”.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

“It is a worry whether the full-time academic staff have enough time allocated for research purposes with the teaching loads and administrative burdens laid upon most of them”.

6.2 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

The Department does mention research in its mission, but it does not describe in detail the types of impacts that are in focus or how it seeks to enhance the research potential of for example the younger growing staff.

. Action/Response:

This topic is currently under discussion in the School and Department. In the ongoing process of AACSB accreditation, specific objectives for different categories of faculty are being prepared. In addition, ABS rankings are increasingly adopted at the Business School. At the same time, most faculty members receive six hours of research time release;

research training; financial incentives for Scopus indexed publications; and funding for faculty development.

In addition, please note that in response to the EEC's request in the Findings section above, **Appendix IV** presents in an anonymized fashion the number of published documents (2016-2021) per year, per staff member and the respective H and i10 Indices.

7. Resources

All sub-areas of the category were considered by EEC as compliant and we thank the committee for its positive comments and feedback.

Below, **Section 7.1** presents the Findings, Strengths and Areas of improvement and recommendations on the Department Teaching Staff reported by the EEC and **Section 7.2 reports on** the Committees Constructive Feedback and our Action/Responses.

7.1 Findings and Strengths reported by the EEC

Findings

"The Department comes across as a unit with high spirits and teamwork that help to lift teaching and administrative burdens. Many of the full-time staff have some sort of administrative burden relating to educational management.

The worry here might be that they do not have enough periods of time completely free of teaching and admin that would enable them to focus on research".

Strengths

"The Department is innovative in developing its studies and the students are overall very satisfied with the way things are run".

"Areas of improvement and recommendations

From a management perspective it is recommended to work on creating synergies in teaching; especially between the MBA specializations; and also to create research space by organising for periods of no administration and completely free of teaching for research staff."

7.2 Constructive Feedback by the EEC

The Department is currently looking to hire more full time staff and the trend is that better candidates are applying to the available positions. It is positive that more staff are being hired. This is crucial for the continued improvement of the Department our concerns over workloads and resource availability.

. Action/Response:

As noted above we are currently in the process of accessing faculty needs and we will proceed accordingly.

B. Conclusions and final remarks

Section B.1. reports the conclusions and the final remarks of the EEC.

B.1. Conclusions by EEC

“The assessment of the Department of Management was performed from November 13 until November 14, 2020. The assessment was done based on information given during a virtual visit on November 13, as well as the information provided by the Department in their application forms for departmental evaluation as well as the evaluation of the BBA, MBA and PhD programmes. Additional information was provided by the Department upon request.

This evaluation was made in good faith that the information provided is correct. If appropriate, the EEC noted that it was not able to confirm the compliance with existing legislation.

The overall assessment of the EEC is positive.

Overall, we believe the Department is in a strong position and it is one that has clearly been on a journey of growth and improvement. This visit demonstrated very clearly a highly committed and collegial academic and administrative staff base who are passionate to the provision of high-quality education. We commend this.

We however have concerns over whether the continued growth and improvements are sustainable unless there is a) increased resourcing (staffing) and b) consideration given to rationalisation of some courses.

As the strategic objectives were not reinforced with clear targets or KPIs there is a danger that growth continues unabated which could be detrimental in the long run if this is not accompanied with increased resources”.

Department Final Comments:

We would like to express our appreciation to the EEC members for the overall positive evaluation, as well as their constructive comments for the Department of Management. We are satisfied with the EEC members' evaluation of the Department as compliant in all categories, with a very high score. Furthermore, we are pleased to know that the EEC members commend the Department's strong position, its highly committed and collegial academic and administrative staff, as well as its ongoing growth and improvement.

We have provided clarifications to EEC's comments and addressed all recommendations. The Department of Management - the biggest Department of the School of Business - with an interdisciplinary character, and with distinguished academic staff members, is further strengthened by EEC's recommendations. We are looking forward to the accreditation of the Department.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
Prof. Angelika Kokkinaki	Dean, School of Business	
Prof. Despo Ktoridou	Head, Department of Management	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	

Date: 30/03/2021

