

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 20/11/2023

## Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
Mediterranean Institute of Management
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Programme of study**  
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

**In Greek:**

Μεταπτυχιακό στη Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων Εξ Αποστάσεως, 90 ECTS, 18 Months

**In English:**

Master of Business Administration e-learning, 90 ECTS, 18 Months

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** New
- **Concentrations (if any):**

**In Greek:** N/A

**In English:** N/A



**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 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].**

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

- *The Higher Education Institution (HEI) based on the External Evaluation Committee's (EEC's) evaluation report (Doc.300.1.1 or 300.1.1/1 or 300.1.1/2 or 300.1.1/3 or 300.1.1/4) must justify whether actions have been taken in improving the quality of the programme of study in each assessment area. The answers' documentation should be brief and accurate and supported by the relevant documentation. Referral to annexes should be made only when necessary.*
- *In particular, under each assessment area and by using the 2<sup>nd</sup> column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
  - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in \*.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>A more explicit and consistent mapping of the programme's learning outcomes (LOs), delivery methods, and expectations for prospective students would significantly enhance the comprehension and execution effectiveness of the programme.</p>	<p>The Program Prospectus, the individual course Study Guides and the Analytical Course Outline will be revised to include additional and more detailed information regarding the learning outcomes, the delivery methods and the expectations for prospective students. Relevant information will be included in informational and promotional materials/activities.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Attention should be given to ensuring that students are exposed to current developments and the latest key trends in the field of business and management.</p>	<p>The MIM will continue the periodic review of the program curriculum integrating industry-relevant topics and changes in the business environment. In addition, the MIM will encourage its faculty to invite more often professionals, industry experts, and successful entrepreneurs to give lectures. These speakers share real-world experiences, discuss current trends, and provide insights into the practical application of business theories. The MIM will organize professional development workshops on topics such as leadership skills, emerging technologies, and industry-specific tools.</p> <p>MIM is a member of the Business Graduates Organisation (BGA) and thus its students have free access to the digital edition of the Ambition business magazine. The Ambition magazine is a source of valuable content for students, graduates, business thinkers and practitioners.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The assessment system and criteria regarding student course performance should be communicated more effectively to the students.</p>	<p>The Program Prospectus, the individual course Study Guides and the Analytical Course Outline already include information regarding the assessment system and criteria.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>However, the school management will provide information regarding the assessment system and criteria during the welcoming session of the Program. In addition, the teaching staff will be instructed to further explain it during their first session with students referring to Rubrics where applicable</p>	
<p>Consider certain revisions in the curriculum content for the future. Such revisions may include, but are not limited to: develop leadership skills such as agility and resilience, the art of delegation and how to lead with impact.</p>	<p>The MIM will continue the periodic review of the program curriculum and will make the necessary revisions integrating industry-relevant topics and changes in the business environment. As a first step the “Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior” course which already deals with leadership topics will be revised to place more emphasis on leadership skills.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Online Library Services are of critical importance for distance learning programmes. All required and recommended readings mentioned in the study guides must be made available on the learning platform. Where possible, Open Educational Resources and Open Textbooks should be used.</p>	<p>The MIM will make available on the learning platform (Moodle LMS) all required and recommended readings included in the study guides. The faculty will be urged to use Open Educational Resources and Open Textbooks where possible.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>The student selection process in the conventional programme has an open approach, allowing applications from different fields in the public sector, particularly from Cypriots. This enhances the programme's interdisciplinary focus. However, in the case of the DL program, this approach may overlap with the conventional one by attracting Cypriots from different regions, potentially jeopardizing the sustainability of the conventional programme.</p>	<p>The MIM considers that the target market is different for the conventional and the distance learning programs. The potential students of each target group have a different profile and potentially different needs. Based on that and in order not to jeopardize the conventional program the differences of the programs will be presented in a clear manner in the informational and promotional material/ activities.</p>	

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

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<p>MIM should clearly communicate to the lecturers – internal or external – what is to be expected from them in terms of online teaching standards. The institution should set some standards or policies in terms of best practice e-learning standards, e.g. regarding minimum required response times.</p>	<p>The Teaching Staff Manual will be reviewed and updated if necessary to clearly define the teaching standards expected from lecturers including minimum required response times and other areas of focus. In addition, orientation sessions will be held at the beginning of the academic year to discuss teaching standards and to encourage lecturers to share their thoughts on the teaching standards and provide suggestions for improvement. During performance reviews constructive feedback will be provided based on teaching standards and areas of improvement will be discussed.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>A policy on the ethical use of AI applications, especially generative AI applications for text creation, should be developed and adopted - not only with regard to the assessment of assignments and the prevention of plagiarism but also with regard to the use of such tools to support learning and teaching</p>	<p>The AI is a primary focus topic for MIM and it is thus planning to manage it taking into account the developments, how it affects the school and the services it provides and what actions must be taken in order for the School to take advantage of the opportunities it provides and at the same time be protected from emerging risks. The MIM will prepare a relevant policy according to the CYQAA guidelines and will seek to collaborate with other institutions and adopt good practices which are being implemented. For a start it will approach Business Schools that are members of the BGA.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Opportunities for internationalization “at home” could be used by inviting international speakers to synchronous online conferences.</p>	<p>The MIM will invite international speakers through the Erasmus+ partnerships and at the same time will seek collaboration with other international institutions of higher education. To begin with, BGA/AMBA member institutions will</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	be contacted to explore their interest in possible collaboration.	
Furthermore, it could be considered to use more open educational resources (OER) and open textbooks.	Each member of the staff will be asked to review the teaching material for the course they teach and suggest more open educational resources (OER) and open textbooks. Upon approval of the recommended material by the program coordinator all the necessary actions will be taken to make it available to students.	Choose level of compliance:

### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The EEC recommends that MIM consider providing additional support to the faculty members, as they now have added responsibilities, not only due to the new programme's enrolment but also because of the increased requirements (such as more master dissertations) and the potential needs of students at any given time. This support might include the establishment of proper financial incentives.</p>	<p>The MIM will gather faculty needs through a survey and in addition a meeting will be held to further discuss the support they need and possible incentives.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Strengthening the connection between research and education by incorporating faculty research findings to enhance teaching effectiveness (e.g., utilizing case studies, published results).</p>	<p>The MIM pursues and supports by all means such actions always with the aim of improving and developing research.  MIM encourages faculty to incorporate their research findings into their teaching. It also encourages students and faculty to publish research findings in academic journals or present at conferences.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Encouraging increased faculty involvement with the private and public sectors to enhance the programme's appeal and improve teaching effectiveness. Engaging in public policy discussions and contributing to regulatory developments could also empower faculty to make applied contributions.</p>	<p>The MIM faculty consists of individuals from the private and the public sectors, several of whom are consultants and entrepreneurs with extensive experience in the business environment and the challenges it faces. Members of the MIM teaching staff are senior public sector officers holding positions that give them the opportunity to contribute to regulatory developments.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>One area that MIM should focus on is ensuring there will not be any lack of communication with teachers in the new DL program, particularly concerning students' assessments and team assignments.</p>	<p>The MIM is preparing a section to the Teaching Staff Manual where the duties and responsibilities of the staff regarding distance education are explained. There is information on how and when to contact students. It will include, among other things, good practices for ensuring constructive communication.</p> <p>The Program Prospectus, the individual course Study Guides and the Analytical Course Outline already include information regarding the assessment system and criteria. However, the school management will refer to the assessment system and criteria during Program Open Days, during the welcome day also the teaching staff will be instructed to further explain it during their first contact with students.</p> <p>Clear instructions about team assignments will be available along with the possibility for additional clarification by contacting the faculty. Students through the e-learning platform can also easily communicate (texting, chatting, meetings, break out rooms etc.) between them.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Some students mentioned that one of the main motivations for potentially joining a DL programme is the time savings and cost-effectiveness, especially if they live in different regions. Senior management should carefully review this as it pertains to the programme's sustainability.</p>	<p>It is a fact that many choose distance education for the time and cost savings. However, it is crucial that they are well informed about all aspects of distance education. And, thus the MIM will ensure that potential students are properly informed about the special characteristics and requirements of each program so that they are able to choose knowing all the parameters that will allow them to make the right decision based on both their work and social profile but</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	also to their academic needs/specificities.	
One significant change compared to the conventional programme is that the number of synchronous online meetings is fewer than a conventional one, which means students must put in more personal effort and workload. This should be clearly communicated to prospective students.	It is undoubtedly very important to communicate this to potential students so that they make an informed decision. The MIM will take all necessary actions so that this information is included in all informational and promotional material/activities.	Choose level of compliance:
Instructors should provide clearer guidance regarding reference books and course materials, as well as how students can obtain this material.	Each member of the staff will be asked to review the teaching material for the course they teach and suggest more open educational resources (OER) and open textbooks. Upon approval of the recommended material by the program coordinator, all necessary actions will be taken to make it available to students.	Choose level of compliance:
There is a need for more consistent feedback that is tailored to the DL delivery. To implement the suggestions mentioned above, a standardization of the processes in the DL-MBA programme is essential.	The MIM is preparing an appendix to the Teaching Staff Manual where the duties and responsibilities of the staff regarding distance education are explained. There is information on how and when to communicate with students. It will include, among other response timings and, the use of Rubrics and guidance on constructive/meaningful feedback.	Choose level of compliance:

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

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<p>Although the current small team of the E-Learning is providing good services, it is recommended to slightly increase the staff, especially if it is planned to further expand e-learning delivery. Given the increasing significance of distance learning programmes, it is essential to address the latest trends in educational technology and online learning in a professional manner. This includes utilizing and developing open educational resources, utilizing learning analytics, and incorporating artificial intelligence applications such as chatbots for academic guidance and student counselling. MIM should continue to collaborate with an external services provider to remain competitive in terms of the educational technology infrastructure.</p>	<p>The MIM will continue its collaboration with the external services provider and if need be, it will make sure to secure additional support services. At the same time the Cyprus Productivity Centre (the department under which the MIM operates) is in the process of filling two additional executive positions. At the same time, the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance has forwarded a request to the Ministry of Finance for the creation of five additional positions of officers for the CPC/MIM. The management of the institution in view of the entry into distance education will make the necessary arrangements so that a number of the positions are filled by officers with qualifications related to digitization.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>MIM works with an unusually high proportion of external instructors (approx. 80 %). Ensuring the quality of teaching is a particular challenge here. It is strongly recommended to clearly communicate the e-learning quality standards (or Key Performance Indicators, such as minimum response times) to the instructors in a guideline or policy for teaching in MIM's distance learning programmes.</p>	<p>The MIM is preparing a section to the Staff Manual explicitly for online teaching including minimum response times and other areas of focus.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Based on these standards, MIM should develop a more formal, mandatory professional development training programme for current and new lecturers not only in terms of the technical use of the e-learning platform and tools but also in terms of pedagogical aspects to facilitate and support</p>	<p>The MIM will provide training to faculty related to e-learning quality standards. It is also in the process of identifying best practices from other institutions that are well established and operating distance learning programs successfully. These best practices will be evaluated and if</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>asynchronous and synchronous learning, interaction and collaboration.</p>	<p>they are fit for purpose will be adopted by the MIM.</p>	
<p>The EEC believes that the administrative team for the MBA programme is performing admirably. However, we do have a recommendation to make. We strongly believe that the programme and any new DL programme on the way, would benefit from the recruitment of new permanent personnel. The current administrative team is burdened with a significant workload to maintain a long-term strategic plan for the programme and the MIM. Therefore, our recommendation to the senior management is to invest in acquiring more permanent human capital for the department.</p>	<p>The Cyprus Productivity Centre (the department under which the MIM operates) is in the process recruiting two officers as permanent personnel. At the same time, the Ministry of Labor and Social Insurance has forwarded a request to the Ministry of Finance for the creation of five additional positions of officers for the CPC/MIM. In view of the increased needs for human resources and especially management personnel, certain positions will be filled by administration officers.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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

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## 7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

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## B. Conclusions and final remarks

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p>The EEC welcomes the programme positively as it holds the potential to allow MIM to promote its conventional programme and reputation, fostering collaboration with both local and international industry and business. Like most programme proposals, there is room for improvement. Indeed, we have identified areas for reflection, elaboration, and further development, as outlined in each section above. All of the above concerns can be reflected in the programme content, as well as in the course content in the current proposed curriculum. We also suggest that MIM promotes the programme in the local and international job markets, increasing its visibility, and targeting professionals.</p>	<p>The MIM will intensify its promotional activities based on a well-structured marketing plan in order to increase its visibility.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
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C.



#### D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Maria Nicolaou Christou</b>	Ag. Director	
<b>Kyprianos Nicolaidis</b>	MIM Manager	
Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	
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**Date:** 20/11/2023

