



oc. 300.3.2

Date: 27 December 2020

Higher Education Institution's Response (Departmental)

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

Programme 1

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

Programme 2

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

Programme 3

In Greek:

Programme Name

In English:

Programme Name

- **Department's Status:** Choose status



ΦΟΡΕΑΣ ΔΙΑΣΦΑΛΙΣΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΠΙΣΤΟΠΟΙΗΣΗΣ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΙΟΤΗΤΑΣ ΤΗΣ ΑΝΩΤΕΡΗΣ ΕΚΠΑΙΔΕΥΣΗΣ
CYPRUS AGENCY OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND ACCREDITATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION



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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.*



1. Department's academic profile and orientation

Sub-areas

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

Findings

We were impressed by our time with faculty, administered staff and students. It seems that morale is good, and the culture is mutually supportive. There was evident pride in the work of the department and a commitment to continuous improvement, excellence in research and teaching, and an enriching student experience. We looked in most depth at the BSc programme but have a good understanding of how this fits with wider provision. As peers, it was a pleasure to learn about the Department, and its future directions.

Strengths

- Excellent academic profile of staff
- Strong support systems in place for students and faculty
- A collegiate and developmental departmental culture
- A nicely articulated mission appropriate to the specialisms and in line with the School and University, including its social mission and public engagement
- Programmes which are coherent and research-led, and which also engage with practice
- An ethic of care towards students
- A systematic approach to quality assurance

Areas of improvement and recommendations

- (i) To continue to find ways to maximize autonomy for decision making within the wider institutional structure.
- (ii) To consider formalizing mechanisms to ensure that administrative staff have a voice in strategic direction and decisions in the Department.

Department's Response

The Department of Business and Public Administration greatly appreciates the positive assessment and constructive comments made by the EEC. The Department is in full agreement with the recommendation to continue to find ways to maximize autonomy within the wider institutional structure, and will continue to do so at the University level. We are also in full agreement with the suggestion to ensure that our administrative staff has a voice in strategic direction and decision making. Although this is informally practiced extensively, given the open



culture of our Department, we will work with University decision makers to ensure that formal institutional mechanisms in this direction are adopted within the framework of the Law.

2 Quality Assurance

Sub-areas

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

Findings

We were shown the quality procedures and discussed with staff and management on the way these are upheld. We found an excellent culture of quality in a good working atmosphere. As is also shown in the process of getting Aacsb accreditation this department has a high standard. We heard in our discussion with the support staff ample evidence of a broadly carried positive attitude of service for students and staff. The connection with society is taken very serious. The successful internship program give evidence for good combination of research, teaching and societal relevance such as one would expect from a engaged scholarship (Van de Ven, 2007) oriented research university. We have met in our discussions with staff and students a high level of objectified criteria for admittance in the PhD program, for the Bsc program this is done via state exams. It appeared that the students on average score high on these exams, so the quality of input of student population is high. The facilities and technology available is of high standard and all relative new. The adaptation to teaching online was administered in a very good way, as reported by staff and students. Using mentoring and more elaborate welfare and (mental) health services are available and well put to use in the pandemicperiod.

Strengths

The systematic approach of the management enables the well structured approach to systematic quality management. We were pleasantly surprised by the processes of care for the students during this pandemic. Also for the part time students the well developed structure on the one hand as well as the flexibility build in was striking.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

We recommend to uphold the combination of clear structure and flexibility of process time in the PhD program. Furthermore, we applaud the efforts to get Erasmus programs and the like to let the students have international experience. If this is not possible for a longer period such as the pandemic period you might consider to join programs of internationalisation from home in virtual class room programs such as in the were developed in several Erasmus programs (e.g. www.Listoproject.eu)



Department's Response

We appreciate the positive comments of the EEC on the high standards and the excellent work culture of our Department that emphasizes quality, good working conditions and care of students and departmental members.

Given the realities of our Department, we agree with the recommendation to uphold the combination of clear structure and flexibility in the PhD program requirements. This combination is safe-guarded by the Committee of Graduate Programs, which monitors the progress of each doctoral student. Its recommendations are always forwarded for decision making to the Departmental Council.

We would like to thank the EEC for applauding the Department's efforts to further build students' international exposure and to be involved in the Erasmus programs. We are hoping that current pandemic measures will not last long, but we have already begun considering the possible involvement of students in virtual classroom programs, such as those mentioned, including those offered by YUFE.



3 Administration

Findings

From students as well as from staff we got a clear picture of that the governance system is clear and used in a way which is compliant to open academic standards. We are as a committee pleased to see how procedures are clear without coming across as bureaucratic inside the department. We did signal some perhaps overly bureaucratic tendencies in how the school and university is managed by the state. Some more autonomy on budget, and rewards for the performance could further improve the situation of the department

Strengths

The governance system is very clear. All layers of staff & students are finding there way to express opinions. Decision making follows procedures in a transparent way.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Above already mentioned is our appreciation of the management of the department and the clear governance structure, but it is hold on a relative short lease by the state. To allow the public university to prosper further in probably enhancing competition for the higher grade students and acquiring new very good staff, the reward system and budget for the department and higher autonomy to adapt to new circumstances seems to be necessary

Department's Response

Again, we are grateful to the EEC for the positive comments. We are in full agreement with the recommendations for greater autonomy, which need to be considered seriously at a higher level (university and state levels).



4 Learning and Teaching

Sub-areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

Findings

The Faculty has an ambitious plan for the department which is to turn it into a point of excellence in the area of studies in business and public administration.

Strengths

There is experienced and professional teaching staff that can create interesting synergies and results in the academic process which may prove beneficial for the students.

The faculty aims very high in terms of academic excellence.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Although the workload of staff was reported to be not too high, we see a hard working culture in the group and thus the Accreditation Committee would encourage the assignment of more members of teaching staff.

Department's Response

We appreciate and concur with the assessment of the EEC regarding the high levels of academic excellence of our faculty but also with the need to assign more members of teaching staff.



5 Teaching Staff

Findings

In overall, the current teaching staff is well-qualified and has adequate experience in the business world. This enables them to offer teaching, which is balanced between theory and practice which is very important for the students. Apart from the 13 members of teaching staff, there are visiting professors and scientific specialists.

Strengths

- Interesting mix of teaching staff from academia and business.
- Enthusiastic about teaching.
- Seem to care for the need of students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Although the workload of staff was reported to be not too high, we see a hard working culture in the group and thus the Accreditation Committee would encourage the assignment of more members of teaching staff.

Department's Response

Again, we would like to thank the EEC for the positive comments. We are in full agreement with the EEC's assessment of our staffing needs and the recommendation to assign more faculty to our Department.



6 Research

Findings

The EEC finds that the department has a very good level in terms of research since most of the teaching staff publishes 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 libraries, databases and equipment are satisfactory and helpful to the staff that wishes to engage in research.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Research is the main objective of the University of Cyprus and goals regarding research are included in the strategic planning of the department. We found no substantive problems but we encourage the department to keep on focusing on the quality and not in the quantity of the research work produced. The publication record of a future candidate faculty member must be heavily weighted in the final decision for employment. The university must provide grants -as much as this is possible- to academic staff to participate in quality international conferences. Nonetheless, it is important that the potential and willingness for research is present.

Department's Response

As our Department places heavy emphasis on research, the positive comments and evaluation of the EEC on this dimension are important and valuable. The Department has always emphasized the quality (not the quantity) of the research produced, both for new hires and for promotions. We will most certainly continue to place the same emphasis, as we believe this to be the cornerstone of establishing a high quality research culture.



7 Resources

Findings

We did not have sight of detailed financial figures; rather we were briefed on student and staff numbers, the strategy of the Department, School and University and developments in provision. We saw evidence of a well run Department with excellent professional support staff and clear structures and processes governing the stewardship of resources. Alongside evidence of excellent support from the University, we heard some examples which suggested constraints on local autonomy over resources. We recognize that this is far from a unique tension for schools and departments seeking to flourish and at the same time contribute to wider institutional strategies.

Strengths

Professional and experienced administrative staff

Excellent faculty leadership, benefiting from responsible office holders and collegiality
A well developed departmental identity to guide the allocation of resources and activities

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Our comments here are closely aligned with our comments provided in Section 1 of this Report. We see excellent features of the Department and a strong fit with the wider goals of the School and University. It is also clear that the work of the Department, and the experience of students, benefits from the infrastructure of the University, including its investments in the world class library, the student health services, sports, as well as the University's reputation, and so on. We know too from our own institutions that resources and relationships with the center are often tricky issues. We see a Department with an excellent track record and high ambitions, in line with the University's aspirations and strategy, and therefore a strong case for appropriate enhancements to financial support and local autonomy.

Department's Response

We greatly appreciate the positive assessment from the EEC about the excellent track record and high aspirations of our Department. More importantly, we fully agree with the assessment of the EEC that our Department makes a "...strong case for appropriate enhancements to financial support and local autonomy" and hope that these recommendations are considered by all relevant authorities at the university and state levels.



B. Conclusions and final remarks

We appreciate the strengths of this department as described above. Although relatively small, the department is capable in delivering good programs and has an effective governance system. They show initiatives to keep at the level of international standards in research as well as in teaching and in creating societal value. Also the initiative to apply for AACSB accreditation is a proof of this overall strategy. Our concerns as expressed above are mainly with the amount of bureaucracy and lack of financial autonomy, and we advise the state to organize this more in line with the proven capabilities of the department.

Department's Response

We are most grateful to the EEC for the time and energy invested in order to fully understand all aspects of the academic work produced by the Department of Business and Public Administration. In a most detailed and constructive manner, the EEC was able to identify and highlight our strengths and make valuable recommendations on how we can further achieve departmental goals, always in line with the Department's strategy. We are grateful for the positive assessment of the EEC, which reflects the high quality standards of the Department in all aspects of research, teaching and service and its commitment to academic excellence.



C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Andreas Soteriou	Chair, Department of Business and Public Administration	
Alexia Panayiotou	Vice Chair, Department of Business and Public Administration	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	
FullName	Position	

Date: 7/1/2021