

Doc. 300.3.2

Higher Education Institution's Response (Departmental)

Date: 02/03/2021

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Central Lancashire (Cyprus)
- **Town:** Larnaca
- **School/Faculty:** N/A
- **Department:** School of Business and Management
- **Programme(s) of study under evaluation**
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)

Programme 1

In Greek:

Πτυχίο στη Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων (Hons)

In English:

Business Administration (Hons) (4years/240ECTS, Bachelor)

Programme 2

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακό στη Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων

In English:

Business Administration (1year/90ECTS, MBA)

Programme 3

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακό στη Διαχείριση Φιλοξενίας, Τουρισμού και Εκδηλώσεων

In English:

Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management (1 year/90 ECTS, Master or 1.5 years/120 ECTS)

- **Department's Status:** Currently Operating

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.*

We would like to thank the External Evaluation Committee (thereafter Committee) for a thorough and constructive evaluation event as well as for the robust and targeted feedback on the School and the three programmes evaluated thereto, namely BA (Hons) Business Administration, MBA and MA with Internship in International Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management. The School has taken the feedback provided into due consideration and has taken all necessary actions to respond to that feedback in an endeavour to develop its three programmes and overall strategic position at University level and beyond, in the region. In the following pages, we delineate, in good faith, how we have taken the Committee’s feedback into consideration. In particular, all three programme structures were revised to incorporate the Committee’s recommendations for each programme of study, while we also articulate herewith how we support and pursue development of the research culture at the School and the staff’s research development therein. Finally, we also offer our response on how we target good quality students and the mechanisms we use to improve on this front.

1. Department's academic profile and orientation

Sub-areas

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

EEC REPORT

Quality indicators/criteria

1.1. Mission and strategic planning

Strategic planning is well developed. The committee was satisfied to hear about the strategic planning process and got the impression that stakeholders and staff are well tuned into this process. Main questions were raised about the academic profile in relation to the strategy especially with regards to the match of the research profile in relation to main teaching strategies. How periodical the strategy is being renewed we did not observe, we would recommend having a rolling system in a determined certain timeline.

The programs are coherent in relation to each other, although the committee has questions about some choices of the mix and the amount of compulsory and elective courses. The bachelor BA seems to have relative many electives already in the 1st year, while the MBA's have very few electives. 2n.r.

Per program we will make suggestions, but overall, we would suggest developing the research profile more to the actual master line of teaching and to change the compulsory-elective mix such that it is more sure that bachelor students get all basic BA functions. We would like the member of staff to consider the allocation of the weight given to the internship. Also, we think that at least 60 credits should be given to the courses on campus.

1.2 Connectivity with society

Not Applicable

1.3 Development processes

As to the hiring of staff, the committee noticed that the procedures and measures lead to a vast majority of junior staff with a high need for developmental processes. Some of the teaching staff have not yet very well-developed publication portfolios. The committee would like to suggest 1. Enrolling a leading scholar which will be able to guide young member of staff. 2. Enrol members of staff who during their PhD process already published papers in prestigious academic journals 3. Enrol scholars from prestigious highly ranked universities/departments. For selection of students we did not observe a systematic process to select excellent students for example in scholarship systems, if that is correct, we would recommend setting up such a system.

The proportion is about 70 Cypriot to 30 Internationals from countries such as Ukraine, Russia, Middle Eastern countries (e.g. Syria, Lebanon and Israel) and some from African countries).

Findings

Taking into consideration that this university and departments is a start-up organization moving from the first development into the stabilization phase and possible effects of the Covid 19, the committee was in general satisfied. Especially when it comes to organization, coordination and

strategy development procedures as written. One of the elements the committee is more critical about is the general research culture and output. This may be the result of hiring junior staff members with very limited publication record. Additionally, the senior members of staff are very tolerant and accepting low-medium level of publications.

Strengths

The processes, procedures and planning is very well organized. The information on this is rich and precise.

The connection to stakeholders seems well organized and developed well for such young institute. Students seem to be pleased to work in the “English” language culture.

Students seem to appreciate the way the members of staff treat them.

Administrative staff enjoys working in the organization.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

Improve the departments research orientation and quality of the publications of the staff.

The committee advises to work more into research programs, which fit well to the chosen specialisations. Furthermore, there seems to be room for stronger leadership and coaching for the majority of junior staff. We would consider nominating a member of staff as a Reader (Research coordinator) to guide young members of staff as well as establishing a norm as to how many publications per year members of staff should aim at. Members of staff who publish in first tier journal should be rewarded for their achievement.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

We would like to thank the Committee for their valuable feedback in respect of the above criteria. With regards to the strategic plan, the University has a 5-year strategic plan setting out the University’s priorities that is being updated in a rolling manner.

With regards to the Committee’s comments on the University approach of curriculum design relative to compulsory-electives mix, we would like to emphasise to the Committee that our University curriculum development and design policy is in line with our commitment to safeguard the quality of our programmes under the European Standards and Guidelines in line with CY QAA rules and regulations and the provisions of the UK QAA to which UCLan UK complies as per our University modus operandi, i.e. the double-awarded degree offering.

As explained in a much more detailed fashion in each programme’s relevant response file (but please see also the concluding response here), the balance between the compulsory and optional modules has been revised, taking into consideration the Committee’s recommendations, thereby enriching the programmes in question (i.e. BA (Hons) Business Administration, MBA, MA in Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management).

As for faculty recruitment, we apply rigorous academic staff selection criteria and research is a key parameter. All full-time employed academics are PhD holders and research active. At the School of Business and Management at UCLan Cyprus, we implement research-informed teaching and the teaching allocation of our Faculty members is aimed towards this.

Furthermore, in response to the Committee’s remarks on the research front, we offer below a set of actions and schemes/mechanisms that are in place to support a stronger research environment.

- All our full-time employed academics are research-active and increasingly publish in high quality, peer-reviewed outlets, targeting 3 and 4* ABS journals. The University and the

School apply a Research, Innovation and Enterprise Mentoring Team (RIEMT) scheme, where senior academic members of staff join with junior staff offering their advice and support to help them develop their research portfolio. Mentors have meetings at least twice a year with their mentees. Mentors also have a meeting with the RIEMT coordinator and discuss issues that come up from meetings with mentees. The RIEMT coordinator then bringsthose issues to the RIEMT and/or the Senior Academic Management Team for further discussion.

- In addition, the RIEMT coordinator asks all RIEMT members at the beginning of the year to provide action steps on how the RIEMT could support their professional development. In the past, we have organized several events, with HR, such as a workshop on "Motherhood in Academia" (for supporting work-family balance among mothers-academics, by inviting a professional psychologist) and a workshop on grant writing by inviting a member from Research and Innovation Organization.
- Finally, a platform has also been used (Yammer) for sharing information among staff members, yearlong, on professional development (e.g. interesting articles on productivity in academia), events and research-related matters.

As part of the RIEMT scheme, we engage our leading senior scholars to offer guidance and support to our junior members of academic staff. As part of this process, the School benefits from the research support and engagement in joint research of senior faculty at UCLan UK and at UCLan Cyprus. Professor Panikkos Poutziouris (Entrepreneurship), Visiting Professor Chris Pyke (Accounting), Professor Hussein Abdou (Director of Research at UCLan with Finance expertise), Professor Richard Sharpley (Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management), Associate Professor Loukas Glyptis (Strategic Management & Accounting), Assistant Professor Christos Anagnostopoulos (Business Management in Sports), Assistant Professor Olga Kvasova (Marketing Management) are some of the faculty that are contributing to RIEMT support offered to our junior members of faculty. Furthermore, Professor Hussein Abdou, as Director of Research at UCLan, has matched developing academic members of staff at UCLan Cyprus with research centres at UCLan UK (e.g. Research Centre for Management and Enterprise) so as to facilitate the pursuit of joint research bids and publications.

For early career researchers appointed to the University, we make sure that those who have published in prestigious journals before receiving a PhD, are given priority in the selection process. However, we appreciate that the Committee will also concur that it is not always possible to recruit academics who have published in prestigious journals over the course of their PhD studies.

In light of Research Evaluation Framework and based on coordinated effort with UCLan UK, we have been matching faculty members across the two Universities, so as to enhance the return from joint research, which has translated into co-authored publications in highly ranked journals.

Below, we offer a selective list of highly-ranked publications of academic staff involved in the School and/or the three programmes of study:

- Christou, P. & Simillidou, A. (2020). "Tourists' perceptions on the use of anthropomorphic robots in tourism and hospitality", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*.

- Christou, P. & Simillidou, A. (2020). Tourist experience: The catalyst role of tourism in comforting melancholy, or not, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 42, 210-221.
- Farmaki, A., Antoniou, K. and Christou, P. (2019). "Visiting the 'enemy': Visitation in politically unstable destinations", *Tourism Review*, 74(3), 293-309.
- Farmaki, A., and Antoniou, K. (2017). "Politicising dark tourism sites: Evidence from Cyprus. *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes* 9(2), 175–186.
- Glyptis, L., Hadjielias, E., Christofi, M., Vrontis D., Kvasova O. (forthcoming). Dynamic familiness capabilities and family business growth: A longitudinal perspective framed within management accounting. *Journal of Business Research*
- Glyptis, L.G., Christofi, M., Vrontis D., Giudice, M. D., Dimitriou S., Michael, P. (2020). E-Government Implementation Challenges in Small Countries: The Project Manager's Perspective. *Technological Forecasting & Social Change*, 152, pp. 1-11, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2019.119880>
- Coad, A.F. and Glyptis, L.G. (2014). Structuration: a position-practice perspective and an illustrative study. *Critical Perspectives on Accounting*, 25, pp. 142-161, <https://doi:10.1016/j.cpa.2012.10.002>
- Kakoudakis, K. I. (2020). 'Counterbalancing the effects of unemployment through social tourism.' In S. McCabe, and A. Diekmann (Eds.) *Handbook of Social Tourism*. (pp. 195-208). Cheltenham: Elgar Publishers.
- Kakoudakis, K. I., and McCabe, S. (2019). Social tourism as a modest, yet sustainable, development strategy: Policy recommendations for Greece. In Diekmann, A, McCabe, S., and C. C. Ferreira (Eds.) *Social Tourism at the Crossroads*, 1st Ed. (pp. 8-22). Abingdon: Routledge.
- Kakoudakis, K. I., McCabe, S. and Story, V. (2017). 'Social tourism and self-efficacy: Exploring links between tourism participation, job-seeking and unemployment.' *Annals of Tourism Research*, 65 (July), 108-121.
- Simillidou, A., Christofi M., Glyptis L., Papatheodorou A. & Vrontis D. (2020). Engaging in emotional labour when facing customer mistreatment in hospitality, *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 45, 429-443.

With regards to the Committee's comment about the selection of students and the offer of scholarship schemes, we would like to inform the Committee that the School of Business and Management, in line with the University's strategy, is constantly seeking to recruit top performing students, while also encouraging high academic student performance, following admission. A Scholarship Policy is in place to benefit our students. The following scholarships are offered by the University:

(1a) Merit-based scholarships to new Bachelor's students upon the below results on their Secondary Education Leaving Certificates/ International Baccalaureate:

A. > 50% scholarship on the original fee

- Cyprus: 19/20 or 95%
- Russia: 4.95/5.0
- Ukraine: 4.95/5.0 or 11.8/12
- Lebanon: 98% or 3.9/4.0

- Jordan: 98% or 3.9/4.0
- South Africa Merit-based scholarships: National Senior Certificate 88%
- EU: A' levels 140 tariff points (new tariff system) (in course related subjects) / IB Diploma 35/45

B. > 40% scholarship on the original fee

- Cyprus: 18.5-18.99/20 or 92.5%-94.9%
- Russia: 4.8/5.0
- Ukraine: 4.85/5.0 or 11.6/12
- Lebanon: 95% or 3.7/4.0
- Jordan: 95% or 3.7/4.0
- South Africa: National Senior Certificate 80%
- EU: A' levels 120 tariff points (new tariff system) in course related subjects / IB Diploma 30/45

(1b) Merit-based scholarships to new Master's students upon the below results on their undergraduate tertiary education:

A. > 50% scholarship on the original fee: Bachelor's degree 1st class with APM 85% and above

B. > 40% scholarship on the original fee: Bachelor's degree 1st class with APM 70-85%

C. > 30% scholarship to UCLan Cyprus alumni

(2) Athletic Scholarships: There are schemes that provide scholarships to students with recent athletic achievements (not less than 1 year).

(3) High Achievers: Students who are proven High Achievers throughout their studies are awarded with the High Achiever Award and a financial award of 500 or 1000 Euros. Every year the High Achievers Committee review the academic performance of the students. From the academic year 2019-20, top performing students are enlisted in the Dean's list and the Vice Chancellor's list and additionally receive an honorary certificate.

The University is also increasingly investing in international partnerships with stakeholders that can push a market international scholarship scheme so that we can attract students from emerging markets. All indicators suggest that during the post Brexit era, international students will face higher tuition fees and living expenses in the UK, and thus will consider UCLan Cyprus offering double awarded degrees, also from UCLan UK, at a significantly lower cost, to be a well worth choice of study. Targeted scholarships are now administered with stakeholders to recruit more quality students on our programmes of study.

2. Quality Assurance

Sub-areas

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

EEC REPORT

Quality indicators/criteria

2.1 System and quality assurance strategy

Not applicable

2.2 Quality assurance for the programs of study

It was not always clear to the committee that in all programs adequate academic support is given to the students. Especially in the large internship parts if the program this was not very clear. Dissertations should be examined/supervised only by members of staff who hold a PhD.

Findings

The quality assurance as a system is very well organized and shows the connection to the UK base of the partner UCLAN-UK.

Strengths

Clear procedures well described and in general well embedded in the culture of the institution.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The quality management of research-based supervision / coaching / support led to questions by the committee about the appropriateness of the academic character of some of the modules and of the fit between research specialisations of staff and the topics to supervise.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

We would like to inform the Committee that the University and the School have in place a detailed procedure of how the learning outcomes of the placement/internship modules should be achieved and students are well-aware of those procedures through their work placement student handbook. Throughout the work placement, the student will be supervised by an Industrial Supervisor (usually the line manager) who is in constant contact with the University through the Placements Manager (usually the module leader, academics from the programme team), and the allocated visiting tutors. At the beginning of the academic period of placement, the Placement Manager coordinates with the Industrial Supervisors on the placement learning outcomes and the assessment methods used in order to grade the students' performance. Depending on the nature of placements chosen for achievement of this module, the Placement Manager allocates visiting tutors, among the academic colleagues in the team, who may support with visiting the students at their placements and assessing their behaviour and performance at the respective workplace. A visiting schedule is then put in place in coordination with the Industrial Supervisors and the students for a more efficient planning of the module's activities. On the visit, the placement tutor will discuss on the type of work, how their placement experience is progressing, etc. The placement tutors assess

the logbook maintained and updated by the student and compare it with what the student is expected to do according to the placement plan. The feedback from the visiting tutor will also contribute towards the Placement grade. The Industrial Supervisor also provides his/her comments and feedback with regards to the student's performance during the placement period and this feedback is taken into consideration during the Placement grade.

In terms of dissertation supervision, we allocate students' dissertation projects to our research-active faculty on the basis of their respective workload and students' selected topic of investigation. Depending on the nature of a given project, we may involve academic members of staff with a practitioner background to support the project supervision, as we believe they add value to the supervisory process due to their industry expertise and network. Nevertheless, we confirm here that we adhere to the recommendation by the Committee and have now proceeded with requiring that all dissertations are supervised by PhD holders.

Furthermore, as the School grows in terms of portfolio of programmes of study and students, we recruit faculty that allows the alignment of PhD and research specialisation with the focus of modules. There are cases where certain modules cover an amalgam of functional topics and more than one faculty is involved in the delivery, which is a by students as they are exposed to different perspectives and approaches, covering nuance of functional expertise.

The Research, Innovation and Enterprise Mentoring scheme introduced at UCLan Cyprus, from its early days of operation, has been described in the previous section and will be further enhanced as per the Committee's recommendation.

3. Administration

EEC REPORT

Quality indicators/criteria

Not applicable

Findings

Interviews with administration employees and staff indicate that the operations of the department work in general well.

Strengths

The administrative staff of IT and library seem to be excellent handling the growing online processes. Students were very satisfied with the learning experience.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

No specific elements to improve based on these observations.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

We are glad to hear that the Committee has recognised that, from the administrative point of view, operational matters and overall processes work sufficiently. The School constantly strives to work collaboratively with all administrative units that contribute towards student recruitment, engagement, progression, graduation and further professional enhancement, as well as the promotion of the School's overall activities (e.g., students' and faculty's achievements).

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study.

4.2 Organisation of teaching

EEC REPORT

Quality indicators/criteria

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

Not applicable

4.2 Organisation of teaching

Not applicable

Findings

The overall quality assurance, planning and assessment of the program are in line with expectations of the committee. Students we met expressed also high level of satisfaction. They report that it is more convenient for them to study in their own country, instead of going to Gr. Britain.

Strengths

The department is trying to do its best to offer the highest possible level of education to the students.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The combination of theory and practice could still be enhanced, based on a better connection to high level research of the staff, which could be organized more in line with specializations in programs. The Committee considers that academics teach a lot and efforts should take in the future in order to allow them for more research time.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

The School follows the University's strategy, which commits to providing a superb teaching and learning experience to its students. A key pillar of that strategy is research-informed teaching and the assignment of teaching duties to academic staff in line with their area of disciplinary and research expertise. As such, academic staff teaching in the School's programmes is assigned to modules that relate to their research interests and disciplinary expertise. However, we would like to welcome the Committee's comment about organising our programmes more in terms of better connecting their specializations (e.g. in BA (Hons) Business Administration, MA Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management, MBA) with the research interests, output and disciplinary background of our academic staff. To this end, we have introduced specialization modules in all programmes listed above, which reflect the research interests and output of our academic staff. For example, our MBA comprises specialisation (elective) modules in Marketing (MK4025), Entrepreneurship (MD4044), Coaching skills (MD4061) and Data analytics (CO4761), which are directly related to specific academic members of staff with relevant research expertise at the School and the University (e.g. Dr Sonia Andreou and Dr Olga Kvasova for MK4025, Professor Panikkos Poutziouris for MD4044, Dr Maria Zeniou for MD4061 and Dr Ioanna Stylianou and Dr Panayiotis Andreou for CO4761).

In addition, enhancement of theory and practice has also been pursued through revising the programme structures of all three programmes that were evaluated by the Committee. For example, when it comes to the MBA, we introduced 5 elective modules covering topics in marketing, entrepreneurship, project management, coaching and data analytics that enhance the theoretical rigour of the programme with 4 compulsory modules in leadership and process management, research skills, strategic management and financial management. At the same time, students get an excellent opportunity to acquire practical experience in business and management via the elective modules in management consulting (MD4063 - SEM 2) and professional placement (MD4054 - Year 2) of the programme. In respect to the MA Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management (MA HTEM), we have revised the programme structure so that it is now more theoretically robust and in line with the Committee's recommendations, while also catering for student opportunity for practical experience. The revised MA in HTEM now comprises 5 compulsory modules (including a dissertation module) and 6 electives over Semesters 1 and 2. All modules are theoretical in nature covering topics in tourism, hospitality and event management as well as strategic management, financial management, marketing and sustainability. This robust theoretical structure is complemented with an elective work placement module at Year 2 (TL4038 - SEM 1). As far as BA (Hons) Business Administration is concerned, we have enriched the compulsory theoretical basis of modules at years 1 and 2 of the programme, while we have also enriched the elective modules of years 3 and 4 in line with the Committee's recommendations. At the same time, the programme comprises remarkable opportunities for practical experience and

student preparation for the real business world. As such, at year 3, we offer the elective module MD2005 'Work-based Learning Project'. There is also an optional sandwich year between year 3 and 4 of the programme where students can opt to proceed with either an annual work placement or international and accrue credits worth of 60 ECTS. Also, at year 4, we offer a compulsory module in 'Personal and Professional Development for Business' (BU3033 – Year-long), as well as an elective work placement module titled 'Enterprise Project' (MD3000 – Year-long).

When it comes to support offered to members of academic staff to develop their research and teaching portfolio, we would like to note that the allocation of teaching load is in line with CYQAA regulations and follows the University workload model policy varying with the academic rank, research portfolio, involvement in the University committees and, of course, responsibilities that come with course leadership.

During the yearly appraisal process, the Head of School and each member of the academic staff work together to balance the workload to 40:40:20 benchmark so that faculty can spend 40% of the workload on teaching, 40% on research activities and remaining 20% in administrative tasks and university committees.

More specifically, academic staff display expert knowledge of, and enthusiasm for, their discipline. Specifically:

- Teaching and learning is research-informed as academic staff is encouraged and enabled to engage with research and use state-of-art outputs (including their own) to enlighten their teaching.
- Academic staff are continuously informed of current and best practices in teaching and learning. They engage with a rigorous Teaching Toolkit programme, which enables them to reflect on their practice and stay up-to-date with best practices in teaching and learning. The use of research in feeding into teaching and facilitating the learning of students is an indispensable part of the Teaching Toolkit curriculum. Through the Teaching Toolkit, academic staff become Associate Fellows, and then Fellows of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA/FHEA).
- Peer-observations are part of the University's culture, carried on as a mechanism for reflection and peer-improvement for academic staff observing and observed.
- Staff Induction and mentoring scheme support newly appointed staff. This is geared towards helping them get up to speed with the University procedures and standards, including teaching and learning aspects.
- Teaching workload is in line with the CY QAA regulations, which results in a high staff-to-student ratio - a factor that helps improve teaching and learning quality as well as our students' experience and support.

UCLan Cyprus and the School of Business and Management encourage its Faculty to enhance their academic and professional development. Income Generating Activity (IGA) and Consultancy policies are in place to enable staff to buy-out teaching time or otherwise invest it in their professional development.

Course leaders and deputy course leaders are academic staff who plan, design, manage, deliver, reflect upon and improve their teaching and curricula with the aim of enhancing student learning. They guide and mentor module leaders to further respect and encourage contributions and participation by all students, fostering a supportive learning environment

- Senior Fellows/Visiting Professors from UCLan UK and other academic institutions, as well as industry experts enrich our teaching and learning strategy, adding an expert perspective and international outlook to our programmes.

- Yearly appraisals ensure academic staff are sufficiently supported in their roles, and that they are enabled to deliver across teaching and research in an exceptional and supportive environment.

In particular, the School has a staff research development budget which can be used for conferences, training, academic visits for collaborations, invited research scholars to deliver seminars and training workshops, to enrich resource base with investment in facilities and equipment, journal and data subscriptions (Osiris, FAME, etc.) and software (Matlab, Minitab, etc.) to support research. The staff development budget is also used to support academic staff pursue research that can inform the teaching, as well as the publication output in highly ranked journals. We continuously encourage our academic staff to continue striving to publish at highly ranked journals. The School also benefits from Erasmus + University grant to support Faculty members to participate in teaching and training mobilities. The University adherence to Erasmus + charter allows also the mobility of students and staff from our partners to UCLan Cyprus enriching students' experience, with multicultural cohorts and the benefit of being taught by the prestigious visiting academics, as well as the establishment of collaboration between academics with similar research interests.

To increase the quality of the research output, the staff development plan is in operation, offering resources and support as follows:

(1) Promote peer mentoring where senior faculty with an excellent publication record, guide and engage emerging scholars by focusing on research and publishing strategies, so that more faculty can reach highly-ranked academic journals and succeed in research bidding.

(2) Orchestrate staff development seminars including guest speakers focusing on strategies involved in publishing in highly-ranked academic journals (Professor Hussein Abdou, Dr Mitch Larson, Dr Michalis Christofi).

(3) Training (software training and new econometric techniques and models) from senior academics focusing on developing certain quantitative skills, which are necessary in top accounting, economics and finance journals. For example, 'non parametric techniques' presented by Dr Ioanna Stylianou, Assistant Professor in Statistics and Economics.

(4) Research workshop and research seminar series for the dissemination of research best practice, raising research interests' awareness and the collection of feedback.

(5) Associate Lecturers are assigned to [co] deliver modules. Some are practitioners with wealth of industry experience and networks. Some other associate Lecturers are pursuing research connected to their assigned teaching topics as part of their PhD. They include ICAEW Chartered Accountants, Human Resource Development Authority approved trainers or other professionally certified staff.

(6) Focusing on returning UCLan Cyprus faculty in the UK Research Evaluation Framework. As such, the research output of UCLan Cyprus faculty is uploaded on CLoK, which is an online repository for the digital intellectual assets of the University of Central Lancashire and evaluated through the Annual Research Assessment (ARA) exercise, which is an internal evaluation process applied at UCLan to peer review the rigour of work published and determine its merit for faculty's inclusion in the REF.

5. Teaching Staff

EEC REPORT

Quality indicators/criteria

Not applicable

Findings

The current teaching staff is quite well qualified and most of the faculty members have 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.

Based on the documents that were submitted 17 full time faculty members are assigned at the School of Economics & Business and 24 associate lecturers, that is special teaching staff. All full-time faculty members are PhD holders.

Strengths

Students are highly satisfied from the quality of learning and teaching. Academics are always available to the students and help them in solving questions.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The School of Economics & Business offers many academic graduate and postgraduate programs. The permanent staff is not enough to run all these programs. That means, that there are postgraduate programs, such as MA Internship in International Tourism, Hospitality and Event Management, that run mainly by academics that have different scientific field (3 out of 5). The Committee encourages the University to create a strong team of permanent academics in short or midterm and allocate them into courses with their specific scientific field.

Due to the above, the committee finds that the teaching load is relatively heavy, and the faculty members do not have enough time to develop their research in top listed journals.

Finally, the committee would encourage a stronger collaboration and students' exchange with Preston campus and other universities for the students to enhance their horizons.

Certain module outlines are out of date and they do not provide the students with the latest published textbook(s). The committee suggests that academics should improve annually their module outlines.

Academic members of staff should attend high quality conference focusing on the areas they teach research.

Due to the strong connection with the university in Preston, there is hesitation to offer new courses not taught on Preston. In addition, the courses are updated and relevant to the current situation in the business world.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

Firstly, we appreciate the Committee's positive remarks regarding the professionalism and engagement of our teaching staff. What is certain is that the School's policy is to be recruiting research-active teaching staff that are PhD holders, but with a demonstrable attitude towards a

student-friendly approach and with an exceptional mentor-oriented mindset throughout the duration of the programme for each of our students.

All this, of course, results from specific schemes and mechanisms that are already in place. More specifically, teaching staff are continuously informed of current and best practices in teaching and learning. They engage with a rigorous Teaching Toolkit programme which enables them to reflect on their practice and stay up-to-date with the best practices in teaching and learning. The use of research in feeding into teaching and facilitating the learning of students, is an indispensable part of the Teaching Toolkit curriculum. Through the Teaching Toolkit, academic staff become Associate Fellows, and then Fellows of the Higher Education Academy (AFHEA/FHEA). Furthermore, peer-observations are part of the School's culture, carried out as a mechanism for reflection and peer-improvement for academic staff observing and being observed. Another critical element that highly contributes to students' satisfaction against the School's teaching staff, concerns the staff induction and mentoring scheme that both support newly appointed staff. This is geared towards helping them get up to speed with the University procedures and standards, including teaching and learning aspects.

It is also important to mention that the teaching workload is in line with the CY QAA regulations, which results in a high staff-to-student ratio - a factor that helps improve teaching and learning quality as well as our students' experience and support.

After carefully looking at the module outlines, the School would like to confirm that its Programme Leaders and Module Leaders have undergone a rigorous review of module outlines and have updated them with the latest published textbooks as per the updated annex 2 provided with the respective answers of each programme of study.

Finally, we would also like to thank the Committee for encouraging further collaboration with the 'mother' University for students and faculty alike (Please refer to Section 5 for a view of the steps we have taken to embrace senior UCLan UK faculty to strengthen research collaboration). Indeed, the School of Business and Management at UCLan Cyprus has concluded a series of Erasmus+ Inter-Institutional Agreements, including UCLan UK, in order to facilitate and encourage academic staffs' and students' mobility in Europe, but also in non-European tertiary institutions. During the last two (2) academic years, there were 8 students who participated in exchange Programmes. The School is committed to further encourage student participation in Erasmus and is targeting to offer an exchange opportunity to 10 students for 2021-22, subject to COVID-19 conditions.

5. Research

EEC REPORT

Quality indicators/criteria

Below is an extensive reaction why two of the scores are three.

Findings

The committee is critical about the research culture, especially regarding the publication ambitions. There are a few good examples of high-level publications (ABS3/4), but the overall productivity could be substantially improved by establishing a more structural research culture in a research program approach.

Strengths

Some of the staff members published some interesting relatively high level of publications. In the discussion with the staff we also saw a good motivation to do research. The group is consisting out of several ambitious junior staff.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

We noticed a relatively small and often low level of publication behaviour, for example in non-reviewed books, and although such publications are good examples of dissemination, we feel focus should be more on higher level ABS3/4 type of journal publications or in reviewed books of reputed publishers (e.g. Edward Elgar). Also, the translation of research to teaching topics can be improved. For enhancing the research culture, we would recommend working together more towards a research program approach, with possibly some high publishing visiting professors or a Reader to support the research development of the junior staff. Possibly a stronger connection to professors of UCLan-UK might be possible, but we recommend also to look beyond this “family” resource to reach into the connections of higher ranked universities or programs. The policy to give ample space for junior staff to develop to higher positions in laudable, however, should not lead to a “closed clique” approach. Critical though constructive assessment of development is necessary to bring the department to a next level. Connecting the research process of staff more explicitly to student thesis work may have a positive effect on teaching and research. Developing a “engaged scholarship” approach for example following the proposals for this from Andrew Van de Ven (2007) might be helpful is reaching the ideal of engaged scholarship on a higher academic level. However, to get an improvement process really working, the 40-40-20 policy for research-teaching-other activities time allocation needs more realization. From the interviews we got a strong impression that it is actually more like 20-60-20 and this is really too small allocation of research time for the junior staff to develop more higher level of relevant publications. We picked up on a strong financial argumentation, and we would suggest looking more into additional budget possibilities, or more efficient organizing of activities. Becoming even more engaged with stakeholders may help in being very relevant for which probably also more budget is available. Also, young member of staff should attend international prestigious conferences. Giving monetary reward for those publishing in first tier journals should be considered. Well known international scholars should be invited to work with members of staff to push the research level forward.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

The critical, yet valid, remarks on the School’s research front are appreciated. While we strongly acknowledge the significance of a solid research culture that results in highly impacted research outputs, it is hard, at the same time, to reap the benefits thereof in the relatively short history of the institution in Cyprus as a whole. Against these two facts/realisations, we already have in place specific schemes that support the faculty’s development on the research front, while we intend to introduce more that, we envisage, will boost research activities and will contribute towards high impact outputs in prestigious outlets of each faculty’s respective field(s) of study.

More specifically, we would like to draw the Committee’s attention to the following schemes/structures:

- The School encourages its faculty to enhance their academic and professional development. Income Generating Activity (IGA) and Consultancy policies are in place to enable staff who have been successful in generating income to manage it by buying-out teaching time or otherwise investing it in their research activities and professional development.

- The School has a staff research development budget which can be used for conferences, training, academic visits for collaborations, invited research scholars to deliver seminars and training workshops, to enrich resource base with investment in facilities and equipment, journal and data subscriptions (Osiris, FAME, etc.) and software (Matlab, Minitab, etc.) to support research. Furthermore, the staff development budget is used to support academic staff pursue research that can inform the teaching, as well as the publication output, in highly ranked journals. We continuously encourage our academic staff to continue striving to publish in highly ranked journals.
- The School also benefits from Erasmus+ University grant to support Faculty members to participate in teaching and training mobility. The University adherence to Erasmus+ charter also allows mobility of students and staff from our partners to UCLan Cyprus enriching students experience, with multicultural cohorts and benefit of teaching by the prestigious visiting academics, as well as the establishment of collaboration between academics with similar research interests.

To increase the quality of the research output, a staff development plan is in operation, offering resources and support as follows:

1. Promote peer mentoring where senior faculty, with an excellent publication record, guide and engage emerging scholars by focusing on research and publishing strategies so that more faculty can reach highly-ranked academic journals and succeed in research bidding.
2. Orchestrate staff development seminars including invited speakers focusing on strategies involved in publishing in highly-ranked academic journals (Professor Hussein Abdou, Dr Mitch Larson, Dr Michalis Christofi).
3. Training (software training and new econometric techniques and models) from senior academics focusing on developing certain quantitative skills, which are necessary in top accounting, economics and finance journals. For example, 'non parametric techniques' presented by Dr Ioanna Stylianou, Assistant Professor in Statistics and Economics.
4. Research workshop and research seminar series for the dissemination of research best practice, raising research interests' awareness and the collection of feedback.
5. Associate Lecturers are assigned to [co] deliver modules. These are practitioners with wealth of industry experience and networks. Associate Lecturers are pursuing research connected as they are doing PhD. They include ICAEW Chartered Accountants, Human Resource Development Authority approved trainers or other professionally certified staff.
6. Focusing on returning UCLan Cyprus faculty in the UK Research Evaluation Framework. As such, the research output of UCLan Cyprus faculty is uploaded on CLoK, which is an online repository for the digital intellectual assets of the University of Central Lancashire and evaluated through the Annual Research Assessment (ARA) exercise, which is an internal evaluation process applied at UCLan to peer review the rigour of work published and determine its merit for faculty's inclusion in the REF.

Beyond the aforementioned schemes, the Rectorate has been orchestrating the Business Case Research Competition (offering small seedcorn funding) to provide support to academic personnel's research activities. Increasingly, the School of Business and Management cooperates with the Centre for Entrepreneurial Development, Alliance and Research (CEDAR), and supports the development (through e.g. funding initiatives that help establish a research network or disseminate the research output) of research clusters such as Entrepreneurship, Finance, Governance and Accounting Research (FIGAR), as well as Sustainable Economic Development

(SED), which pioneer in generating value-relevant knowledge in all streams of entrepreneurship, in accounting, finance and governance through establishing synergies among stakeholders in industry, SMEs, and the services economy. At University level, the Research and Innovation Committee (RIC) is involved with the stipulation, review and approval of policies, practices and initiatives that concern the development of original research published in high impact outlets and which has an impact to the society.

Moreover, and with reference to the workload model, we operate a win-win research consultancy policy for income generating activities (IGA), which enables faculty to pursue further their research with income generated from research bidding (useful examples are externally funded projects such as SPRING, GReFORM, ARTISAN, INSPIRE, ACTION), and research consultancy projects (such as OECD-funded series of projects on Inclusive Entrepreneurship). Research-active faculty can use their research account to support new research activities, sponsor PhD studentships, or buy out teaching time so that they can deliver research projects, get published and support research clusters in additional bidding. For example, Dr Christos Anagnostopoulos, as part of his research development plan, has attended an executive course at Harvard Kennedy School on 'impact evaluations' that will result in a series of in-house research-based training for junior and more senior faculty alike.

We wish to also reiterate the added value that our close communication and collaboration between UCLan UK and UCLan Cyprus brings to the School's faculty on the research front. Staff development seminars are periodically organized at UCLan UK, where academics from both campuses are actively participating with the aims of disseminating research outcomes, attract feedback and identify common research projects to pursue and get published in highly ranked academic journals. Professor Andrey Kuznetsov, Professor Chris Pyke, Professor Hussein Abdou, and Dr Philip Kostov play a key role in supporting and enhancing the quality of research at both UCLan UK and UCLan Cyprus via the aforementioned platform, and also, through joint doctoral supervision. Relatedly, we have recruited research-inspired graduates of UCLan Cyprus who wish to pursue an academic career via obtaining a PhD at UCLan UK. To supervise doctoral students, resident faculty at the School links with peers at UCLan UK to support the supervision process and contribute, via also other spin off research synergies that arise out of this joint work, to help enlarge our research footprint and help our faculty increase their portfolio of research activities.

It is worth mentioning the following contributions from colleagues at UCLan UK or academics at UCLan Cyprus: i. Professor Hussein Abdou on "The use of non-parametric modelling techniques in Finance". ii. Dr Mitch Larson on "Doing qualitative research: Whence and Whither". iii. Dr Christos Anagnostopoulos on "The best way to get cited? An example of a systematic literature review". iv. Dr Isabella Karasamani research on internal social capital and investment efficiency. v. Dr Loukas Glyptis research on a) e-government implementation processes in small countries and b) inter-organisational cost management in shipping. vi. Dr Salomi Dimitriou on the applications of environmental accounting in manufacturing. In addition, UCLan Cyprus Academics are Research Fellows in UCLan UK research centres developing research collaborations including publications and joint research bids. The restrictions from Covid-19 for visits and collaborations have been discussed between the two campuses and a common strategy has been developed, focusing on organizing seminars through the Microsoft Teams platform. In particular, Dr Ioanna Stylianou, Research Degree Tutor for the School of Business and Management at UCLan Cyprus and Dr Mitch Larson Research Degree Tutor for UCLan UK, have agreed the organization of common seminars and training sessions starting from October 2020.

What's more, UCLan Cyprus has been implementing a multi-faceted scheme to enrich the pool of faculty as follows: Offering PhD scholarship to academic practitioners and other scholars, so that we can develop the next generation faculty in disciplines for which is proving difficult to recruit faculty locally. Moreover, a number of senior faculty has been appointed as visiting Senior Fellows to provide mentoring to early career research active academics, support academic delivery, supervision of projects and to support the research development of our local resident faculty.

Notable additions are:

- Professor [Chris Pyke - University of Central Lancashire \(uclan.ac.uk\)](http://uclan.ac.uk)
- Professor [Hussein A. Abdou - University of Central Lancashire \(uclan.ac.uk\)](http://uclan.ac.uk)
- [Dr Aliakbar Jafari | University of Strathclyde](http://uclan.ac.uk)
- [Prof Richard Sharpley - https://www.uclan.ac.uk/academics/professor-richard-sharpley](https://www.uclan.ac.uk/academics/professor-richard-sharpley)

6. Resources

EEC REPORT

Quality indicators/criteria

Not applicable

Findings

The committee got the impression that resources and its management in general is satisfactory. However, some of the use of the resources in the research area could get more attention. As mentioned above the committee advises to give more research time to the academic staff

Strengths

The resources are managed well. No particular strengths to be mentioned.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The committee would advise to make a stricter allocation of research resources in line with engaged highly publishable research. A reward system in time allocation for research maybe mildly developed more in the direction of stimulation of trying to get into review in the highest level of journals in the researchers' area. Getting into review and be rejected is a (painful but) good way to learn how to publish academically contributing research. Mildly, is added to not fall in the trap of overly unengaged scholarship "just for publication purposes". Also, to put some more resources in dedicated readers or regularly visiting scholars is a recommendation we would like to make.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

On the resources front too, the Committee's remarks revolve around the research environment and the outcomes that result from therein. Our extensive response regarding this matter on the previous section, clearly showcases the acknowledgement of the possible deficiencies, but crucially, highlight also the schemes and mechanisms for addressing them. More specifically: the mentoring to early career researchers through the University's Mentoring Scheme; the offering of research related trainings through the University's Research and Innovation Committee; the offering of access to European Office Cyprus; and the offering of access to UCLan UK research support mechanisms (e.g. Grants and Funding Unit, Ethics and Integrity Unit, Research Excellence Unit, access to UK Research Office (UKRO), access to Research Professional, access to CLoK (Open Access platform), access to UCLan Knowledge). As such, we envisage that all the aforementioned 'access points' will progressively address whatever deficiency seems to be currently the case and offer a much stronger faculty research environment that sooner than later reaps the benefits of these structures.

B. Conclusions and final remarks

EEC REPORT

The department can be seen as a successful start-up in its phase to become a scale up. In general, the committee was satisfied with the development in the department and sees overall a variant of an interesting business school. However, we also see several issues regarding teaching and research. The main issue in the teaching is in the eyes of the committee, that the mixture of compulsory and elective courses do not seem logical. In the bachelor we see very early possibilities for electives, where we assume that the student should still master the principles of business administration, preferably in the functional areas, and some specialties of the school, probably to do with on the one hand entrepreneurship & innovation and local cultural heritage on the other. There may be other focus points, but with the size of the current group it is difficult to maintain multiple foci, unless the academic collaborative network is expanded with well working relation with more senior colleagues in the fields of interest. The committee also think that the internship in its present form should be provided with 30 credits. Students should learn more than 4-5 courses at the master level.

For research we see a bit lagging publication practice and a probably on average too small time allocation of staff to research (it seems closer to one day a week than two). Relying on work in evening and weekend are not a viable research management practice. In high level research universities 40% of the time for research is considered minimum for well publishing professors.

UCLAN CYPRUS RESPONSE

We would like to thank the Committee for their rigorous and constructive comments and conclusions. As witnessed in our response dedicated for the BA (Hons) Business Administration programme, we have proceeded with modifying the distribution of compulsory and elective modules in BA (Hons) Business Administration. Years 1 and 2 comprise compulsory modules by majority, giving the students the opportunity to opt for 1-2 elective modules among a list of available modules that are primarily business oriented. Years 3 and 4 of the programme offer less compulsory modules to students (3 modules) and open up for them the opportunity to specialise in areas of business administration (e.g. marketing, human resources management, financial management, entrepreneurship, economics). For the MBA, we have enriched it with the introduction of a list of 6 elective modules in line with the Committee's recommendations. Students can opt for 2 out of 6 electives and shall also have to take 4 compulsory modules across semesters 1 and 2. Furthermore, students will have the opportunity to opt for a work placement module (internship, worth 30 ECTS as per Committee's recommendation) at year 2, if they wish to.

In respect of the Master's in Hospitality, Tourism and Event Management, we have also introduced new modules as compulsory and elective to address the Committee's recommendations for a more theoretically robust programme, comprising more taught modules that correspond to the disciplinary areas that the Committee suggested. We have also introduced a compulsory dissertation module (worth 30 ECTS) and we altered the status of the work placement module (internship, worth 30 ECTS as per Committee's recommendation) so that it features as elective at year 2.

On the research front, the current research-oriented schemes/mechanisms/ development actions plan facilitate a much more impactful research environment in which, our truly committed research-active Faculty, will manage to flourish.

Following the re-accreditation of the School of Business Management and its programmes, we shall proceed with our next phase of growth that will depend on the successful internationalisation of the recruitment strategy of the University to which the School greatly contributes.

The growth strategy of the School will build on the following pillars:

Recruitment of local and international students, via the expansion of programme portfolio, building partnerships with stakeholders and other universities regionally and internationally.

Retention of students: Enhance student learning experience through research and engagement, offering students more placement and internship opportunities, as well as exchange and mobility opportunities, so as to expand their employability and entrepreneurial routes.

Research initiatives: Faculty to continue to undertake high level research so as to enrich knowledge and teaching / training and inform debate on best practice and impact on policy at all levels; and to transfer knowledge to industry. Achieving publications in top tier journals is vital in the acceleration of the academic development and posture of our faculty and subsequently help to increase our success rate in research bidding for externally funded projects. This will boost our research reputation and strengthen the scope for cooperation across frontiers which can help towards the building of kudos as a research-led University.

Relationships and partnerships: The School is building long-lasting relationships that embed synergetic cooperation across teaching, training, research, engagement with stakeholders i.e. industry, professions, SMEs , entrepreneurs, alumni, which can help reach out to more markets and further fruitful partnerships.

Reputation-Ranking: With advancement in research, educational excellence and world-class partnerships, the School can pursue additional accreditation by professional institutions professional accreditation; and subsequently help towards the ranking of UCLan Cyprus in global university rankings.

For the successful implementation of the above multi-faced growth strategy UCLan Cyprus and the School of Business and Management are committed to strengthening its academic faculty in line with growth in programme portfolio and student numbers, while investing further in research, knowledge transfer and innovation and enterprise initiatives, locally and regionally.

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Dr Loukas Glyptis	Head of School of Business and Management Chair of the School of Business and Management Academic and Quality Assurance Committee	
Dr Christos Anagnostopoulos	Deputy Head of School of Business and Management Member of the School of Business and Management Academic and Quality Assurance Committee	
Dr Ioanna Stylianou	Deputy Head of School of Business and Management Quality Lead of the UCLan Cyprus Academic and Quality Assurance Committee	
Dr Anthi Avloniti	Lecturer in Business and Management Member of the School of Business and Management Academic and Quality Assurance Committee	

Date: 02/03/2021