



Doc. 300.2.3

Feedback report From EEC experts (Institutional Evaluation)

Date: *Date*

- **Higher Education Institution:**
Cosmos Open University
- **Town:** Nicosia
- **Institution Status:** New Institution

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. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Morris Altman	Member: Committee Chair & Dean and Chaired Professor	University of Dundee, School of Business
Rob Koper	Member: Professor & Dean of the Centre for Learning Sciences and Technologies	Open University, the Netherlands
Iuliana Toma-Dasu	Member: Professor & Head of the Medical Radiation Physics Division	Stockholm University
Timo Goeschl	Member: Professor & Director of the Research Center for Environmental Economics	Heidelberg University
Kyriacos Andreou	Student member	Open University of Cyprus
FullName	Position	University

BUILDING FACILITIES - STUDENT WELFARE SERVICES - INFRASTRUCTURE

General Answer by CU: We would like to emphasize to the members of the EEC, a technical issue regarding the documents uploaded online of the Institution's application as well as the document Annex 3 (which contains all the policies and procedures of the University so far, a document around 80 pages) where not searchable, a fact that made their work harder (as can be seen a lot of the answers to their comments are contained in these documents). Additionally, we also include Annex 3a, which contains even more information (around 150 pages). This document (Annex 3a) was developed and enriched during the period between the submittance of the Institutional application and the visit of the EEC. Moreover, in Annex 3a, we have also added new procedures and policies after the recommendations of EEC. The document Annex 3a is a dynamic one that will continuously be improved. We also provide below a summary table that contains all the grades of the EEC for a quick and general view. We have answered all the comments of the EEC corresponding to all sub-grades in tables from 3 and below (grading 1-5 for sections D1-D7) and to poor or unsatisfactory for sections C2-C3.

We would like to thank the EEC for their kind comments on identifying our willingness to strengthen some areas of our proposal so that the institution and the two proposed programs meet all the standards specified for accreditation! We would like to celebrate the comment of EEC: "... what became clear is a heartfelt enthusiasm for Cosmos and the two programs that we are evaluating"! We would also like to thank the EEC for their challenging task in those two days and that in all main categories C2 to D7 we received grades Partially Compliant and Compliant (no areas of non-Compliant), which gives us the strength and the satisfaction to proceed with positive energy in fulfilling the dream of this new University! We hope that with the answers that we provide here to CYQAA and the EEC, we managed to fulfill their expectations and high standards that guide us through their fruitful recommendations for the accreditation of our new-born University.

Moreover, we would like to emphasize that "The large host of individuals who demonstrated their strong support for this new proposed university", are Members of the Governing Board and of the International Advisory Board of the Institution, originating from several international research centers, scientific organizations, directors of medical centers, policy makers on environmental and economic reforms, established technocrats, business CEOs, and reputable academic people from both distance learning and conventional institutions of higher education, who committed themselves to the project of founding this new university.

Task	Evaluation	Comments
C.2 Student Welfare Services	2.1: Satisfactory 2.2: Poor	Answers in section C2
C.3 Infrastructure	C3: Satisfactory	Answers in section C3
D.1. Institution's Academic Profile	1.1: Partially Compliant 1.2: Partially Compliant 1.3: Compliant	Answers in section D1
D.2 Quality Assurance	2.1: Partially Compliant 2.2: Partially Compliant	Answers in section D2
D.3 Administration	D3: Compliant	Answers in section D3
D.4. Learning and Teaching	4.1: Compliant 4.2: Partially Compliant	Answers in section D4
D.5 Teaching Staff	D5: Partially Compliant	Answers in section D5
D.6. Research	D6: Compliant	Answers in section D6
D.7 Resources	D7: Compliant	Answers in section D7

1. Building facilities

1.1 Plans and licenses

We would like to thank the EEC for their satisfactory grades in all items of evaluation

1.2 Other facilities

We would like to thank the EEC for their satisfactory grades in all items of evaluation

EEC's comments on the external evaluation report (Building facilities)

No further comments

2. Student welfare services

Item	Evaluation	Reply
2.1 Special access for students with disabilities	Satisfactory	<p>Comment 1: Consider recruiting suitably qualified, specialist staff for supporting students with disabilities to ensure that key roles, such as the Head of Student Services, are not overburdened with responsibilities. Explicitly detail the process for identifying students with disabilities and financial support within the Policy for People with Disabilities</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Our University will seek to hire the best possible staff, with specialized knowledge and skills in this specific area, in order to facilitate the enrollment of students with disabilities and strengthen their performance in distance learning mode. At the same time, special training seminars will be held under the Human Resources sector to bring this staff up to date to the latest developments.</p> <p>The professor – counsellors, in the context of their duties, have the capability to identify students with disabilities or financial difficulties. During registration, the students will be able to state if they face any problems of this nature.</p>
2.3 Policy and statutes for academic student support	Poor	<p>Comment 1: Develop a Student Welfare Strategy (or equivalent) and ensure this is linked to timebound and measurable action plans Review and revise the Policy for Plagiarism to address all forms of academic misconduct, including contract cheating and forms of misconduct that are especially challenging in a distance learning modality</p>

	<p>Develop detailed operational procedures (either within the Policy for Plagiarism or elsewhere) that set out the institution’s practical approach to identify academic misconduct Reconsider whether all acts of plagiarism should be considered misconduct, irrespective of any mitigating factors Address repetition and duplication in policies and regulations (e.g. the Policy for Plagiarism and Internal Regulations) to minimise associated risks with version control and accessibility for students Ensure that Cosmos Open University has its own tailored and contextualised policies in place for all its provision, rather than referring to those of third-party institutions Review nomenclature relating to academic support roles Develop a student handbook that contains clear information on academic student support Ensure University expectations regarding baseline academic support are clearly detailed and supported by contractual arrangements with all faculty</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Please see Policy and statutes for academic student support are described in the submitted application for institutional accreditation (pages 16-21) and in the Charter of the Institution (pages 42-48 and 49-52).</p> <p>Also, please refer to ANNEX 3 on Rules, page 13: Quality data collection: measurement, analysis and improvement</p> <p>14. The Internal Evaluation Committee manages the qualitative data of the educational, research and other academic activities, as well as the data of the administrative operation of the University. Its purpose is the collection, analysis and use of qualitative data during the internal evaluation of processes and the decision-making processes for each level of operation of the University, in order to improve them.</p> <p>Measurement, data analysis, creation of indicators and their correlation with the objectives of quality assurance</p> <p>15. The Internal Evaluation Committee issues the annual quality indicators, utilizing the data from the information system or from other sources. The annual quality indicators are: Quality indicators for the academic and administrative activities of the University, the Faculties and the Study Programmes. Performance indicators for the academic and administrative operation of the University, linked to the quality objectives.</p> <p>Creating, maintaining, updating and evaluating websites, web applications and other media</p>
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16. The process determines the way of creating, maintaining, updating and evaluating the University's websites, web applications and other media, in order to achieve the requirement of direct, accessible, up-to-date, objective and clearly worded information for all interested parties.

Please, also refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 77:

(2) Our primary goal is on the one hand the creation of a dynamic e-learning environment and on the other hand the production of basic and applied research in cognitive fields that are directly related to the needs of society. The investment in modern learning technology in combination with the academic staff that has many years of teaching and research experience in foreign universities, are the guarantees for the achievement of the goals set by our University. Cosmos Open University has created a dynamic learning environment meeting your needs, and developed basic and applied research in cognitive fields that are directly related to the needs of society.

Library, page 78

4. (1) The ultimate goal of the Cosmos Open University Library is to provide informational support for the institution's academic programs, and therefore to provide knowledge and guidance to academic / research staff and students as regards to study issues and research for ongoing personal development and self-improvement.

Learning Support, page 79-84

7. (1) As a student you are guided by a Professor Counsellor, faculty member, throughout your studies. This member usually teaches a course of the programme you are attending.

Among other things, this Counsellor is your point of contact with the services of our University and you can discuss personal issues related to family, career, studies and other related social issues. The Professor Counsellor can provide advice on academic matters, including the selection and evaluation of modules / courses.

In case of problems of any kind, the Professor Counsellor should always be your first point of reference. The Professor Counsellor can and should bring you in contact with the wide range of special support services provided by our University as well as with the Student Union, as the case may be.

You, as students, can arrange at least three meetings with your Professor Counsellor during the academic year. However, do not hesitate to contact him/her in any case, if you feel that you need help or advice.

	<p>Our instructors/academic staff support you on many levels in order to improve your study skills, such as taking notes, writing essays, managing time and exam technique. Particular importance is attached to improving your IT and communication skills and abilities.</p> <p>In addition to lectures and seminars, you should take the time to study in person, study and research to do practical work or specific projects. For each course there is a bibliography for study, but at the same time, you must design and plan your own study.</p> <p>(a) The course is taught via distance learning and students will take part in: Interactive presentations of different approaches during lectures discussions case studies interactive learning material audio-visual learning material a virtual learning environment</p> <p>Cosmos University students have access to the Moodle Platform where important and useful information is posted. In this Platform, students are informed about the Curriculum they are following, the goals and learning outcomes of each course and other relevant information.</p> <p>In addition to the interactive approaches to teaching, tutors systematically employ various techniques aimed to facilitate understanding of the subject, by supporting the active involvement of students through the following: Brainstorming Group work Peer review Activities Discussions Real-life scenarios</p> <p>The objective is for students to develop: Critical thinking, that is, interpretation, analysis, evaluation and synthesis of the information provided and Creative thinking, that is, becomes capable of producing original and innovative ideas and solutions to problems.</p> <p>Students support: 9. (1) The Professor - Counsellor who teaches, guides, and supports students on their path to knowledge is a key functional member of our well-trained Academic Personnel.</p>
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	<p>(2) The Professor-Counsellor is a member of the Academic Personnel of our University or other educational organizations and performs educational and research work.</p> <p>Group Counselling Meetings 10. These meetings are held periodically between the Professor Counselor and students electronically, through the University's Distance Learning Platform and are part of the educational methodology.</p> <p>The Cosmos Open University Information Technology Centre 11. (1) The Cosmos Open University Information Centre provides services to you and develops and maintains programmes for a wide range of applications. The Information personnel provides training, information, advice and assistance to users via teams.</p> <p>(2) We, Cosmos University, provide: University-wide Information Technology services and the first point of contact for students is the Computing Services Help Desk, where students can find out about all aspects of the services of the University and obtain advice regarding a wide range of IT based activities Online Lecture Series which is a tool for delivering Lectures / Teleconferences through the Moodle LMS (Learning Management System) learning platform of the University. Participants are all students and its Academic / Administrative staff. The system offers the respective Lecturer / Presenter the opportunity to digitally course address distant audiences, creating a digital educational environment. The online tool Online Lecture Series, supported by the online platform (MOODLE) of the University, is addressed to the internal community of the University aiming at the dissemination of specialized and general knowledge and training of its members, strengthening the sense of community and cohesion.</p> <p>General Support: 12. (1) For any daily information, our Student Support Service staff is available for personal communication either by phone, Viber, WhatsUp, or email, from 8 p.m. until 6 p.m. on every working day.</p> <p>Students have access through the Learning Centre website to multimedia material, presentations, lecture leaflets, bibliography, further links, e-exercises, and discussions. At the same time, excellent services, libraries, and other learning resources are provided.</p> <p>In addition, the University offers you several services such as the Student Support Service, the Career Service, the Counselling</p>
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		<p>Service and the Student Support Service for students with health problems.</p> <p>The duties of the Academic Coordinator (Dean in distance learning universities that do not have departments), the Course Coordinator, and the Professor Counsellor are analytically described throughout Annex 2 on Regulations. All these duties constitute relevant measures contributing to the support for the students' learning.</p> <p>The Evaluation of students is described on page 89 of Annex 2 on Regulations as well as in the Institutional Application (pages 76-83 on the system of examinations/grading and evaluation).</p> <p>The material on 2.3 Policy and statutes for academic student support continues in Annex 2 on Regulations, page 101 (article 41) regarding Plagiarism. Please also refer for this in Annex 3 on Rules, page 63: XVIII on the Policy for Plagiarism.</p> <p>In addition to the above,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we already adopted early intervention guidelines seeking to assist in preventing students' poor performance. • during the induction period and, later on, as part of the learning process, the professors will clearly inform everyone on avoiding plagiarism, detection mechanisms and related implications. • each case of plagiarism or misconduct will be examined by the professors in charge and depending on the case will be referred to the relevant committee.
<p>2.4 Policy and statutes for financial student support</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>Comment 1: Develop clear publicity information for prospective and current students that outlines the available scholarship and fellowships funds, including the criteria, application and selection processes</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Please, see annex 2, XIV. This regulation will be also publicly available on our website (our website is currently in restricted access due to CYQAA regulations).</p>
<p>2.5 Counselling services</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>Comment 1: Establish a network of referral services and countries and regions where the University will be active in recruiting students</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Once the University is accredited our plan to establish a network of referral services and countries (referred into Institutional Application under section Strategy) and regions will be implemented ASAP.</p>

<p>2.6 Career office</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Comment 1: The University’s documentation, including the self-evaluation report and internal policies, refer to a Career Office. However, the proposed structure for administration services does not include an explicit unit. Therefore, it was not entirely clear to the EEC how this would be serviced although responsibilities Head of Student Services include careers. The Vice President and Head of Administration (Academic) informed the EEC that the careers service will assist students with part-time jobs and that adjunct faculty will be asked to support the Career Office by sharing key contacts from the industry networks. The University also has Career Office rules in place, which details further responsibilities including CV assistance, job search techniques and interview preparation. It may be beneficial for staff working in this area to hold a qualification in career development.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1a: The Career Office for students is not shown on the official organogram of the Institution as it operates under the Students’ Affairs Office, while the Career Office for the Staff of the University operates under Human Resources. It should be noted that the services provided by the Career Office are analytically described on pages 26-27 of the Institutional Application. Also, concerning the comments of the EEC on the qualifications of the staff working in this area, we kindly note that on page 27 of the Institutional Application it is stated that: “...the Career Office of Cosmos University is scheduled to employ at least three (3) qualified professionals to cope with the many cases. The staff working for the Career Office of the University should have the capability to approach each student or member of the staff of the University at a deeper level, considering their personal ambitions and aspirations and working efficiently with potential employers in order to create the best opportunities for them to achieve the career paths they want. Therefore, they must be good listeners and great communicators to promote the University’s students in the professional market ”.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1b: Please refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 92: Alumni and Careers Office 32. The Alumni and Careers Office of the Cosmos Open University was created to serve and support graduates of the University. It contributes to the strengthening of relations between graduates and the university community, but also to their interconnection with the local and wider community.</p>
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		<p>Please, also refer to Annex 3 on Rules, page 72: The Career Office Rules.</p>
<p>2.7 Service linking the institution with business</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Comment 1: Adopt a more systematic approach to employer engagement</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: The direct participation of directors and CEOs of established businesses in the Institution’s Governing Board and International Advising Board, as well as the signing of corresponding MoUs with these businesses containing the exchange and training of students and personnel and the joint participation in common projects, <u>we do believe</u> constitute what the EEC wants to see as ‘systematic vehicles for managing these relationships and sufficient comprehension of the complexity this presents when operating such a highly international approach’. Under formal Technical Protocols of Collaboration with such businesses, that must necessarily follow the Accreditation of our Institution, as explained to the EEC Members, any Employer Engagement Strategies, industry liaison panels, formal partnerships with industry representative bodies, and internship programs and modules will be put naturally on place on a timely and credible basis after the Accreditation.</p> <p>Nevertheless, we managed (even before the accreditation) to sign several very important MoUs, that can be found in the Institutional Application under Appendix 15; other MoUs are ready to be signed after the accreditation of the University. In the case of Bouygues Construction, we also submit a recorded message by its Director and in the case of Elastic Architects (the biggest office and best office for 2022 in the world) a video clip announcing a close collaboration with our new Institution. At the same time, we are ready to sign an MoU with the Hellenic Aerospace Industry and with the TANAIS Innovation & Aerospace Supercluster Initiative (TIASI) based in Canada to collaborate in a joint aerospace engineering program.</p> <p>Please refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 92: Alumni and Careers Office 32. The Alumni and Careers Office of the Cosmos Open University is created to serve and support graduates of the University. It contributes to the strengthening of relations between graduates and the university community, but also to their interconnection with the local and wider community.</p> <p>Refer also to Annex 3 on Rules, page 72: The Career Office Rules</p> <p>Furthermore, we will adopt a more systematic approach to employer engagement.</p>

<p>2.8 Mobility office</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>Comment 1: Introduce effective arrangements for English language support for international students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer by CU 1: In the Institutional Application In the Learning Support Consequently, students are responsible for planning their own reading and private study. As the University’s official language of instruction is English, the University organizes classes with English lessons so that they learn to express themselves fluently and write well English. • In H. Learning and Teaching (Institutional Application) <p>1. Policy and process of risk assessment and sustainability of programme of study</p> <table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lack of fluency in English</td> <td>Poor understanding of educational material</td> <td>Students, Programmes</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> <td>See A</td> <td>See B</td> </tr> </table> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Require in the application material to provide a certificate of English Language • Introduce free courses to improve knowledge of English • CU has adopted a new Policy • <p>Early Intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Annex 3 • Pages 79/85 Pages 81/85 • 6. (1) (a) In order to avoid students presenting poor understanding of the English language, potential students must provide a certificate of proficiency during the application procedure. • (b) In case this problem is still present during the courses, free courses in the English language will be provided. 	Lack of fluency in English	Poor understanding of educational material	Students, Programmes	3	5	3	See A	See B
Lack of fluency in English	Poor understanding of educational material	Students, Programmes	3	5	3	See A	See B			
<p>2.9 Student clubs/organisations/associations</p>	<p>Unsatisfactory</p>	<p>Comment 1: Student clubs and organisations will not operate in person, but the University has appropriate plans in place to facilitate online social activities including virtual networks, online</p>								

		<p>coffee sessions and engagement in democratic processes and University committees through the establishment of a formal Students' Union</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: There is an issue (probably by mistake which is always understandable) in 2.9, as the comments of EEC are positive, but their grade was Unsatisfactory.</p> <p>The matter of the participation of Cosmos University's students in all sports, found on pages 14-15 of the Institutional Application, was clearly presented to the EEC that, upon accreditation, Cosmos University will join the corresponding events organized by National University Sports Association(s) under ΚΟΠΑ (the Cyprus University Sports Federation), EUSA (the European University Sports Association) and FISU (International University Sports Federation). Clubs for other kinds of activities, which are usually founded in almost all universities by their respective Students' Associations, were also described, and the EEC comments drawn are positive proving that the classification 'Unsatisfactory' is a Lapsus calami (A slip of the Keyboard, a miswriting) mistake.</p> <p>Please also refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 93 (34A).</p>
<p>2.10 Other services</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Comment 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the complaints procedure to clarify timeframes, support, arrangements for avoiding conflict of interest and establish clear grounds for appeal. • Consider the possibility of using an external adjudicator as part of the complaints process <p>Establish suitable procedures for assessing the comparability of admissions pre-requisites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a detailed model for the quality assurance of student welfare services <p>Answer by CU 1: In the Appeals Procedure, described on page 88 of the Institutional Application, the process is described for the submission of Grievances, where the Institution avoids any conflict of interest (for example where a member of staff is involved in the initial complaint, and he/she is detached from the review procedures taking place at a higher level) and any reference to grounds for appeal/review. Indeed, complainants can access support as the EEC wants to see (which could be the students' union, <u>but only when this union is established</u>, as the EEC agrees. The same should hold for the Alumni that can only start upon the enrollment of the first students of the Institution.</p> <p>Please refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 92:</p>

	<p>Alumni and Careers Office</p> <p>32. The Alumni and Careers Office of the Cosmos Open University is created to serve and support graduates of the University. It contributes to the strengthening of relations between graduates and the university community, but also to their interconnection with the local and wider community.</p> <p>Please refer also to Annex 3 on Rules, page 72: The Career Office Rules</p> <p>We have already adopted a new Policy and Procedure regarding the students' complaints based on the suggestions of the EEC, and of course students always have the right to appeal based on the relevant policy and procedure.</p> <p>In addition, a survey will be conducted on an annual basis among the students in relation to the administrative services provided, including the services' response. These findings, in combination with learning analytics, will give us, among others, important information for improvement on this issue.</p> <p>Very good suggestion is that regarding the involvement of an external adjudicator, who may prove useful after the operation of the relevant students support services which will show, to some extent, the effectiveness of the current processes.</p> <p>The existing model of quality assurance for student wellness services is schematically based on the principles of internal evaluation and external evaluation. At the same time, students can evaluate these services (annual service evaluation questionnaire) which all together constitute potential sources of information for taking improvement measures, if the circumstances require it.</p>
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EEC's final recommendations and comments (Student Welfare Services)

2.1 Special access for student with disabilities – this was a satisfactory judgement in any case and our comments are intended to strengthen the provision. Although they say they will do so in their response, the institution did not detail with any certainty the expert staff support they were looking to recruit in this area and did not have job descriptions or other documentation prepared at the time of the visit. Similarly, it makes sense to detail financial support in the policy. Comments and evaluation stand.

2.3 Policy and Statutes for academic student support – this is a really confusing response on the part of the institution. They have re-stated different aspects of the support in place (which we were well aware of) but haven't directly challenged the comments and recommendations that led to the 'poor' evaluation. They have directly copied other institutional policies and while there are a range of academic support services in

place this information isn't well codified for students in the form of a handbook. Other challenges here in terms of using visiting and fractional lecturers for support and they didn't have convincing plans to guide mitigate the risks of inconsistent support. Haven't addressed the limitations of their plagiarism policy, other than saying staff will look on a case by case basis. The closest they get to directly challenging a recommendation is where they discuss the quality indicators for the academic and administrative activities of the University, the Faculties and the Study Programmes. They say performance indicators for the academic and administrative operation of the University will be linked to the quality objectives.

That's fine but this doesn't represent a timebound or measurable action plan for student support – it's at a very high, rather than granular level and they haven't set out how this will work exactly. Comments and evaluation stand.

2.4 Policy and statues for financial and student support – Obviously we had read Annex 2, XIV and this was the basis for the satisfactory evaluation for this 2.4. However, it doesn't detail the amount students can apply for, the name of the scholarships, or the detailed criteria that the Financial Aids Committee will use. Comments and evaluation stand.

2.5 Counselling services – again a satisfactory evaluation and the support in place at the moment, where they have appointed a dedicated member of staff is sufficient for now. However, the institution has set out to establish a network of referral services and does not currently have a credible plan as to how it will achieve this. It needs further attention and warrants the comment. Comments and evaluation stand.

2.6 Career Office – I think we should change the last sentence of our comment from this:

It may be beneficial for staff working in this area to hold a qualification in career development.

To this:

The EEC acknowledge the institution's commitment to recruiting qualified careers advisers. The University should expedite this work by drafting suitable job descriptions and establishing staff recruitment strategies that will enable them to establish the Career Office in advance of receiving the first cohort of students. The EEC also note the institution's response to the draft report that states the Career Office was not on the university structure for administration services because it straddles two departments (Students' Affairs Office and Human Resources). However, this has the potential to be confusing to stakeholders, including students. So, the EEC recommends that the institution find a way to accurately communicate the position of the Careers Office within the organisation.

Despite the response here, these plans were not convincing and there didn't appear to be any clear strategy to getting the Career Office up and running in time for the first cohort. Comments and evaluation stand.

2.7 Service linking the institution with business – The EEC acknowledge that the institution has referred to a number of MoUs with specific companies that it says it has either already signed or intends to sign. However, despite the response, it is not clear that this is informed by a clear and explicit Employer Engagement Strategy nor that the institution has a clear and coherent plan for industry liaison panels, formal partnerships with industry representative bodies, internship programmes and modules, despite the University's claim that it does. Similarly, these arrangements do not sufficiently align with the institution's stated strategy of pursuing a highly international approach to recruitment. Comments and evaluation stand.

2.8 Mobility Office – Again, a satisfactory evaluation that was largely based on the text that they have referred to in their response and which we had already read. We acknowledge their intention to provide English language support, but again during the visit itself the institution didn't clearly outline how it will deliver this support, hence the recommendation. Comments and evaluation stand.

2.9 Student clubs and organisations/associations – We had indicated that we thought this was satisfactory. It is not clear if this evaluation got modified based on Kyriacos’ feedback? However, I think their arrangements are sufficient and appropriate at this stage in their development. Also, that their plans post accreditation are credible. So we would suggest altering this outcome to satisfactory to align with the text.

2.10 Other services – the first recommendation in this section is concerned with the University’s Student Complaints Policy (Annex 3), however the institution’s response references the Appeals Procedure (concerning assessment appeals) which is not discussed. There is some promising detail in this section about intent to conduct surveys etc. However, nothing at this stage that should alter the comments, recommendations or evaluation.

3. Infrastructure

Item	Evaluation	Reply
2.1 Special access for students with disabilities	Satisfactory	<p>Comment 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider recruiting suitably qualified, specialist staff for supporting students with disabilities to ensure that key roles, such as the Head of Student Services, are not overburdened with responsibilities. Explicitly detail the process for identifying students with disabilities and financial support within the Policy for People with Disabilities <p>Answer by CU 1: Our University will seek to hire the best possible staff, with specialized knowledge and skills in this specific area, in order to facilitate the enrollment of students with disabilities and strengthen their performance in distance learning mode. At the same time, special training seminars will be held under the Human Resources sector to bring this staff up to date to the latest developments.</p> <p>The professor – counsellors, in the context of their duties, have the capability to identify students with disabilities or financial difficulties. During registration, the students will be able to state if they face any problems of this nature.</p>
2.3 Policy and statutes for academic student support	Poor	<p>Comment 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a Student Welfare Strategy (or equivalent) and ensure this is linked to timebound and measurable action plans Review and revise the Policy for Plagiarism to address all forms of academic misconduct, including contract cheating and forms of

misconduct that are especially challenging in a distance learning modality

- Develop detailed operational procedures (either within the Policy for Plagiarism or elsewhere) that set out the institution’s practical approach to identify academic misconduct
- Reconsider whether all acts of plagiarism should be considered misconduct, irrespective of any mitigating factors
- Address repetition and duplication in policies and regulations (e.g. the Policy for Plagiarism and Internal Regulations) to minimise associated risks with version control and accessibility for students
- Ensure that Cosmos Open University has its own tailored and contextualised policies in place for all its provision, rather than referring to those of third-party institutions
- Review nomenclature relating to academic support roles
- Develop a student handbook that contains clear information on academic student support
- Ensure University expectations regarding baseline academic support are clearly detailed and supported by contractual arrangements with all faculty

Answer by CU 1:

Please see Policy and statutes for academic student support are described in the submitted application for institutional accreditation (pages 16-21) and in the Charter of the Institution (pages 42-48 and 49-52).

Also, please refer to ANNEX 3 on Rules, page 13:

Quality data collection: measurement, analysis and improvement

14. The Internal Evaluation Committee manages the qualitative data of the educational, research and other academic activities, as well as the data of the administrative operation of the University. Its purpose is the collection, analysis and use of qualitative data during the internal evaluation of processes and the decision-making processes for each level of operation of the University, in order to improve them.

Measurement, data analysis, creation of indicators and their correlation with the objectives of quality assurance

15. The Internal Evaluation Committee issues the annual quality indicators, utilizing the data from the information system or from other sources.

	<p>The annual quality indicators are: Quality indicators for the academic and administrative activities of the University, the Faculties and the Study Programmes. Performance indicators for the academic and administrative operation of the University, linked to the quality objectives.</p> <p>Creating, maintaining, updating and evaluating websites, web applications and other media 16. The process determines the way of creating, maintaining, updating and evaluating the University's websites, web applications and other media, in order to achieve the requirement of direct, accessible, up-to-date, objective and clearly worded information for all interested parties.</p> <p>Please, also refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 77: (2) Our primary goal is on the one hand the creation of a dynamic e-learning environment and on the other hand the production of basic and applied research in cognitive fields that are directly related to the needs of society. The investment in modern learning technology in combination with the academic staff that has many years of teaching and research experience in foreign universities, are the guarantees for the achievement of the goals set by our University. Cosmos Open University has created a dynamic learning environment meeting your needs, and developed basic and applied research in cognitive fields that are directly related to the needs of society.</p> <p>Library, page 78 4. (1) The ultimate goal of the Cosmos Open University Library is to provide informational support for the institution's academic programs, and therefore to provide knowledge and guidance to academic / research staff and students as regards to study issues and research for ongoing personal development and self-improvement.</p> <p>Learning Support, page 79-84 7. (1) As a student you are guided by a Professor Counsellor, faculty member, throughout your studies. This member usually teaches a course of the programme you are attending.</p> <p>Among other things, this Counsellor is your point of contact with the services of our University and you can discuss personal issues related to family, career, studies and other related social issues. The Professor Counsellor can provide advice on academic matters, including the selection and evaluation of modules / courses.</p>
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	<p>In case of problems of any kind, the Professor Counsellor should always be your first point of reference. The Professor Counsellor can and should bring you in contact with the wide range of special support services provided by our University as well as with the Student Union, as the case may be.</p> <p>You, as students, can arrange at least three meetings with your Professor Counsellor during the academic year. However, do not hesitate to contact him/her in any case, if you feel that you need help or advice.</p> <p>Our instructors/academic staff support you on many levels in order to improve your study skills, such as taking notes, writing essays, managing time and exam technique. Particular importance is attached to improving your IT and communication skills and abilities.</p> <p>In addition to lectures and seminars, you should take the time to study in person, study and research to do practical work or specific projects. For each course there is a bibliography for study, but at the same time, you must design and plan your own study.</p> <p>(a) The course is taught via distance learning and students will take part in: Interactive presentations of different approaches during lectures discussions case studies interactive learning material audio-visual learning material a virtual learning environment</p> <p>Cosmos University students have access to the Moodle Platform where important and useful information is posted. In this Platform, students are informed about the Curriculum they are following, the goals and learning outcomes of each course and other relevant information.</p> <p>In addition to the interactive approaches to teaching, tutors systematically employ various techniques aimed to facilitate understanding of the subject, by supporting the active involvement of students through the following: Brainstorming Group work Peer review Activities Discussions Real-life scenarios</p>
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	<p>The objective is for students to develop: Critical thinking, that is, interpretation, analysis, evaluation and synthesis of the information provided and Creative thinking, that is, becomes capable of producing original and innovative ideas and solutions to problems.</p> <p>Students support:</p> <p>9. (1) The Professor - Counsellor who teaches, guides, and supports students on their path to knowledge is a key functional member of our well-trained Academic Personnel.</p> <p>(2) The Professor-Counsellor is a member of the Academic Personnel of our University or other educational organizations and performs educational and research work.</p> <p>Group Counselling Meetings</p> <p>10. These meetings are held periodically between the Professor Counselor and students electronically, through the University's Distance Learning Platform and are part of the educational methodology.</p> <p>The Cosmos Open University Information Technology Centre</p> <p>11. (1) The Cosmos Open University Information Centre provides services to you and develops and maintains programmes for a wide range of applications. The Information personnel provides training, information, advice and assistance to users via teams.</p> <p>(2) We, Cosmos University, provide: University-wide Information Technology services and the first point of contact for students is the Computing Services Help Desk, where students can find out about all aspects of the services of the University and obtain advice regarding a wide range of IT based activities Online Lecture Series which is a tool for delivering Lectures / Teleconferences through the Moodle LMS (Learning Management System) learning platform of the University. Participants are all students and its Academic / Administrative staff. The system offers the respective Lecturer / Presenter the opportunity to digitally course address distant audiences, creating a digital educational environment. The online tool Online Lecture Series, supported by the online platform (MOODLE) of the University, is addressed to the internal community of the University aiming at the dissemination of specialized and general knowledge and training of its members, strengthening the sense of community and cohesion.</p>
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		<p>General Support:</p> <p>12. (1) For any daily information, our Student Support Service staff is available for personal communication either by phone, Viber, WhatsUp, or email, from 8 p.m. until 6 p.m. on every working day.</p> <p>Students have access through the Learning Centre website to multimedia material, presentations, lecture leaflets, bibliography, further links, e-exercises, and discussions. At the same time, excellent services, libraries, and other learning resources are provided.</p> <p>In addition, the University offers you several services such as the Student Support Service, the Career Service, the Counselling Service and the Student Support Service for students with health problems.</p> <p>The duties of the Academic Coordinator (Dean in distance learning universities that do not have departments), the Course Coordinator, and the Professor Counsellor are analytically described throughout Annex 2 on Regulations. All these duties constitute relevant measures contributing to the support for the students' learning.</p> <p>The Evaluation of students is described on page 89 of Annex 2 on Regulations as well as in the Institutional Application (pages 76-83 on the system of examinations/grading and evaluation).</p> <p>The material on 2.3 Policy and statutes for academic student support continues in Annex 2 on Regulations, page 101 (article 41) regarding Plagiarism. Please also refer for this in Annex 3 on Rules, page 63: XVIII on the Policy for Plagiarism.</p> <p>In addition to the above,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • we already adopted early intervention guidelines seeking to assist in preventing students' poor performance. • during the induction period and, later on, as part of the learning process, the professors will clearly inform everyone on avoiding plagiarism, detection mechanisms and related implications. • each case of plagiarism or misconduct will be examined by the professors in charge and depending on the case will be referred to the relevant committee.
<p>2.4 Policy and statutes for financial student support</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>Comment 1: Develop clear publicity information for prospective and current students that outlines the available</p>

		<p>scholarship and fellowships funds, including the criteria, application and selection processes</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Please, see annex 2, XIV. This regulation will be also publicly available on our website (our website is currently in restricted access due to CYQAA regulations).</p>
2.5 Counselling services	Satisfactory	<p>Comment 1: Establish a network of referral services and countries and regions where the University will be active in recruiting students</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Once the University is accredited our plan to establish a network of referral services and countries (referred into Institutional Application under section Strategy) and regions will be implemented ASAP.</p>
2.6 Career office	Poor	<p>Comment 1: The University's documentation, including the self-evaluation report and internal policies, refer to a Career Office. However, the proposed structure for administration services does not include an explicit unit. Therefore, it was not entirely clear to the EEC how this would be serviced although responsibilities Head of Student Services include careers. The Vice President and Head of Administration (Academic) informed the EEC that the careers service will assist students with part-time jobs and that adjunct faculty will be asked to support the Career Office by sharing key contacts from the industry networks. The University also has Career Office rules in place, which details further responsibilities including CV assistance, job search techniques and interview preparation. It may be beneficial for staff working in this area to hold a qualification in career development.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1a: The Career Office for students is not shown on the official organogram of the Institution as it operates under the Students' Affairs Office, while the Career Office for the Staff of the University operates under Human Resources.</p> <p>It should be noted that the services provided by the Career Office are analytically described on pages 26-27 of the Institutional Application.</p> <p>Also, concerning the comments of the EEC on the qualifications of the staff working in this area, we kindly note that on page 27 of the Institutional Application it is stated that:</p>

		<p>“...the Career Office of Cosmos University is scheduled to employ at least three (3) qualified professionals to cope with the many cases.</p> <p>The staff working for the Career Office of the University should have the capability to approach each student or member of the staff of the University at a deeper level, considering their personal ambitions and aspirations and working efficiently with potential employers in order to create the best opportunities for them to achieve the career paths they want.</p> <p>Therefore, they must be good listeners and great communicators to promote the University’s students in the professional market ”.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1b: Please refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 92: Alumni and Careers Office 32. The Alumni and Careers Office of the Cosmos Open University was created to serve and support graduates of the University. It contributes to the strengthening of relations between graduates and the university community, but also to their interconnection with the local and wider community.</p> <p>Please, also refer to Annex 3 on Rules, page 72: The Career Office Rules.</p>
<p>2.7 Service linking the institution with business</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Comment 1: Adopt a more systematic approach to employer engagement</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: The direct participation of directors and CEOs of established businesses in the Institution’s Governing Board and International Advising Board, as well as the signing of corresponding MoUs with these businesses containing the exchange and training of students and personnel and the joint participation in common projects, <u>we do believe</u> constitute what the EEC wants to see as ‘systematic vehicles for managing these relationships and sufficient comprehension of the complexity this presents when operating such a highly international approach’. Under formal Technical Protocols of Collaboration with such businesses, that must necessarily follow the Accreditation of our Institution, as explained to the EEC Members, any Employer Engagement Strategies, industry liaison panels, formal partnerships with industry representative bodies, and internship programs and modules will be put naturally on place on a timely and credible basis after the Accreditation.</p>

		<p>Nevertheless, we managed (even before the accreditation) to sign several very important MoUs, that can be found in the Institutional Application under Appendix 15; other MoUs are ready to be signed after the accreditation of the University. In the case of Bouygues Construction, we also submit a recorded message by its Director and in the case of Elastic Architects (the biggest office and best office for 2022 in the world) a video clip announcing a close collaboration with our new Institution. At the same time, we are ready to sign an MoU with the Hellenic Aerospace Industry and with the TANAIIS Innovation & Aerospace Supercluster Initiative (TIASI) based in Canada to collaborate in a joint aerospace engineering program.</p> <p>Please refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 92: Alumni and Careers Office 32. The Alumni and Careers Office of the Cosmos Open University is created to serve and support graduates of the University. It contributes to the strengthening of relations between graduates and the university community, but also to their interconnection with the local and wider community.</p> <p>Refer also to Annex 3 on Rules, page 72: The Career Office Rules</p> <p>Furthermore, we will adopt a more systematic approach to employer engagement.</p>
<p>2.8 Mobility office</p>	<p>Satisfactory</p>	<p>Comment 1: Introduce effective arrangements for English language support for international students</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Answer by CU 1: In the Institutional Application In the Learning Support Consequently, students are responsible for planning their own reading and private study. As the University’s official language of instruction is English, the University organizes classes with English lessons so that they learn to express themselves fluently and write well English. • In H. Learning and Teaching (Institutional Application) <p>1. Policy and process of risk assessment and sustainability of programme of study</p>

		<table border="1"> <tr> <td>Lack of fluency in English</td> <td>Poor understanding of educational material</td> <td>Students, Programmes</td> <td>3</td> <td>5</td> <td>3</td> <td>See A</td> <td>See B</td> </tr> </table>	Lack of fluency in English	Poor understanding of educational material	Students, Programmes	3	5	3	See A	See B
Lack of fluency in English	Poor understanding of educational material	Students, Programmes	3	5	3	See A	See B			
<p>2.9 Student clubs/organisations/associations</p>	<p>Unsatisfactory</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Require in the application material to provide a certificate of English Language Introduce free courses to improve knowledge of English CU has adopted a new Policy <p>Early Intervention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Annex 3 Pages 79/85 Pages 81/85 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6. (1) (a) In order to avoid students presenting poor understanding of the English language, potential students must provide a certificate of proficiency during the application procedure. (b) In case this problem is still present during the courses, free courses in the English language will be provided. <p>Comment 1: Student clubs and organisations will not operate in person, but the University has appropriate plans in place to facilitate online social activities including virtual networks, online coffee sessions and engagement in democratic processes and University committees through the establishment of a formal Students’ Union</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: There is an issue (probably by mistake which is always understandable) in 2.9, as the comments of EEC are positive, but their grade was Unsatisfactory.</p> <p>The matter of the participation of Cosmos University’s students in all sports, found on pages 14-15 of the Institutional Application, was clearly presented to the EEC that, upon accreditation, Cosmos University will join the corresponding events organized by National University Sports Association(s) under ΚΟΠΑ (the Cyprus University Sports Federation), EUSA (the European University Sports Association) and FISU (International University Sports Federation). Clubs for other kinds of activities, which are usually founded in almost all universities by their respective Students’ Associations, were also described, and the EEC comments drawn are positive proving that the classification ‘Unsatisfactory’ is a Lapsus calami (A slip of the Keyboard, a miswriting) mistake.</p>								

		<p>Please also refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 93 (34A).</p>
<p>2.10 Other services</p>	<p>Poor</p>	<p>Comment 1:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Revise the complaints procedure to clarify timeframes, support, arrangements for avoiding conflict of interest and establish clear grounds for appeal. • Consider the possibility of using an external adjudicator as part of the complaints process <p>Establish suitable procedures for assessing the comparability of admissions pre-requisites</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a detailed model for the quality assurance of student welfare services <p>Answer by CU 1: In the Appeals Procedure, described on page 88 of the Institutional Application, the process is described for the submission of Grievances, where the Institution avoids any conflict of interest (for example where a member of staff is involved in the initial complaint, and he/she is detached from the review procedures taking place at a higher level) and any reference to grounds for appeal/review. Indeed, complainants can access support as the EEC wants to see (which could be the students' union, <u>but only when this union is established</u>, as the EEC agrees. The same should hold for the Alumni that can only start upon the enrollment of the first students of the Institution.</p> <p>Please refer to Annex 2 on Regulations, page 92: Alumni and Careers Office 32. The Alumni and Careers Office of the Cosmos Open University is created to serve and support graduates of the University. It contributes to the strengthening of relations between graduates and the university community, but also to their interconnection with the local and wider community.</p> <p>Please refer also to Annex 3 on Rules, page 72: The Career Office Rules</p> <p>We have already adopted a new Policy and Procedure regarding the students' complaints based on the suggestions of the EEC, and of course students always have the right to appeal based on the relevant policy and procedure.</p> <p>In addition, a survey will be conducted on an annual basis among the students in relation to the administrative services provided, including the services' response. These findings, in combination with learning analytics, will give us, among others, important information for improvement on this issue.</p>

		<p>Very good suggestion is that regarding the involvement of an external adjudicator, who may prove useful after the operation of the relevant students support services which will show, to some extent, the effectiveness of the current processes.</p> <p>The existing model of quality assurance for student wellness services is schematically based on the principles of internal evaluation and external evaluation. At the same time, students can evaluate these services (annual service evaluation questionnaire) which all together constitute potential sources of information for taking improvement measures, if the circumstances require it.</p>
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EEC's comments on the external evaluation report(Infrastructure)

Issue

Assessment of current status

The ICT teaching and learning infrastructure is on the critical path, there are doubts whether the infra would be ready before October 2023.

No concrete architectural and functional ICT plan is provided, nor a concrete implementation and test plan for this.

There are no detailed documents that connect the functional didactical requirements of the universities education system which should be fulfilled by the e-learning infrastructure.

Not provided.

It is important to have a handbook detailing for faculty, professional support staff and partners, all critical aspects of teaching, learning and research and relatedly QA.

No concrete handbook was provided.

There are doubts about the security of the systems, a cybersecurity expert should test this.

No new, concrete information about the way this issue is handled.

In the courses we inspected there was no information available for students (and probably also for teachers) what the performance criteria are and how the grading process takes place. Rubrics for instance are absent.

In the response document, references were made to an attachment about assessment. However, these are very general (meta) guidelines, not specific to course specific test items, nor does it specify the range of different test items that are used in courses. It is also not clear whether this is information available for students for *each* test item they are required to make.

GENERAL REMARK:

In the conclusion of the response document a reference is made to section C.3 Infrastructure for a lot of our questions. However, we could not find the detailed answers to the specific questions we asked for in this section C.3.

Also note:

CU's response to the EEC's evaluation and comments is appreciated.

[1] Appendix 15 does not appear to have undergone an update since the on-site evaluation. On this basis, CU provides evidence of five signed MOUs. The remainder are no more than aspirational statements that the EEC cannot evaluate.

[2] The educational platform needs to be available for evaluation.

1. Institution's Academic Profile and Orientation

Sub-Areas

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

Item	Evaluation	Reply
1.1 Mission and strategic planning	Partially Compliant	<p>Comment 1: Thus far no information is public. There is no website from what we can see. This must be in place. Cosmos makes clear that all pertinent info will be public, but this has to be more concretely articulated. More specificity is required with regards to point 1.1.7..</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Already referred and replied in C.3. Infrastructure. Website has been developed but not published due to CYQAA regulations.</p> <p>Comment 2: Too much emphasis on this being a Green university. This venerable objective is part and parcel of all programmes from what we can see. How will students be oriented and educated with regards to this objective? Will all students have to take a credit or non-credit course? What is the plan here?</p> <p>Answer by CU 2: Greening our university is a key element to its identity and has a strong added value as we are convinced that it will be an essential criterion for young people not only to study in our institution but the Institution itself to provide the society information and actions on problems related to environment.</p> <p>As we have already stated in our on-site accreditation presentations by Georgios Kremlis (Honorary Director of the European Commission; Principal Advisor to the Greek Prime Minister on energy, climate, environment and circular economy; Member of the Board of the European Public Law Organization), Yiannis Tsironis (former Alternate Minister for Environment and Energy; former Alternate Minister for Agriculture Development and Food; former Member of the Greek Parliament; Leader of the Ecologists Greens; Greek Delegate in the Council of the European Green Party; Co-founder of the NGO Persephone that supports Green economic initiatives), Ivelina Vassileva (former Deputy Mayor of EU Affairs and Environment; former Deputy Minister and former Minister of Environment and Waters, Bulgaria), and Prof. Christos Zerefos (Atmospheric Physics; Secretary General of the Academy of Athens; Head of the Research Centre for Atmospheric Physics and Climatology; Climate Envoy of Greece; Order of Honor of the Hellenic Republic; Recipient of many International Medals and Awards; Member of several Academies of Sciences; Founder of Laboratories and Centers), as well as by members of our Governing Board, greening our university is based on four pillars:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A holistic approach provided to all our students, in every field of study, on the environmental impact of any activity on a global scale. A holistic approach can be achieved through seminars on important items, such as the blue economy that Mrs. Vasileva has presented, and the Circular Economy presented by Mr. Kremlis in its internal and external dimensions. It is essential for all students living in countries with sea, such as Cyprus, to

benefit from this holistic approach, as threats and challenges presented in the sea condition, due to the climate crisis do not have borders and crucially affect societies and economies, not solely professions.

2. **Making our students ambassadors in their local societies**, creating a network where students and professors can exchange information on successful sustainable examples or even failures.

3. **The third pillar includes credit courses**, such as green economics and circular economy. Furthermore, we also have the vision to offer other credit courses such as:
 -- “Water management”, focusing in areas with water scarcity, such as Cyprus or the Arab countries.
 -- “Regenerative agriculture in areas with desertification risk”.

Such items have essential impact on the global struggle on climate change mitigation and adaptation, so we believe that in this energy transition and climate neutrality process - through circular economy - our young graduates will have promising career perspectives (very useful credits in their careers).

Of course, parts of these credit programs will be offered by the seminars mentioned in the first paragraph, addressed to all our students, in every field of study, and supporting our vision of the holistic approach. Dedicated circular economy and ESG seminars can also be organized for the business community and as appropriate for local authorities and other stakeholders.

4. **Making our institution a good sustainability example**, minimizing energy consumption and waste disposal, aiming finally to make it circular and carbon neutral, through digital economy patterns in the framework of an ESG Strategy.

In addition, we can:

5. Create free courses for anyone (not only for students of CU) to inform the problems and give solutions for a sustainable society.
6. Design actions for all citizens to participate.
7. Provide information and news on the environment (through our website and social media)

As a final comment by CU, we hope that all the Universities in the world proceed with such efforts for protecting our planet and provide more ideas on fulfilling such a mission.

Comment 3:

More info on the advisory board is required.

Answer by CU 3:

The Members of the International Advisory Board have been properly introduced to the Members of the EEC in the premises of the Institution during the Accreditation process. They are established members of the international academic community, with well-known track records in their disciplines/areas of specialization, directors/CEOs of established Medical Centers providing diagnostic and therapeutic services to patients, well-known political personalities (with technocratic knowledge in crucial areas related to the current and future study programs of our Institution), business founders and CEOs of international companies, and personalities who formulate international and public policies in a series of subjects relevant to the study programs of our Institution.

		<p>With most of the members of the International Advisory Board, the members of the Governing Board of the Institution have long-standing, since several decades, professional collaborations and participation in common projects, some of which involve the training of students, their introduction to complicated infrastructure/instrumentation and their participation in Schools, Conferences, Internships and other projects.</p> <p>All Members of the International Advisory Board have committed themselves to providing their advising services and collaboration, helping to develop the new Institution so that it becomes one of the best distance learning universities in the geographic region of its operation. In addition, both the Members of the Governing Board, and especially so the Members of the International Advisory Board, are ambassadors of the University to society, they are one of our links to society, “hearing” its demands and needs, and at the same time reflecting to the society the University’s values and ideals.</p> <p>For a very brief introduction on the Who is Who of the members of our International Advisory Board (by no means CVs with their projects and publications), please refer to the uploaded presentation given to the EEC Committee by the President of the Governing Board Prof. Panos Razis, also provided as an Appendix GB to this document for a quick reference.</p> <p>Comment 4: There is an issue with the mission statement. Cosmos is not an open university. It is more of a distance learning institution. An open university is one where no pre-requisites are required. In the programmes being assessed pre-requisites are required similar to what one finds in a ‘regular’ university.</p> <p>Answer by CU 4: In our Institution, there are no formal requirements for undergraduate programs except for a leaving certificate from a high school. The only requirements are B1-B2 certification in English and basic knowledge on computers (even on these we supply courses in English language and video guidelines for knowledge on computers). For graduate programs, there is a requirement for a bachelor's or equivalent degree (mandatory for all universities in the world, open or not) or exceptional experience on the specific field and a B2-C1 certification on English language. As concerned special graduate programs, such as Medical Physics, there are admission criteria such as some knowledge of Physics, which can be met, for example, through a prior BSc degree in natural sciences, information technology, engineering and medicine. Such a policy exists at the Open University of Greece, the Open University of Cyprus or even at the Open University of UK. We provide the relevant pages of the Open University of UK (https://collegedunia.com/uk/university/857-the-open-university-milton-keynes/admission), (https://www.open.ac.uk/courses/do-it), (https://www.open.ac.uk/courses/do-it/english-skills). For instance, we can see that for the MSc in Engineering there is an admission requirement “knowledge of mathematics”.</p>
<p>1.1.6 In the Institution's development strategy, interested parties such as academics, students,</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>no specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Students and graduates could not have participated in the Institution’s development strategy as they do not exist yet in an Institution pending accreditation. Academics, professionals and other people in scientific associations are represented at this stage by the people involved in the founding and working teams of the Institution (Governing Board and International Advisory Board).</p>

<p>graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Institution's development strategy.</p>		<p>In addition, see answer to 3.2 9, where one can see all the bodies and the participation of Cosmos University people.</p> <p>Once we receive the accreditation, more advisory bodies from unions, professional organizations, research institutions, scientific associations etc. will be formed for each School/Program, and eventually graduates and collaborators, like Bouygues, which can participate in the Institution's projects and future development.</p>
<p>1.1.7 The mechanism for collecting and analysing data and indicators needed to effectively design the Institution's academic development is adequate and effective.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>no specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: The feasibility studies and SWOT analysis performed for substantiating the case of founding an open and distance learning university, with the specific programs of studies chosen, are considered very realistic and attractive. The needs of the society were taken into account and the implementation of the development plan of the Institution, concerning its educational programs of studies, was designed through the joint efforts of the international scientific community and the personalities composing the leading bodies of the Institution.</p>
<p>1.2 Connecting with society</p>	<p>Partially Compliant</p>	<p>Comment 1: The main problem here is the vagueness of the documentation and the fact that not much clarity was added during the onsite meeting. How will Cosmos assure that it will have a positive impact in society (currently vague and fluffy)? How will it take into consideration the demand of society? What mechanisms? Which society? Cyprus? International? How will this be done? How are the advisory board members chosen? Criteria? Environmental issues are touched on, but not substantiated. What are the educational plans across the entire student population in this domain, for example?</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: The impact in society for any given respectable university is 3-fold; it comes through its graduates and the role they play in the society, through its research outcome and its proper dissemination to the professional world and society, and through the services the university provides to the society. Good and highly qualified graduates make a significant impact in the society, important new results in research transform and shape the society of the future, and good services provided inside and beyond the university produce the good name of the university. The demand of society is taken into consideration through the established bodies of the university that are entrusted with this role, the Council and the Senate, through the students' body and through the academic and administrative staff communities (all representing indirectly also their families with relevant aspirations). Each one of the above groups communicates with its proper feedback mechanism, whether government, sponsors and investors, families and friends or wider population in society. To facilitate this democratic measure of interaction with society, and to provide an absolute transparency in its operation, the university will promote its news, activities and development of matters through a bulletin, widely circulating to the interested members and to the wider community in its areas of operation, in events participating, conferences, the local electronic press and other dedicated media. Cosmos University will be an international university, so the dissemination of data will not only take place in Cyprus, but in all areas where classes of the university take place.</p>

		<p>The Members of the International Advisory Board were chosen to cover innovative scientific fields of great importance for the future of science and the society, they are all established personalities in their fields and have long-standing professional collaboration with the Members of the Governing Board, through their participation in common projects, some of which involve the training of students, their introduction to sophisticated and important projects and their participation in international schools, conferences and internships.</p> <p>Concerning the Environmental issues, there are answers in comment 2 above. Especially, the existence of a team of four (4) “Greens” in the Governing Board is to cover such issues!!</p>
<p>1.3 Development processes</p>	<p>Compliant</p>	<p>Comment 1: To attract teaching staff, more details are required on where adds will be placed and other means of attracted faculty. Vague of which students will be attracted. On 1.3.1 On pay scale, where is this info from? Also, stipulations for research by position, where is this derived from. Expectations too high for adjunct. Part time staff typically don't have the time to research. Research is typically the domain of full time staff. The % might make it difficult to attract the desired staff with regards to teaching, dominated by adjunct academics</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: To attract teaching staff, the announcements for the relevant positions will be published in at least two hard copy media and two electronic media, out of the following: 'EURAXESS', 'The Time Higher Education', https://academicpositions.com, https://academicJobsOnline, https://www.academia.edu, https://academiccareers.com, ResearchGate, LinkedIn, the Website of Cosmos University, and a few selected, highly circulating newspapers in Cyprus, UK, Greece, Middle East and India. In addition, for adjunct professors, the posts will be promoted electronically through our vast network of professors and collaborators.</p> <p>Concerning the master's degree programs, students will be attracted who already hold bachelor's degrees and knowledge in relevant areas. For example, for the Medical Physics and Diagnostic Imaging master's program, students holding a BSc degree in Physics, Chemistry, Biology, Engineering, Information Technology, or a Doctor of Medicine degree will be attracted who have some knowledge of physics. On equal footing, for the master's program in Sustainable Environmental and Energy Management, students holding a BSc in Natural Sciences, Engineering, Economics, and Management will be attracted.</p> <p>With respect to the percentage dedicated by the faculty staff (academic faculty in the 4 ranked positions and adjunct professors) on research, Table 13 supplied in our Application and reproduced below should not be considered at all as presenting too high expectations for adjunct professors; 10% dedication to research is the minimum requirement for a scientist to keep-up with the recent developments in his/her field, and this is considered a must if one wants to create a critical mass of research in any given field. All numbers in the Table below are very reasonable for the Institution to build strong teams both in teaching and research, and to provide the minimum administrative duties for running the activities of the Institution. The percentages for the adjunct professors are also normalized to their total involvement with the new Institution.</p> <p>However, please note that the 10% engagement of the adjunct professors in research should be considered as an <u>attraction mean</u>, thanks to the self-financing of their research activities by the University, and <u>not as a requirement</u>, if they do not wish to get involved in the research of the University. Such involvement in research could also contribute to the sense of <u>'feeling part of the Cosmos community to optimize their contribution and minimize turnover of adjunct staff'</u>, a measure that is clearly favored as stated by the EEC.</p> <p>Table 13: Percentages of time spent in the 3 different pillars of the University's contribution</p>

		RANKING	RESEARCH %	TEACHING %	Other Contributions %
		Professor (permanent personnel)	35	40	25
		Associate Professor (permanent personnel)	40	40	20
		Assistant Professor (permanent personnel)	45	40	15
		Lecturer (permanent personnel)	60	30	10
		Adjunct Professor	10	70	20
		Postdoctoral Fellow	90	10	0
1.3.4 The Institution applies an effective strategy of attracting students/ high-level students from Cyprus	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: In specific, high-level students will be attracted naturally through the long-term legacy of the university, the international reputation of its faculty staff, the fellowships offered by the university to high-level students and the quality of the services offered by the university to all its students.</p> <p>In general, even if we devise the best policies to attract high level students, an Open University's mission is to embrace all levels of potential students (without requirements such as grades or recommendation letters). Every student has the potential to be a high-level student under the right environment, guidance and encouragement.</p>			
1.3.5 The Institution applies an effective strategy to attract high-level students from abroad	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: In specific, high-level students will be attracted naturally through the long-term legacy of the university, the international reputation of its faculty staff, the fellowships offered by the university to high-level students and the quality of the services offered by the university to all its students.</p> <p>In general, even if we devise the best policies to attract high level students, an Open University's mission is to embrace all levels of potential students (without requirements such as grades or recommendation letters). Every student has the potential to be a high-level student under the right environment, guidance and encouragement.</p>			
General Comments		<p>Areas of improvement and recommendations</p> <p>Comment 1: A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations on how to improve the situation. "As per the points made above more detail is required with especially with regards 1.3.4 and 1.3.5. Also more detail on how to attract excellent full time and part staff (for example means and places for advertising, pay at different levels, overall treatment of adjuncts to attract them to Cosmos as opposed to other universities. Note that these are quite different types of academics and different mechanisms will have to be implemented to attract these academics."</p> <p>Answer by CU 1:</p>			

Answers to 1.3.4 and 1.3.5 have been provided above. The same holds for means and places for advertising.

As far as attracting excellent full-time and part-time staff, payment at different levels according to the academic reputation of the faculty staff is a good recommendation to be applied by the Institution. In addition, the commitment of the Institution to provide a good level of funding for research, on a competitive basis, is also a good measure in the right direction, in particular, for attracting adjunct professors as opposed to other universities, together with the possibilities to work remotely due to the nature of the university as distance learning.

EEC's comments on the external evaluation report (Institution's academic profile and orientation)

Overall, the responses are appreciated, but they are not such that we would change our scores.

1.1 Committee's initial comments: Thus far no information is public. There is no website from what we can see. This must be in place. Cosmos makes clear that all pertinent info will be public, but this has to be more concretely articulated. More specificity is required with regards to point 1.1.7. Too much emphasis on this being a Green university. This venerable objective is part and parcel of all programmes from what we can see. How will students be oriented and educated with regards to this objective? Will all students have to take a credit or non-credit course? What is the plan here?

There is an issue with the mission statement. Cosmos is not an open university. It is more of a distance learning institution. An open university is one where no pre-requisites are required. In the programmes being assessed pre-requisites are required similar to what one finds in a 'regular' university.

More info on the advisory board is required.

In the Institution's development strategy, interested parties such as academics, students, graduates and other professional and scientific associations participate in the Institution's development strategy.

Assessment: Above not adequately addressed. Cosmos has significant pre-requisites as it must for core programmes. This is more on-line. Green is great. Specifics remain vague. Thus far more concrete attributes should be specified. Module for all students. Pathways. Lecture series. Example of a programme. Development strategy. Nothing new added.

1.2 Passing grades already awarded. No increases are justified from the responses.

1.2 Upgrade to Compliant

1.3.4-1.3.5 Committee's initial comments: The information provided is typically too vague. Not being accredited is no excuse for being specific with regards to processes and rules and objectives. This vagueness results in lower scores in certain categories. The information in hand does suggest compliance on average, just above the bar. To attract teaching staff, more details are required on where ads will be placed and other means of attracting faculty. Vague of which students will be attracted. On 1.3.1 On pay scale, where is this info from? Also, stipulations for research by position, where is this derived from. Expectations too high for adjunct. Part time staff typically don't have the time to research. Research is typically the domain of full time staff. The % might make it difficult to attract the desired staff with regards to teaching, dominated by adjunct academics.

Assessment: 1.3.4-1.3.5 are the major problem areas. Responses remain vague. No upgrade recommended



2. Quality Assurance

Sub-Areas

2.1 System and quality assurance strategy

2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study

Answer by CU 1: *Guidelines have been provided to all the people who were assigned with the task of writing Study Guides on specific courses belonging to a Program of Studies. They have been provided through remote sessions, like ZOOM or Microsoft Teams, through e-mail examples and CYQAA files (application forms, CV forms, tables to fill etc.), as well as through several telephone communications and discussions made. Other potential teachers of these courses were not yet provided with guidelines on the arrangements of assessments, although they were briefed generally on the requirements of the programs of studies, since a formal process of advertising posts for adjunct professors will follow only upon completion of the Accreditation Process of the Institution, so that it can legally function*

as a recognized University. This is quite natural, as nobody expects any commitment on behalf of people for academic posts in the new Institution prior to its accreditation that legitimizes its function as a recognized university. The overall performance for every course and the process in terms of percentage grading for every course's assignment are clearly stated in the Institutional Application and in the Study Guides addressed to the students. The Rubrics can be found in the "WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES" document (file name: assignments-assessment-guidelines.pdf). which are in line with the statements made in the institutional report. Concrete guidelines will be provided to the teachers on the designing of formative and summative assessments, which will include the performance criteria for the assessments (made also available to students) only upon conducting and finalizing the hiring of the faculty staff and the assignment of courses to the staff members. This cannot be conducted before the end of the Accreditation Process!

Item	Evaluation	Reply
2.1 System and quality assurance strategy	Partially Compliant	
2.1.4 The quality assurance system adequately covers all the functions and sectors of the Institution's activities:		
2.1.4.2 Research	1	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: We would like to kindly reply that, the quality assurance in research is particularly strong (and does not deserve the grading of '1') for the University's international research projects, as these are regulated by official MoUs, Technical Protocols of Collaboration describing the scientific and financial contributions of all the partner institutions involved, properly designed application forms and scrutinization processes by external committees, followed by yearly reviews on all aspects and outcomes of the projects, publications in refereed journals and presentations in conferences. All these processes are specially and carefully designed to meet all quality assurance criteria. The same system of research applications, evaluation, funding, progress monitoring, reporting and publishing is also designed to be followed for the Internal research projects of the University, within its four distinctive phases described in the Institutional Application under the responsibility of the Research Committee of the University.</p> <p>Further to QA policies referred into the Institutional application (Regulation and Procedures of Research Work), CU also includes a special course in every Master Program regarding Research Methodologies.</p>
2.1.4.3 The connection with society	3	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: This issue of the connection with society was addressed through the answers provided in point 1.2 above. The same answers also hold here, for point 2.1.4.3, enhanced by the measures already described how to hire high level faculty staff (both academic faculty and adjunct professors), who will certainly impose high quality standards in connecting with society.</p>
2.1.5 The quality assurance system promotes a culture of quality.	3	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: The hierarchical system monitoring of the implementation of the quality assurance strategy of the Institution across all its</p>

		educational, research and service activities, composed of the Self-Assessment Reports at the level of the Programs and Projects, followed by the Reports and corrective actions taken by the Internal Evaluation Committee of the University, the Report of the Committee of Independent Experts (as a pre-stage to the external evaluation taking place every 4-5 years), and the Reports of the External Evaluation Committee, promotes the creation of a proper Quality Assurance culture for the University. From what we know, the measure of the Independent Experts providing areas for immediate corrective actions related to quality does not exist in other institutions and will be of great importance to the quality assurance establishment at the University.
2.1.6 The Institution consistently applies pre-defined and published regulations covering all phases of student 'life cycle', e.g. student admission, progression, recognition and certification.	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: While we note that there are relevant regulations that cover the student lifecycle, we also note the commitment to our student-centeredness. Therefore, based on learning analytics and our, as CU, annual evaluation by the students, we believe that we will have all the information to further improve our predefined and published regulations and related services.</p> <p>At this phase it is impossible to prove the comment "consistently applies" part, since we have still no students enrolled in our courses.</p>
2.1.7 Institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention, cooperation with other institutions and quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Our University fully aligns with Lisbon Recognition Convention and once accredited we will register the University with the Cyprus Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications and be part of the network. We will follow all regulations and laws under KYSATS (https://www.kysats.ac.cy/) and strongly cooperate with other institutions (participate also in ERASMUS+ projects), both directly and through the information obtained by the various national ENIC/NARIC Centers.</p> <p>CU already participates in the accreditation procedure held by the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA).</p>
2.2 Ensuring quality for the programmes of study	Partially Compliant	
2.2.2 The system and criteria for assessing students' performance in the subjects of the programmes of studies offered by the Institution are clear, sufficient and known to the students.	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Checklist item 2.2.2 is graded as 2. Please check for errata since in the general comments of the EEC they report that "2.2.1 and 2.2.2 appear to be particularly strong".</p> <p>To have the system and criteria for assessing students' performance <u>known</u> to the students implies that the Institution has already enrolled students, and it already operates!</p>
2.2.3 The quality control system refers to specific indicators and is effective	3	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: planning to use learning analytics (relative policy)</p>

<p>2.2.4 The results from student assessments are used to improve the programmes of study</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: All results from student assessments are reviewed by the Academic Coordinator of the Program and presented to the corresponding Council of the Program and the Pedagogical Committee for further improvement.</p> <p>Using results from student assessments to improve the programmes of study implies that the Institution has already enrolled students, and it already operates!</p>
<p>2.2.5 The policy dealing with plagiarism committed by students as well as mechanisms for identifying and preventing it are effective</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Please refer to Annex 3 p 63 XVIII. Policy for Plagiarism</p>
<p>2.2.6 The institutionalised procedures for examining students' objections/ disagreements on issues of student evaluation or academic ethics are effective.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Please see section STUDENT APPEAL under Internal Rules and Procedures, Annex 3a</p>
<p>2.2.7 The Institution provides information about its activities, including the programmes of study it offers and the selection criteria for them, the intended learning outcomes of these programmes, the qualifications awarded, the teaching, learning and assessment procedures used, the pass rates and the learning opportunities available to the students as well as graduate employment information.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: All info is available in our Website which is still "restricted" to the public due to specific rules of the CYQAA. We have created special account for the EEC committee and all credentials and URLs are send in a separate email for security issues.</p>
<p>2.2.8 The Institution ensures that effective methodology is applied in the learning process.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Please refer to part C.3 regarding pedagogical model and eLearning technologies. Further, we participate in National presentations by CYQAA and have established a competent enough Pedagogical Committee.</p>
<p>2.2.9 The Institution systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students, implements procedures for evaluating such data and has a relevant policy in place</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: The University includes a complete survey in each course that is taken (not mandatory) by course students once the semester is completed. Results are analyzed and actions are taken when necessary (Academic Coordinator, Council of the Program, Pedagogical Committee and Student Welfare). Furthermore, our LMS keeps track of every student's activity during the semester and special actions are taken</p>

		<p>as precaution measures. E.g., if a student does not participate in online meetings or submit assessment, the Student Welfare office contacts the student to investigate. See also Risk Assessment.</p> <p>The expression 'The Institution systematically collects data in relation to the academic performance of students' implies a long-term operation of the Institution with enrolled students!</p>
2.2.10.3 Rooms for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: The educational knowledge is delivered through our Programs of Studies curricula in the form of online courses. Therefore, students are enabled to take the courses from their own premises. Exams are taken in examination facilities arranged worldwide and according to our students' location. MoUs for laboratories will be signed once we are accredited as University.</p>
2.2.10.4 Technological infrastructure	3	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Already answered in the Infrastructure section (C.3)</p>
2.2.10.5 Support structures for students with special needs and learning difficulties	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Please refer to ANNEX 3 XXIII. Policy for People with Disabilities</p>
2.2.10.6 Academic Support	3	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Special courses are designed for all the academic faculty and adjunct professors regarding the University IT infrastructure, rules and regulations, pedagogical methodology, and research opportunities in line with the European and International Standards.</p> <p>The academic support provided by the University for its students is analytically described on pages 16-35, 37-38, and 41-43 of the Institutional Application, and for its faculty staff on pages 66,</p>
Findings. There is enough information to identify compliance.		<p>Comment 1: There is enough information to identify compliance. But there is also significant vagueness on key points such as academic dishonesty, addressing special needs, lab space and QA therein. The blended teaching methodology applying to a distance learning university is not adequate. 2.2.1 and 2.2.2 appear to be particularly strong.</p> <p>Answer by CU: Answered in specific comments above.</p>
Areas of improvement and recommendations		<p>Comment 1: Policy on plagiarism is very vague and fluffy. This is a serious challenge for distance learning and there should be specific policies to deal with this. Otherwise, the whole enterprise can sink. Turn it in is one platform that can assist, but one needs upgraded platforms to deal with robotic essay writing. One requires other interventions to deal with purchased essays such interviewing random students, having students submit an outline first with references, having students do a short presentation on their paper. Questions need to be designed minimize cheating on exams as well. 2.2.9 More detail on how data are collected analysed. 2.2.3 is important and therefore more detail is required. This easy to do, just provide more detail. More info on the provision of students with special needs and learning difficulties in the</p>

		<p>Quizzes with several types of MCQs with immediate or deferred feedback (based on guidelines) for formative assessments. Quizzes that use closed questions and simulate real life exams (only the closed questions parts of the examinations with limited submission time).</p> <p>Furthermore, and especially for summative assessments the follow mechanisms are used: Tests are developed based on the specific intended learning outcomes, ILOs, of each course/topics. Each question is mapped to 1 or more Intended Learning Outcomes. Each question is assigned with a weight and an estimation of student time to complete. The weight is reflected as a percentage of the question to the total grade of the exam. The exam is then formulated based on the importance of the ILOs, the points of each question and the total time required to complete the test. The exam is then tested for the time duration and the level of difficulty by a member of the Academic team. For the future anchor questions could be used to measure the discrimination index and further contribute to the quality and objective of our exams.</p> <p>Further to the above we attach the guidelines already submitted online with our application that refer “WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS ASSESSMENT GUIDELINES” document (file name: assignments-asseessment-guidelines.pdf).</p>
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EEC’s comments on the external evaluation report (Quality Assurance)

Quality assurance

Problem area 2.1.4.2.

Assessment Still not clear with regards to how research excellence is evaluated. What are your standards for excellence? Needs to be specified. How to you guard against academic misconduct in research? Basically remain very vague. But easy to comply by designing a concrete QA research system in place in other universities.

No upgrade recommended.

Problem

2.1.6-2.18

Responses remain vague

No upgrade recommended.

2.2.8-2.2.9

Upgrade to 3 recommended

Problem areas 2.2.10.3 & 2.2.10.5

2.2.10.3 remains vague. More info is required, especially in the area medical physics.

2.2.10.5 **Upgrade to 3 recommended**



2.1 System and quality assurance strategy

Upgrade to 3 recommended

3. Administration

Item	Evaluation	Reply
3.	Compliant	
3.2 The members of the teaching and administrative staff and the students participate, at a satisfactory degree and on the basis of based on specified procedures, in the management of the Institution.	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: According to the composition of the management bodies of the University, described in our Charter and in the Institution Application, there is provision for the teaching, administrative staff and students to participate in the management of the Institution.</p>
3.7 The Institution applies procedures for the prevention and disciplinary control of academic misconduct of students, academic and administrative staff, including plagiarism.	2	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Please refer to Annex 3 regarding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • X , Code of Conduct for Employees • XI , Code of Conduct for Research • XII , Code of Conduct for Teaching • XIII , Equality and Anti-Discrimination Policy • XIV , Policy and Code of Practice for Combating Harassment and Sexual Harassment at the Cosmos University • XV , Intellectual Property Policy • XVI , The Personal Problems Management Policy • XVII , Grievance Rules • XVIII , Policy for Plagiarism <p>All the above Rules and Regulations are contained in corresponding Legislation that has passed through the House of Representatives of the Republic of Cyprus and constitute Laws that must be strictly applied. Our University fully aligns with Lisbon Recognition and will be compliant with Cyprus Council for the Recognition of Higher Education Qualifications procedures.</p>
	Findings	<p>Comment 1: The documentation here is sufficient to determine that relatively high scores should be assigned. This was confirmed in the site visit although we were distracted by not so relevant information on the supporter of Cosmos and future plans</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: We would like to thank EEC for the high scoring on this area! We would like also to politely remind that the “supporters” are the members of the Governing Board, the International Advisory Board and Professors. Almost all members have traveled to Cyprus to show their commitment and even those who did not, provide a video (ie Professor John Ellis, Victor Stefanescu Director of Bouygues Construction, Elastic Architects one of the biggest architect office)</p>
	Areas of improvement and recommendations.	<p>Comment 1: One area that requires clarification is the role of the Adjuncts. Will they contribute to administration/governance of the university. This point is important in university that relies on adjuncts for most of their course and programme delivery. They need to feel part of the Cosmos community to optimize their contribution and minimize turnover of adjunct</p>

	<p>staff. Otherwise quality will deteriorate and there will be multiple points of failure.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: In 1.3 in the table presented Adjunct, they have 20% of their time to participate in other activities (apart from teaching and research). In addition, in 3.2, Adjuncts participate in the governance through their representatives in all Institutions Bodies.</p> <p>All the adjunct professors, beyond their teaching duties for the Cosmos Open University, are very welcome and encouraged (but not required) to participate in the research projects of the University and entitled to get funded for research on a small or bigger scale on a competitive basis. Those of them who are senior and/or experienced to do so, can also participate in advising the students on their studies and career issues. Also, according to the organograms of the University, the adjunct professors are represented in the Senate of the Cosmos University.</p> <p>All the above measures, already taken by the Governing Board of Cosmos University, are steps in the right direction and agree fully with the statements made by the EEC: For adjunct professors it is stated by the EEC that: They need to feel part of the Cosmos community to optimize their contribution and minimize turnover of adjunct staff</p> <p>Also, more time should be allocated to research for full time staff given all other responsibilities of these academics. There need not be a research requirement from adjunct staff unless some are hired to mentor and lead on research.</p>
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EEC's comments on the external evaluation report (Administration)

Administration: initial scores is compliant

No changes recommended. Responses are the most part vague. Plagiarism piece & academic misconduct needs significant specificity.

4. Learning and Teaching

Sub-Areas

4.1 Planning the programmes of study

4.2 Organisation of teaching

Item	Evaluation	Reply
4.1 Planning the programmes of study	Compliant	
4.1.2 Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development	2	<p>Comment 1: Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.—NOT CLEAR 4.1.2 IT IS NOT EVIDENT THAT THIS IS THE CASE.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Please refer to annex 3 P. 65 Programme Evaluations Policy</p> <p>Participation The evaluation criteria should encourage collaboration between the evaluator and the individuals or groups involved in the Curriculum.</p> <p>(1) All Programmes of Study will be constantly monitored and evaluated through data analytics (statistical analysis of a large amount of data), covering the areas of</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students' demand and response • Financial sustainability • Students' performance • Students' evaluations about the Programme • Number of students attending the Programme <p>Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development". Currently, we have not involved any students since we are not yet accredited as a University and have no students in any of our programs. Once students are enrolled, we will involve them in improving the current programs and creating new programs. Each course includes a detailed survey for evaluation, students have an open channel with Student Welfare services and educational needs will be gathered on an annually based using online surveys. In these surveys all members and non-members of the University (Societies, Individual learners, other institutions, governing bodies, ...) will be able to participate. In additions, please see answer to 3.2.</p>
4.1.3 The programmes of study are in compliance with the ESG and the existing legislation and meet the professional qualifications requirements in the professional courses, where applicable	2	<p>Comment 1: Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development. Probably, but the narrative is much too vague</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: All Programs where developed based on the procedures and guidelines of Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education are compliant with ESG 2.3 standards.</p>

4.1.4 The Institution ensures that its programmes of study integrate effectively theory and practice.	3	<p>No specific comment by EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: All Programs of Study include theory and practice through interactive activities and hands on laboratories.</p>
4.1.5 The assessment and evaluation procedures and content are in compliance with the level of the programme of study (in reference to EQF).	3	<p>No specific comment by EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Compliance with CYQAA</p>
<p>Justify the numerical scores provided for the quality indicators (criteria) by specifying (if any) the deficiencies.</p>		<p>Comment 1: Students and other stakeholders, including employers, are actively involved on the programmes' review and development.—NOT CLEAR 4.1.2 IT IS NOT EVIDENT THAT THIS IS THE CASE. 4.1.3 Probably, but the narrative is much too vague.</p> <p>Answer by CU: See answer above</p>
4.2 Organization of teaching	Partially Compliant	
4.2.2 Recognition of prior studies and credit transfer is regulated by procedures and regulations that are in line with European standards and/or international practices.	3	<p>No specific comment by EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Compliance with CYQAA</p>
4.2.3 The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons.	1	<p>Comment 1: 4.2.3 There is no evidence that this is case. Nothing concrete and this is a serious problem for any proposed programme that requires lab work.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: We are obliged by CYQAA not to include more than 30 students per teaching room. This is applied in all theoretical courses and laboratories. "The number of students in the teaching rooms is suitable for theoretical, practical and laboratory lessons." Each online classroom does not exceed, based on CYQAA rules, 30 people. Furthermore, CU promotes Collaborative learning through group assignments. The CU has come to initial agreement with Laboratories in Cyprus and Greece to provide access to all Program students. The lab program is well designed and agreed with Laboratory directors and is compliant with the Program ILOs.</p>
4.2.4 The teaching staff of the Institution have regular and effective communication with their students.	2	<p>Comment 1: 4.2.4 Information is very vague. Should provide concrete procedures to given us confidence in what Cosmos is doing</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: This is also stated in our university regulations, Distance Learning methodology and Study guides that each class will have weekly contact hours twice per week at least 2 hours per session and 6 interactive sessions each 2 hours. Furthermore, students can communicate with students via chats, video conference and emails, state-of-the-art video conference tools and real time forums.</p>
4.2.5 The teaching staff of the Institution provides timely and	2	<p>Comment 1: 4.2.5 Information is very vague. Should provide concrete procedures to given us confidence in what Cosmos is doing</p>

<p>effective feedback to their students.</p>		<p>Answer by CU 1: This is also stated in our university regulations, Distance Learning methodology and Study guides that teaching staff provide timely and effective feedback to their students. In the example course, 4 written assignments are included with online feedback by the teacher. Furthermore, it is stated in the Study Guide and in the online course that these assignments will be presented by the student group to the classroom, therefore also preventing <i>plagiarism</i> and cheating.</p>
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EEC's comments on the external evaluation report (Learning and Teaching)

4.1.2 Recommended for upgrade to 3
Other ratings do not change.

4.2.3 No upgrade recommended—critical problems with regards to how programmes such as medical physics would be organized in teaching spacesw.

4.2.4 Recommended for upgrade to 3

4.2.5 Recommended for upgrade to 3

4.2 Organisation of teaching

Borderline compliant (upgrade)

5. Teaching Staff

Item	Evaluation	Reply																																																		
D5	Partially Compliant	<p>Comment : Information provided suggests that overall teaching staff will be adequate. But it is not clear that enough fulltime staff relative to adjuncts are sufficient given the administrative role that's expected and the research expected for full time staff and for the university as a whole. This endangers the quality of education as well as the research orientation of Cosmos' mission and vision. There do appear to be gaps in teaching qualifications of some of the adjuncts that should be addressed (medical physics).</p> <p>Answer by CU: Overall answer</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>NUMBER OF STUDENTS</th> <th>325</th> <th>900</th> <th>1250</th> <th>1725</th> </tr> <tr> <th>RATIO STUDENTS / FACULTY STAFF</th> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <th>PERIOD 1</th> <th>PERIOD 2</th> <th>PERIOD 3</th> <th>PERIOD 4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td> <td>6.02</td> <td>6.25</td> <td>5.98</td> <td>6.12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <p>The general advice from CYQAA is a ratio of 1/10. In other institutions like The Open University of UK the ration is at 1/22, in Open Catalonia at 1/17, in Open Greece at 1/18. In our model (and in the financial one) we have considered ratios of almost 1/6 which is a ratio that someone can find in IVY Schools. The reason for such an assumption was to over-stress our financial model and at the same time to test our potential good service to our students. The ratio of 1/6 ensures that professors (permanent or non-permanent) have a very big population in the Institution. Based on this ratio, we have considered the ratio of permanent to non-permanent (or equivalent in definition academic faculty to adjunct ones) and the ratio of total teaching staff to administration as</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>RATIO ADJUNCT / ACADEMIC</th> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> <tr> <td></td> <th>PERIOD 1</th> <th>PERIOD 2</th> <th>PERIOD 3</th> <th>PERIOD 4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>ADJUNCT PROFESSORS</td> <td>40</td> <td>120</td> <td>180</td> <td>240</td> </tr> <tr> <td>ACADEMIC FACULTY</td> <td>14</td> <td>24</td> <td>29</td> <td>42</td> </tr> <tr> <td>RATIO</td> <td>2.9</td> <td>5</td> <td>6.2</td> <td>5.2</td> </tr> </tbody> </table> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF</th> <th>24</th> <th>30</th> <th>44</th> <th>51</th> </tr> </thead> </table> <p>We automatically see that the ratio of academic faculty to adjunct goes to 1/5. The ratio admin/ academic staff goes to 1/5 also. All these ratios are with respect to the initial ratio of students/ faculty staff 1/6 which produce a massive population of faculty staff to the Institution.</p> <p>These tables were part of the presentation and presented during the visit of EEC and uploaded before the visit to google drive.</p> <p>Moreover, we would like to point out that the Open University of Cyprus has for 3700 students, 29 permanent professors which give us a ratio of 1/127!!</p>	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	325	900	1250	1725	RATIO STUDENTS / FACULTY STAFF						PERIOD 1	PERIOD 2	PERIOD 3	PERIOD 4		6.02	6.25	5.98	6.12	RATIO ADJUNCT / ACADEMIC						PERIOD 1	PERIOD 2	PERIOD 3	PERIOD 4	ADJUNCT PROFESSORS	40	120	180	240	ACADEMIC FACULTY	14	24	29	42	RATIO	2.9	5	6.2	5.2	ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF	24	30	44	51
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		As concerned “There do appear to be gaps in teaching qualifications of some of the adjuncts that should be addressed (medical physics).” this is a comment that we would like to answer at the examination of the program “Medical Physics and Diagnostic Imaging”.
5.1 The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study. 3	3	Overall answer is provided
5.3 The Visiting Professors' subject areas adequately support the Institution's programmes of study. 3	3	Overall answer is provided
5.4 The special teaching staff and special scientists have the required qualifications, sufficient professional experience and expertise to teach a limited number of programmes of study. 3	3	Overall answer is provided
5.5 The ratio of special teaching staff to the total number of teaching staff is 1	1	Overall answer is provided

satisfactory.		
5.6 The ratio of the number of subjects of the programme of study taught by teaching staff working fulltime and exclusively to the number of subjects taught by part-time teaching staff ensures the quality of the programme of study.	1	Overall answer is provided
5.8 The number of teaching staff - full-time and exclusive work - and the subject area of the staff sufficiently support the programmes of study	3	Overall answer is provided
<p>Areas of improvement and recommendations. A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation</p>	<p>Comment: There is not enough fulltime staff relative to adjuncts are sufficient given the administrative role that's expected, and the research expected for full time staff and for the university as a whole. This endangers the quality of education as well as the research orientation of Cosmos' mission and vision. There does appear to be gaps in teaching qualifications of some of the adjuncts that should be addressed (medical physics). Also, there is no gap analysis to identify any gaps in teaching expertise. This is a serious problem, especially given the number of adjuncts and the very small number of fulltime faculty.</p> <p>Answer by CU: Overall answer is provided</p>	

EEC's comments on the external evaluation report (Teaching staff)

Main problem areas: 5.5 & 5.6

Panel's initial comments:

There is not enough fulltime staff relative to adjuncts are sufficient given the administrative role that's expected, and the research expected for full time staff and for the university as a whole.

This endangers the quality of education as well as the research orientation of Cosmos' mission and vision.

There does appear to be gaps in teaching qualifications of some of the adjuncts that should be addressed (medical physics).

Also, there is no gap analysis to identify any gaps in teaching expertise. This is a serious problem, especially given the number of adjuncts and the very small number of fulltime faculty.

Assessment

We remain concerned about the number of adjuncts relative to fulltime staff given the significant admin role required by full time staff and the research required of such staff. Cosmos does not respond to these concerns. At this point, this is of particular importance for the Medical Physics programme.

No upgrade recommended

6. Research

Item	Evaluation	Reply
D.6	Compliant	
6.7 The Institution ensures that research results are integrated into teaching and, to the extent applicable, promotes and implements a policy of transferring know-how to society and the production sector.	2	<p>Comment 1: The evidence suggests compliance. But it is not clear how research will be integrated into teaching or that teaching will be research-led. This is an important gap given the importance of research to Cosmos' mission, vision, and strategy.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: Each course's learning material is evidence based. CU has already established a contract with EBSCO regarding research databases relevant to the submitted programs. CU will participate in the Cyprus Academic Libraries Consortium once CU gets the institutional accreditation. Teaching staff (full time and adjunct research portfolio will be an important factor during the hire procedure). Each Program of Studies includes at least one 6-7 ECTS course on Research Methodology in the corresponding field.</p> <p>In addition, most of the study programs of the new Institution will be offered at the graduate level, contributing to a closer interaction between the teaching content of the programs' courses with the later results of research in the corresponding fields. This cultivates stronger mentality of transferring know-how to society and the graduate programs necessarily have a closer contact with the production sector.</p>

<p>6.8 The Institution provides mechanisms which ensure compliance with international rules of research ethics, both in relation to research activity and the rights of researcher</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: Signing the European Charter for Researchers and implementing the guidelines of the code of conduct for researchers is a right step towards establishing the compliance of the new Institution with the international rules of research ethics.</p>
<p>6.9 The external, non-governmental, funding of research activities of academic staff is similar to other Institutions in Cyprus and abroad.</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>No specific comment from EEC</p> <p>Answer by CU: The external, non-governmental funding of research activities of the faculty staff is like other Institutions in Cyprus and abroad; however, the internal funding level and research scheme of the Institution are expected to provide better integration of the adjunct professors into its research outcome.</p>
<p>6.11 The programmes of study implement the Institution's recorded research policy.</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>Comment 1: Same as comment 6.7</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: The recorded research policy of the Institution gives great importance to state-of-the-art scientific fields and areas contributing to innovation and a rich spectrum of applications for the benefit of science, the future generations of scientists and society as a whole. Such areas enhance the international visibility of the Institution; they include several programs of study that are currently under implementation or being designed in our Institution, such as Medical Physics and Diagnostic Imaging (great need to address and cure serious diseases and an area with many applications), Sustainable Environmental and Energy Management (great urgency to handle environmental problems, contribute to the mitigation of climate change, develop circular economy, manage the depleting energy sources of the planet and to develop new and safe energy sources like fusion and renewable energy sources), Epidemiology and Public Health (handle health crises and pandemics like covid19), and Strategy-Intelligence and Cybersecurity (address new emerging threats and provide security solutions from new technologies). There are new programs of studies for later-on, on blue economy, artificial intelligence, engineering physics and management leading to pronounced applications, space physics and clinical pharmacology, that are very innovative in research, as well as fields enhancing the educational performance of people, such as pedagogical methodologies, better knowledge of IT and communication technologies, and language strengthening for intercultural communications.</p>
<p>Findings:</p>		<p>Please refer to Annex 2, page 70 or 72? - Research Centre Research fields 7. (1) Aiming at the best and wider activity of the Centre, decision of the Senate and approval of the University Council to create special research units with a specific and exclusive field of activities.</p> <p>Refer to Annex 2, page 72 or 74? - The Research Funding Internal Regulations</p> <p>Refer to Annex 3, page 83 - Research Policy and Procedure</p> <p>For a university with an expressed vision to provide high quality education with innovative programs of studies, it is natural to expect that its research will also be of a high-level. The same should also hold for the regulations concerning its professors' funding and the relations of the university with society and organizations governed by Memoranda of Understanding and Technical Protocols of Collaboration.</p>

	<p>Refer to Annex 2, page 31 or Annex 3, page 75 - The Sabbatical Leave Rules</p> <p>The purpose of the Sabbatical is to conduct research and enrich the knowledge of the beneficiary by participating (involvement) in a research project at an institution abroad or at home, or in a center such as a library or museum outside the University.</p>
<p>Areas of improvement and recommendations</p>	<p>Comment 1: It is not clear how research will be integrated into teaching or that teaching will be research-led. This is an important gap given the importance of research to Cosmos' mission, vision, and strategy.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: See answer for 6.7</p>

EEC's comments on the external evaluation report (Research)

Panel initially evaluated research as compliant.

Problem areas: 6.7 & 6.11. Also (from the Panel's initial review): "Overall, the research strategy appears to be reasonable. But it is not clear how it will be implemented given its low full time to part time faculty ratio. No substantive discussion on this point and challenge."

Reponses are not specific enough. No new information on implementation. Of critical importance is the lack of time available for full time staff to do research. What are expectations for research output?

No upgrade recommended.

7. Resources

Item	Evaluation Reply	n
(page 37-39)	Compliant	
7.2 The Institution follows sound and efficient management of the available financial resources in order to develop academically and research wise		3
7.3 The Institution's profits and donations are used for its development and for the benefit of the university community.		3
7.4 The Institution's budget is appropriate for its mission and adequate for the implementation of strategic planning.		3
7.5 The Institution carries out an assessment of the risks and sustainability of the programmes of study and adequately provides feedback on their operation.		2
General comment		

Please see "General Response to comments" in below row

Please see "General Response to comments" in below row

Answer by CU: See "General Response to comments" in below row

No specific comment from EEC

Answer by CU: There exists a risk assessment table in the institutional application and the "remedies" concerning this matter. In addition, in the SWOT analysis of each program weaknesses and threats are considered, and their "remedies" are provided.

Comment 1: The information in hand suggests compliance. It is not clear that all costs of running the university is adequately covered, especially that which related to operating a distance learning university that aspires to a blended learning approach. More details are required on how course viability is determined and the conditions under which a course or programme will be deleted. It should also be clear if there will be any cross subsidization across programmes. Will any lab resources require significant expenditure

	<p>(what would be the estimated size). How many students to make a course financially viable. It should be clear how much funds will be available by investors after the first two years. Will the university then have to pull its own weight financially? Clarify.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: In every programme application, there is a mandatory field “Feasibility Study”. In specific, for the two programmes submitted for accreditation, CU has provided in detail the feasibility study i.e., revenues, direct expenses, variable expenses, profit/losses etc. These tables also exist in the presentations uploaded on Google drive.</p>																									
<p>Findings A short description of the situation in the Institution based on evidence from the Institution’s application and the site - visit.</p>	<p>Comment 1: Cosmos appears to be financially compliant. But more information is required on the extent of financial viability after the two years of significant subsidies lapses. Much emphasis was placed on the investors; not enough on revenue generated through operation of the university and related costs, both fixed and variable. Basically, more information is required on revenue and costs on annualized bases and what are the benchmark of course and programme viability</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: See “General Response to comments” in below row</p>																									
<p>Areas of improvement and recommendations A list of problem areas followed by or linked to the recommendations of how to improve the situation</p>	<p>Comment 1: . More information is required on the extent of financial viability after the two years of significant subsidies lapses. Much emphasis was placed on the investors; not enough on revenue generated through operation of the university and related costs, both fixed and variable. Basically, more information is required on revenue and costs on annualized bases and what are the benchmark of course and programme viability. This is easily done. One has to cost faculty, overhead costs, and revenue based on market demand. One has to stipulate the time line for a module to prove itself in terms of financial viability. The committee is concerned that not all costs to operate a distant learning university with a blending learning orientation has been properly costed. Solution: review the financials provided and update the information if required. This is critically important to guide the university into financially sustainable future. No documentation of the possible further financial contributions of investors. Hence, this can’t serve as a basis to evaluate the long run viability of Cosmos were it to achieve its mission and vision.</p> <p>Answer by CU 1: See “General Response to comments” in below row</p>																									
<p>General Response to comments</p>	<p>FINAL ANSWER BY CU FOR ALL: In the Institutional application it is true that in the section for the budget the recommendation is to run a 2-year model. BUT the CU has submitted a 4-year plan! At the same time, in the presentation “The Financial Operations and Planning of the Institution” which was presented during to EEC during their visit in CU, a 4-year plan was considered!! The presentation was uploaded 2 days before visit to Google drive. On this Institution’s feasibility study expenses were considered (both direct and variable), revenues, profit/loss etc. (See uploaded presentation). At the same time, we are running multiple financial scenarios, projections with Deloitte in a 30.000 euro study for a 10 year period! In addition, there is a cost of 100.000 euro per year that we did not include, which is a small number that does not affect the model significantly. The viability of the CU is ensured after the second year, and it keeps having “profit” for years 2,3,4.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>PROFIT/LOSS</th> <th>PERIOD 1</th> <th>PERIOD 2</th> <th>PERIOD 3</th> <th>PERIOD 4</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Income</td> <td>2300000</td> <td>6300000</td> <td>8500000</td> <td>11550000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Expenses</td> <td>2586200</td> <td>4801150</td> <td>6256550</td> <td>8386013</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Profit</td> <td>-286200</td> <td>1498850</td> <td>2243450</td> <td>3163987</td> </tr> <tr> <td>%</td> <td>-11.1%</td> <td>31.2%</td> <td>35.9%</td> <td>37.7%</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	PROFIT/LOSS	PERIOD 1	PERIOD 2	PERIOD 3	PERIOD 4	Income	2300000	6300000	8500000	11550000	Expenses	2586200	4801150	6256550	8386013	Profit	-286200	1498850	2243450	3163987	%	-11.1%	31.2%	35.9%	37.7%
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Profits" will be used for further development of the University according to its strategy and Vision • "Losses" will be covered by the capital of the University or directly by the investors <p>This table and the comments exist in the presentation mentioned above and presented.</p> <p>Regarding the sub comment “No documentation of the possible further financial contributions of investors. Hence, this can’t serve as a basis to evaluate the long run viability of Cosmos were it to achieve its mission and vision.”. In the Institutional application, in the presentation during the visit of EEC the following statement exists “The founders are willing to provide any additional capital to fulfill the Vision and Mission of Cosmos Open University. The founders will rely on their personal wealth during the first five years of development and operation. Thus, loans would not be necessary or any other external funding.”</p> <p>This statement was also made in person during the visit of EEC by Mr. Papadakos (during the presentation of the Governing Board, at his speech) and from the statement of Prince Majed Al Saud which was presented by his representative. The reason for considering 5 years is due to the second accreditation that it will take place after 5 years.</p>
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EEC’s comments on the external evaluation report (Resources)

7.5 Panel recommends upgrade to 3.

Concerns remain on how feasibility is determined on a module or course basis

Conclusions and Final Remarks

Item	Evaluation	Reply
a. “But we do not believe that the institution is ready to launch for October 2023. The teaching and learning infrastructure won’t be ready from what we can see.”		Please see answer in Justification of comments in C.3.
b. “On the mission, Cosmos is more of a distance learning/e-learning institution, not an open university where no pre-requisites are required for entry. This needs clarification”	Partially Compliant	Please see answer in D1 item 1.1
c. “With regards to human welfare services: Consider recruiting suitably qualified, specialist staff for supporting students with	Compliant	We will consider the EEC recommendation recruiting suitably qualified, specialist staff and in accordance with CU policies (Annex 3, XXIII Policy for People with Disabilities) for supporting students with disabilities.

<p>disabilities andfor the quality assurance of student welfare services.”</p>		
<p>d. “With regards to Cosmos being a distance learning institution we were told that the critical e-learning Cloud based infrastructure will not be readythe functional didactical requirements of the universities education system which should be fulfilled by the elearning infrastructure. This could lead to a technology push instead of pull system.”</p>	<p>Partially Compliant</p>	<p>Please see answer in Justification of comments in C.3.</p>
<p>e. “So, we advise that the university creates a concrete requirements analysis specifying the functionalities that are needed by teachers,and relatedly QA”</p>		<p>Please see answer in Justification of comments in C.3.</p>
<p>f. “There is no information available for students (and probably also for teachers) what the performance criteria are and how the grading process takes place. Rubrics for instance are absent. This is not in line with good practice and with the (very to the point) statements about this in the institutional report. We strongly advise the university to provide concrete guidelines to the teachers how to design formative and summative assessments and include the performance criteria for the assessments that are also made available to students.”</p>		<p>Please see answer in section D.2. Areas of improvement and recommendation answer by Cosmos University.</p>
<p>g. “More detail on how to attract excellent full time and part staff (for example means and places for advertising, pay at different levels, overall treatment of adjuncts to attract them to Cosmos as opposed to other universities). Note that these are quite different</p>	<p>Compliant</p>	<p>Please see answer in D.1 section 1.3</p>

<p>types of academics and different mechanisms will have to be implemented to attract these academics”</p>		
<p>h. “Policy on plagiarism is very vague and fluffy. This is a serious challenge for distance learning and there should be specific policies to deal with this. Turn-It-In is one platform that can assist, but one needs upgraded platforms to deal with robotic essay writing. One requires other interventions to deal with purchased essays such interviewing random students, having students submit an outline first with references, having students do a short presentation on their paper. Questions need to be designed minimize cheating on exams as well.”</p>		<p>Please see answer in C.3. regarding tools included in our platform and methodologies applied by teaching staff. See Annex 3 XVIII. Policy for Plagiarism</p>
<p>i. “More info on the provision of students with special needs and learning difficulties in the online learning space. Modified exams, more time for exams, access for special software depending on needs? How about access to labs when required?”</p>		<p>Please see answer in C.2. section 2.1 and section 2.2.10.5</p>
<p>j. “There should also be more information on the methodology of learning. There should be details on the online version of blended and how it will be operationalized. Since we are evaluating a programme that requires lab space, there should more useful and carefully crafted info on how this will be actioned and then on the QA process that will ensure that students will be treated equitably across on labs and that course objectives and rubrics are clearly specified.”</p>		<p>Please see answer in C.3. in Justifications of Comments</p>

<p>k. “There are different approaches to blended learning and relatedly to QA in the distance learning space. Cosmos needs to figure what it wants to do given its mission and strategy. This has not been adequately done. Not difficult to do. This is critical if this university if to offer a quality product and a high level of excellence in terms of learning outcomes and the student experience.”</p>		<p>We apply CYQAA procedures and QA policy to meet standards of Open Universities. To achieve this we have a specific <u>Training the Trainers</u> program to ensure quality assurance in teaching. See all comments made by CU in D.2 QA</p>
<p>l. “Another area that requires clarification is the role of the adjuncts. Also, will they contribute to administration/governance of the university? This point is important in university that relies on adjuncts for most of their course and programme delivery. They need to feel part of the Cosmos community to optimize their contribution and minimize turnover of adjunct staff. Otherwise quality will deteriorate and there will be multiple points of failure.”</p>		<p>See D.3 section Areas of improvements and recommendations</p>
<p>m. “The University should be clear how Cosmos will incorporate student input and feedback. On lab space. Concrete example of probable facilities and location, student access and QA. Critically important for programme. Currently, everything is vague, nothing is written down.”</p>		<p>Course and Laboratories surveys Students participate in QA and Program Evaluation Mention Ογκολογικά Κέντρα and Laboratories in Greece Each lab sessions will have curriculum and scheduled activities, report from Laboratory director and report from Student</p>
<p>n. “There is not enough fulltime staff relative to adjuncts are sufficient given the administrative role that’s expected, and the research expected for full time staff and for the university as a whole. This endangers the quality of education as well as the</p>	<p>Partially Compliant</p>	<p>Please see answer in D.5 section Assessment Area</p>

research orientation of Cosmos' mission and vision."		
o. "There does appear to be gaps in teaching qualifications of some of the adjuncts that should be addressed (medical physics)."		This is a question that will be answered in the Program accreditation.
p. "Also, there is no gap analysis to identify any gaps in teaching expertise. This is a serious problem, especially given the number of adjuncts and the very small number of fulltime faculty."	Partially compliant	Please see answer in D.5 section Assessment Area Moreover, gap analysis will be conducted after the accreditation of the CU, when we will have the ability to make post announcements for academic positions (permanent and no permanent). Currently, we have already many pre-contracts, especially for adjunct ones (more than 25 at this stage where 2 programs were presented)
q. "It is not clear how research will be integrated into teaching or that teaching will be researched. This is an important gap given the importance of research to Cosmos' mission, vision, and strategy. Cosmos should specify the means by which Cosmos faculty research and other research will be integrated into teaching and how this will be monitored."	Compliant (Research)	See answer in D.6 section 6.7
r. "It is not clear how Cosmos' mission, vision, and strategy with regards to research will be implemented given its low full time to part time faculty ratio. No substantive discussion on this point and challenge. More full staff should be hired given the university's research strategy. Also, more time should be allocated to research for full time staff given all other responsibilities of these academics. There need not be a research requirement from adjunct staff unless some are hired to mentor and lead on research."	Compliant (Research)	See answer in D.6 section 6.11
s. "A website should be developed ASAP for Cosmos university. It		See answer in C.3 in section JUSTIFICATION OF COMMENTS

would have been useful if something was prepared prior to the site visit.”		
t. “On the finances: More information is required on the extent of financial viability after the two years of significant subsidies lapses.its mission and vision”	Compliant (Recourses)	See answer in D.7 in section Areas of improvement and recommendations

EEC’s conclusions and final remarks

We wish to thank Cosmos staff for their responses.

Overall, we find that their responses remain vague. Although, **for certain areas we recommend upgrade.**

Many of the concerns we raised in our initial appraisal remain.

Signatures of the EEC

<i>Name</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Morris Altman	
Rob Koper	
Iuliana Toma-Dasu	
Timo Goeschl	
Kyriacos Andreou	
Matthew Kitching	
Michalis Trypiniotis	
Erato Stylianou Markidou	

Date: April 2, 2023

