



Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 07.06.2024

## Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
Neapolis University
- **Town:** Pafos
- **Programme of study**  
**Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

**In Greek:**

Μεταπτυχιακό Πρόγραμμα στη Βιώσιμη Διεθνή  
Διοίκηση (εξ αποστάσεως)

**In English:**

MSc in International Sustainable Management (E-  
Learning/ 1.5 years/90 ECTS)

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

**In Greek:** None

**In English:** None



**The present document has been prepared within the framework of the authority and competencies of the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education, according to the provisions of the “Quality Assurance and Accreditation of Higher Education and the Establishment and Operation of an Agency on Related Matters Laws” of 2015 to 2021 [L.136(I)/2015 – L.132(I)/2021].**

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

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

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

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>   | Actions Taken by the Institution  | For Official Use ONLY              |
|--|---|------------------------------------|
| <p>The programme seems to not have clear learning objectives and outcomes for diverse pool of student, and it is not sufficiently clear how these learning outcomes are mapped to the modules offered and the assessment tools used. A more explicit and consistent mapping would considerably aid the comprehension and execution effectiveness of the programme.</p> | <p>Done. The existing Programme Learning Outcomes (PLOs), are as follows:</p> <p>PLO1. Value the meaning and implications of sustainable management and its application within an international business context.</p> <p>PLO2. Assess when it is best for an organization to focus either on organization's strategic choices, or policy making from external bodies.</p> <p>PLO3. Apply different sources related to international sustainable management within the context of their own research in order to create new knowledge.</p> <p>PLO4. Create custom based solutions to specific business problems, following the role analysis of leadership and human resource management for all the different departments and functions of an international business and their impact with external factors.</p> <p>PLO5. Communicate effectively the information available in interdisciplinary and multicultural international business environments for the promotion of a business as widely as possible.</p> <p>PLO6. Propose strategies that will make a business as sustainable as possible into the future following an evaluation of innovation driven challenges and opportunities within an international business context.</p> <p>Due to the change in the name of the programme from "<b>International Sustainable Management</b>" to "<b>International Sustainability Management</b>" (please see EEC comments and responses from us in the rest of this section 1), we propose the following changes at a programme level, without the need for these to have any impact on Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) and assessments/activities within each course:</p> <p><b>PL01.</b> Value the meaning and implications of sustainable management and its application within an international business context.</p> <p><b>CHANGED TO:</b></p> <p><b>PL01.</b> Value the meaning and implications of sustainability and its application for businesses of various industries and sectors within an international context.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

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|  | <p><b>PLO2.</b> Assess when it is best for an organization to focus either on organization’s strategic choices, or policy making from external bodies.<br/> <b>CHANGED TO:</b><br/> <b>PLO2.</b> Assess businesses’ options with regard to their strategic choices that emanate from their internal environment and policy making that emanate from bodies in their external environment.</p> <p><b>PLO3.</b> Apply different sources related to international sustainable management within the context of their own research in order to create new knowledge.<br/> <b>CHANGED TO:</b><br/> <b>PLO3.</b> Use different sources of data (primary, secondary, qualitative, quantitative) to enhance existing and create new knowledge with regard to sustainability.</p> <p><b>PLO4.</b> Create custom based solutions to specific business problems, following the role analysis of leadership and human resource management for all the different departments and functions of an international business and their impact with external factors.<br/> <b>CHANGED TO:</b><br/> <b>PLO4.</b> Use leadership and human resource management to help aid solutions to the sustainability-oriented problems and challenges of an international business.</p> <p><b>PLO5.</b> Communicate effectively the information available in interdisciplinary and multicultural international business environments for the promotion of a business as widely as possible.<br/> <b>CHANGED TO:</b><br/> <b>PLO5.</b> Establish and use communication skills as effectively as possible, especially In the context of an interdisciplinary and multicultural international business environment.</p> <p><b>PLO6.</b> Propose strategies that will make a business as sustainable as possible into the future following an evaluation of innovation driven challenges and opportunities within an international business context.<br/> <b>CHANGED TO:</b></p> |  |
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|   | <b>PLO6.</b> Propose innovative sustainability strategies based on the principles of profit, people, planet, that will make a business as sustainable as possible into the future.   |                             |
| In the current application, the content and design are problematic in that they reflect a 'Management and Sustainability' programme rather than a sustainability programme as a whole, owing to the number of modules that are not sustainability orientated and which instead reflect dimensions of business management per se. Whilst these undoubtedly have strengths for the University as 'tried and tested' modules on other Programmes. Their contribution to this specific (sustainability) programme is problematic.         | Done. EEC has offered 3 options and the university has chosen to implement the following: "option 2 – keep the programme content as it is, but as a 'management with sustainability' programme. This is in line with the third comment from the EEC below in this section and reflects the foundations upon which this programme has been created – to focus on sustainability (than management). During the meeting of the EEC with the Programme creator and Head of the Department and the 'exit discussion' meeting of the EEC with the Programme creator, Head of the Department and the Rector of the University, it was discussed that an appropriate title for this program would be <b>"International Sustainability Management"</b> and <b>this is what we will provide.</b> | Choose level of compliance: |
| The recommendations above also impact the name of the programme (currently: "International Sustainable Management"). The name of the programme needs to be aligned with the programme's core educational content and objectives. The current name is ambiguous as it could be misread as a pure management programme rather than a programme that focuses on sustainability. The new title should explicitly reflect the sustainability aspect and enhance the programme's appeal and clarity to potential students and stakeholders. | In alignment with the response to the second comment of the EEC in this section, we have changed the name of the programme from "International Sustainable Management" to "International Sustainability Management". This was a possible title that we discussed prior to the submission of the application at the end of 2023.  | Choose level of compliance: |
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## 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>  | Actions Taken by the Institution  | For Official Use ONLY              |
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| <p>The committee's primary concern regarding the DL methodology is the inadequate tutor support for part-time distance students. Each course, worth 7.5 ECTS (equivalent to 187.5 hours of student work), combined with a four-course enrolment per semester, results in a total of 750 work hours over 13 weeks. This equates to over 57 hours per week, which we believe is an excessive workload for online part-time students. We recommend a review of the enrolment assessment process and a collaborative effort to synchronize course activity schedules to prevent overlapping deadlines.</p> <p>It is also crucial to ensure that study guides accurately detail the workload and study time required for each weekly activity, aiding students in effective semester planning.</p> | <p>It should be noted that the students have the option to study this programme in 18 months as the minimum duration and up to 30 months as the maximum duration.</p> <p>This gives the flexibility to the students to perform their studies at their own chosen pace, taking into consideration their other obligations as well, if any, beyond their university studies.</p> <p>As such, we ensure as University to make it very clear to prospective applicants that their studies can take place within the 18-30 months' time frame (including the necessary time dedicated to complete their dissertation thesis).</p>  | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |
| <p>While live teleconferencing sessions are beneficial, particularly when employing a flipped classroom format and incorporating teamwork, it is essential to consider the diverse time zones of DL students. Currently, this is not an issue as most students reside in Cyprus and Greece. However, we advise the University to anticipate the need to adapt the DL model to accommodate a greater proportion of asynchronous activities.</p> <p>We suggest that the DLU explore the adoption of advanced</p>  | <p>We would like to note that all the live teleconferencing sessions in our DL programs are recorded, remaining accessible till the end of semester and the intention is to do the same for the "International Sustainability Management" programme.</p> <p>We keep the suggestion in mind with regard to the advanced feedback mechanisms, intelligent tutoring systems and conversational pedagogical agents especially once the programme starts running and in anticipation of the students' possible needs in terms of feedback.</p> <p>For the time being, we believe that the bi-weekly live teleconferencing sessions, the fact that these are to be recorded and the programme directors and course leaders' availability are sound enough methods to accommodate the students' need for feedback.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |

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| <p>feedback mechanisms, such as intelligent tutoring systems and conversational pedagogical agents, to expedite the resolution of student inquiries and facilitate self-assessment of their progress.</p>  | <p>Furthermore, the fact that the live teleconferencing sessions are to be recorded adds to the richness of the asynchronous activities that the students can perform on a weekly basis together with the ones entailed in their study guides.</p> |                                    |
| <p>As this is an international program, we propose that the University consider pursuing external voluntary accreditations (e.g. EFQUEL, EADTU, QS Stars) to further evaluate and enhance its DL quality assurance measures. This would complement the existing cooperative agreements with other European universities.</p> | <p>We would like to note that Neapolis University Paphos is a member of EDEN: <b>European Distance and E-Learning Network</b>. We certainly keep the point made by the EEC for further expansion with regard to this matter.</p>                   | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |
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### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>  | Actions Taken by the Institution   | For Official Use ONLY              |
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| <p>The EEC suggests that the NUP should provide further support of the research agenda for the teaching staff and encourage all faculty in a more active involvement in research activities. This could involve the establishment of proper incentives, data availability, and the encouragement of research cooperation domestically and abroad.</p> | <p>The Vice Rector of the university has a research fund available to aid the research activities of teaching staff in particular and all faculty in general. The full policy is attached in a separate file and is based on the following 6 elements:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.Publication-based incentives</li> <li>2.Research funding</li> <li>3.Seed-funding for early stage researchers</li> <li>4.Initial funding for new academic staff</li> <li>5.Internal research programs</li> <li>6.Participation in external research programs.</li> </ol> <p>It should also be noted that there are several staff mobilities taking place every year through the Erasmus+ programme to aid staff development with regard to teaching, research and training. Please, <b>see Annex1 NUP Research Policy</b></p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |
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#### 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>   | Actions Taken by the Institution   | For Official Use ONLY       |
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| A main drawback identified is the workload and assessments required of students, which exceed expectations and demand much more personal effort than students can manage. This excessive burden might hinder their ability to achieve the learning outcomes. | In alignment with the first answer provided in section 2, we would like to reiterate the fact that the students have a choice in terms of the duration that their programme of study can last, ranging from 18 months as a minimum to 30 months, as a maximum. | Choose level of compliance: |
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## 5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>  | Actions Taken by the Institution   | For Official Use ONLY       |
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| DL necessitates a foundational level of digital literacy. While the University acknowledges this requirement and may provide some support to new students, the EEC strongly recommends the implementation of targeted, brief introductory courses. These courses should be designed to equip students with the necessary digital skills, ensuring they can fully concentrate on their chosen program from the outset, particularly during their first semester. | Done. We have prepared a 20-hour syllabus which is titled <b><i>“DL Students Digital Literacy Seminar Syllabus”</i></b> and equips students with essential digital literacy skills required for successful completion of distance learning Programmes of Study.<br>Please, <b><i>see Annex2_ Digital Literacy Seminar Syllabus</i></b> | Choose level of compliance: |
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**6. Additional for doctoral programmes**  
 (ALL ESG)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b> | Actions Taken by the Institution | For Official Use ONLY       |
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## 7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

| Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b> | Actions Taken by the Institution | For Official Use ONLY       |
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## B. Conclusions and final remarks

| Conclusions and final remarks by EEC   | Actions Taken by the Institution   | For Official Use ONLY              |
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| <p>To establish the sustainability and the competitive advantage of the new programme over the coming years, and considering the recent developments and competition, the EEC has identified areas of improvement. We have elaborated on these recommendations in each section above, highlighting where further development is recommended.</p> | <p>We have taken on board all of the suggestions and recommendations of the EEC on how the programme can be improved and as such be even more responsive to the needs of potential students.</p> | <p>Choose level of compliance:</p> |
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### C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| <i>Name</i>                      | <i>Position</i>         | <i>Signature</i> |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------|
| <b>Professor Pantelis Sklias</b> | Rector                  |                  |
| Click to enter Name              | Click to enter Position |                  |
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**Date:** 07.06.2024

