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1st November 2017

Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance
& Accreditation in Higher Education,
Chair of the Council,
Nicosia, Cyprus

Dear Professor Koutselini,

SUBJECT: Evaluation of the LLM in International Business Law (1 year, 90 ECTS, Masters Degree) – UCLan Cyprus, Ref. no: 07.14.345.010

Thank you for informing us of the Council's decision regarding the validation of our LLM in International Business Law of 24th and 25th July 2017, contained in your Report dated 2nd August 2017. We are also thankful for the constructive comments on our proposed programme. In particular, we were asked to specifically respond to points 2, 3 and 5 contained in your Report dated 2nd August. We are hereby formally submitting our response to the aforementioned comments.

2. *'Teaching staff must be re-enforced with more experienced and expert members of full time staff in International Business Law, whose employment offers and letters must be sent for when the programme is to run.'*

The School of Law of UCLan Cyprus comprises of an academic staff team with strong foundations and expertise in the area of International Business Law. More specifically, the School of Law currently employs Dr. Stephanie Lulhe Shaelou, a Professor in European Law and Reform and who is also the Head of the School, Dr. Nevi Agapiou, a Lecturer in International Commercial Law and Dispute Resolution, Dr. Lida Pitsillidou, a Lecturer in Company Law and Corporate Governance and Despina Christofi, a Lecturer in International Commercial Arbitration and Investment Law. All aforementioned academics have the relevant expertise for the programme and are contractually obliged, strongly encouraged and facilitated to regularly publish in leading law journals and present papers at both national and international conferences.

To further enhance the expertise of the team and in light of your recommendations, the School of Law of UCLan Cyprus has secured the secondment of Dr. Henrik Andersen from UCLan UK. In addition, the School of Law has established collaborations with distinguished academics and practitioners in the field of Banking and Financial Law, a related field, namely Dr. Phoebus

Athanasiou, Dr. Dimitra Plati and Napoleon Xanthoulis whose Offer Letters and CVs can be found in **Appendix C**. While Mr. Xanthoullis's appointment has already started, Dr. Athanassiou and Dr. Plati have both accepted their appointments and we are expecting their signed Offer Letters any day now, following formal clearance from their respective institutions. In fact, Mr. Xanthoulis helped design a new compulsory module entitled 'Law of International Financial Transactions' which will be available to students of the LLM in International Business Law as an optional module and on the students on the LLM in Financial and Commercial Law as a compulsory module. Please find the module description for 'Law of International Financial Transactions' in **Appendix A**. You can find more information on this in our formal reply dated 30th October on the Re-Evaluation of the LLM in Financial and Commercial Law (Ref. no: 07.14.345.011).

In line with quality assurance monitoring mechanisms governing the awarding of double degrees, Dr. Andersen will offer general academic supervision working with Course Leaders in Cyprus and UCLan UK. He has been appointed Visiting Senior Lecturer of International Economic and Commercial Law at UCLan Cyprus, School of Law, on secondment from the School of Law, University of Central Lancashire, UK, where he is a Senior Lecturer, effective from 25th October 2017 until 31st August 2018, in the first stage. You will find his signed Offer Letter in **Appendix C**. Dr. Andersen has a number of relevant publications, has received research funding and currently teaches in the broad field of international economic and trade law. He will closely be working with Professor Stephanie Laulhe Shaelou and Dr. Nevi Agapiou, the LLM Course and Deputy Course Leaders respectively. In fact Dr. Andersen's first visit to UCLan Cyprus is taking place during the week commencing 30th October and involves a number of teaching and research activities involving both members of staff, undergraduate, postgraduate and research students, over the whole week. Dr. Andersen will visit us again in Semester 2 for another week of teaching and research activities in the field of international economic and trade law.

UCLan UK is strategically committed to support and guide UCLan Cyprus as the University in Cyprus grows, as evidenced by the Pledge Letter of support issued by UCLan UK which you can find in **Appendix B**. The School of Law of UCLan UK, which includes academics with several years of academic and research experience in a number of different areas of law, including Financial and Commercial Law, supports the School of Law of UCLan Cyprus through collaboration on the delivery and preparation of the curriculum and through ensuring that students and staff have access to cross-campus research and funding projects and opportunities.

In support of our response above, please find the offer letters and the CVs of the aforementioned expert individuals in **Appendix C**. The CVs of Professor Laulhe Shaelou, Dr. Agapiou, Dr. Pitsillidou and Despina Christofi were submitted with our letter dated 21st July.

3. *'(...) Further explanations should be given concerning the participation of both academic members of staff and students of UCLan Cyprus to the quality assurance procedures of the programme of study, as required by European and international standards.'*

As already explained in our letter dated 19th June and further elaborated in our letter dated 21st July, academic members of staff and students of UCLan Cyprus actively and satisfactorily participate in quality assurance processes, as required by European and international standards,

both on a University and School level and in relation to individual programmes of study. A great number of committees are in place to ensure quality in research and teaching and an excellent all-round UCLan Cyprus employment and student experience.

We emphasise that students are adequately represented and/or consulted; universities depend on their students and we would not be excelling in student satisfaction and the provision of higher education if we were not properly and adequately consulting students. The University has a Student Council whose members are elected in order to afford the students with a strong and harmonised voice on all relevant matters including all programme-specific quality assurance matters. Moreover, the University has elected course representatives for every course per their year of study who sit on the respective Student-Staff Liaison Committees of their School. These committees meet once every semester. There are discussions around the student experience relating to the programme and the University in general and where actions arise, the outcomes are fed back to students and are freely available to the students through the e-learn environment.

In the School of Law, like in every other School, there is a postgraduate Student-Staff Liaison Committee meeting every Semester of which the LLM student representative is a member and has the obligation and opportunity to formally participate in all relevant matters to their course, including quality assurance matters. The Agendas, minutes and tables of actions relevant to these meetings are freely accessible to all postgraduate students as these are uploaded on their LLM course space on Blackboard, the University's online Student Portal (this also applies for LLB students). For your information, the LLM student representative for 2016-17 was Kathryn Dutton, who in fact met with members of the External Evaluation Committee without the presence of any UCLan Cyprus members of staff on the day of the External Evaluation. The two Student-Staff Liaison Committee meetings of the previous academic year were held on 1st December 2016 and 6th April 2017.

The introduction of new courses, such as the LLM in International Business would mean that there will be an elected course representative for each new programme who would also sit on the Student-Staff Liaison Committee. The duties and responsibilities of the LLM student representative is to act as a highly responsive and effective medium of communication between the postgraduate student body and the School of Law and the University on quality assurance and other issues that may be of concern to the students and/or academics. Of course, an LLM student representative is free to have a meeting with the Head of the School of Law or any other academic on any quality assurance or other issue which may be of concern to just a single student, a group of students or the whole body of postgraduate students. The LLM Academic Advisor System in place at UCLan Cyprus, where each LLM student is assigned an academic member of staff as their Academic Advisor, is another mechanism both students and staff members can use to successfully identify, address and resolve possible academic or other important issues requiring attention. Please find the Academic Advisor Handbook each academic member of staff needs to adhere to in **Appendix D**.

The Head of the School of Law often consults academics for quality assurance and other important matters either through email, individual personal meetings or at the formal Staff meetings of the School attended by all academic members of staff. All minutes are freely accessible to any member of staff for consultation and action purposes. If appropriate, relevant decisions by the School of Law may be notified to colleagues in other Schools in the form of good practices either through email or through one of the aforementioned Committees, including

informal afternoon coffee breaks with colleagues under the umbrella of the Research and Innovation Committee (RIC).

Moreover, an academic member of staff from each School will also attend the Senior Management Team's (SMT) meetings other than the Head of each School. While this was regular practice during past academic years, it was recently formalized by a circular to the three Schools of UCLan Cyprus. In addition to the Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee (ASQAC) meetings, SMT meetings are also a very good venue to consider, address and resolve possible quality assurance issues, actions or matters. Please find a letter signed by the Interim Rector, Professor Panikkos Poutziouris confirming this and the SMT Membership list in **Appendix E**.

5. *'The programme of 90 ECTS to be expanded to 13 months in order for the time duration of the programme to reflect the workload and anticipated outcomes.'*

We acknowledge your recommendations and clarification given in your letter dated 13th October and the programme is extended to 13 months.

In addition to our responses above, we would like to note that as a part of the Annual Monitoring Mechanism and Periodic Course Evaluation the University systematically reviews programmes following feedback from students, faculty, external examiners and other stakeholders e.g. Professional Bodies and thus, we continuously refine the structure, learning methodologies and assessment techniques in line with QA policies and best practice.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity again to thank the Council for the valuable and constructive comments and suggestions towards enhancing the LLM in International Business Law programme at UCLan Cyprus. We feel that we are fully equipped to grow the course and enhance the positioning of our School, UCLan Cyprus and Cyprus as an international education hub.

We hope our efforts in developing the programme to your satisfaction have been successful and remain at your disposal for any further questions and clarifications concerning our responses.

Yours sincerely,

Professor Stephanie Laulhe Shaelou
Head of the School of Law, UCLan Cyprus

Dr. Nevi Agapiou,
LLM & Deputy LLM Course Leader respectively