

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 22/09/2022

Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**
University of Central Lancashire Cyprus (UCLan Cyprus)

- **Town:** Larnaca

- **Programme of study
Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:

Μεταπτυχιακό (Μάστερ) στην Ανάλυση Δεδομένων (1 ακαδημαϊκό έτος, 90 ECTS, Master of Science, Συμβατική μέθοδος διδασκαλίας)

In English:

MSc Data Analytics (1 academic year, 90 ECTS, Master of Science, Conventional Delivery)

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating
- **Concentrations (if any):**

In Greek: N/A

In English: N/A



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 2nd 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 by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>Currently there is no specific policy of review process of the program to include the external stakeholders' input in a formal context. It is recommended to specify a policy with a target to have the program review panel and aim on reviewing the curriculum. The industry external advisors should have an active role in the reviews, since the role of the courses needs to be more strategic in the context of the program in consideration of the current expectations of employers.</p> <p>The EEC had requested the external examiner's report, but it was not sent from the program director.</p> <p>The EEC recommends that the university enhances the quality assurance practices by engaging and receiving feedback from international or local industry experts in the field, to assure that the program is enriched with key current topics in the field. This will also contribute to the attractiveness of the program.</p> <p>The EEC recommends that student representation is ensured in the internal quality review process (including meetings) at all times. The scope of this review should include an analysis of the learning outcomes of the program to identify who are the exact intake prospective applicants and the content of each course regarding the market needs in Data Analytics and not to create false expectations for</p>	<p>We agree with the EEC's recommendation and would like to emphasise that the programme team considers it vital to build and sustain a strong network of partners and long-term collaborations with depth and breadth. Since the development of the conventional delivery of the MSc Data Analytics in 2017, the team managed to develop a large network of national and international collaborators, especially industry partners, which have been informally engaging with the programme in terms of providing advice on curriculum development, industry knowledge/skill needs and student employability aspects. Moreover, our industry partners have been engaging in other educational activities, such as guest lectures, field trips, real case studies, real life student projects, student internships, student competitions, student awards and many more.</p> <p>We welcome the EEC's constructive recommendation to develop a more formal and systematic approach towards this and we acknowledge the substantial benefit and value this can offer to the programme. To this end, the programme team along with the Head of the School will proceed to form its first Advisory Board, which will provide formal advice and feedback to the programme team, not only in terms of its existing curriculum, but also in terms of future directions and developments. It is expected that the Advisory Board will be in place and active within the current academic year.</p> <p>Regarding student engagement in the review of the programme and internal quality assurance processes, this is something the University and the School of Sciences already has in place. According to our current quality assurance policies, students engage in the processes as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Staff Liaison Committee (SSLC) meetings: For each programme of study and for each year of study, students elect a student representative who is responsible to represent them during the SSLC meetings and be the liaison between the students and the programme's academic team. The SSLC meetings are carried out in a way to provide student representatives the opportunity to provide collective feedback about the programme, individual modules, university services, and the overall student experience, and to make recommendations for further course development and improvements. 	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>the applicants. Special focus should be on the purpose of specific electives and the content of the core courses.</p> <p>If an industry and/or student representative is not present, the meeting should not take place.</p>	<p>These meetings are scheduled once per semester (twice in the academic year). Students are asked to provide their feedback on six main categories:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching and Learning • Student Support • Assessment and Feedback • Employability • Course Organisation and Management • Learning Resources • University Services • Overall Satisfaction <p>Students are also asked to provide what they consider the most positive aspect of the programme/module along with one thing they would like to improve, and identify the most effective elements for their learning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Module Feedback Questionnaires (MFQs): The purpose of the MFQs is to collect feedback from the students on each individual programme module, considering several aspects of the teaching and learning experience, such as teaching quality, learning value, support and guidance provided, assessment, quality of feedback, clarity of the marking scheme, organisation of the module, infrastructure, library resources, learning environment, IT resources, student support services, etc. The results of the MFQs are sent to each module leader, the course leader and the Head of School for internal review and action. <p>Both, SSLC meeting minutes and MFQ results inform the annual Module Leader and Course Leader reports. Actions arising from SSLC meetings and MFQ results are discussed and addressed by the programme team and accordingly, feedback is provided to the students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • School Internal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee (ASQAC): Each School has its own internal ASQAC that reports to the University ASQAC. The School Internal ASQAC includes in its membership constitution undergraduate (3rd year of students) and postgraduate student representatives. The School ASQAC holds three meetings per academic year. During the ASQAC meetings, the students along with the other members of the Committees are actively participating in all matters discussed as per the respective agenda of the meeting. The student feedback is highly valued in terms of enhancement and development of academic regulations, compliance with the CyQAA and UK QAA guidelines and legislation, the 	
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	<p>portfolio of study, etc. Furthermore, during the School ASQAC meetings, the students are involved in the internal evaluation processes of the respective department/School and the programmes of study under evaluation by CyQAA external evaluation committees. Their role in ASQAC includes the consideration of specific self-evaluation reports in relation to the External Evaluations concerning each School and its programmes of study, in accordance with standards set and published by the QA Bodies, the analysis of internal strengths and weaknesses (SWOT analysis) of the Department /School and programme, as well as external factors that create opportunities and threats to achieve their goals and many more.</p>	
<p>According to the extra material supplied to the EEC by the university, in recent years the student intake has been:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● In 2017-18: 88% from Cyprus & 13% International (0% EU) ● In 2018-19: 77% from Cyprus & 23% International (0% EU) ● In 2019-20: 69% from Cyprus & 31% International (0% EU) ● In 2020-21: 77% from Cyprus & 23% International (0% EU) <p>The above numbers are encouraging as they show an increase of international students' intake, and the EEC recommends that a strategy should be defined and implemented in order to increase the diversity and inclusion of the program.</p> <p>Regarding the gender based registrations, according to the extra material supplied to the EEC by the university, in recent years the program has performed very well. The EEC recommends that a strategy should be defined and implemented in order to maintain the intake of female students in the near future.</p>	<p>We appreciate the EEC's comment and the recognition of our efforts towards maintenance of a right gender balance in the MSc Data Analytics programme, as well as the increase of the student's intake in terms of diversity and inclusion. These remains a priority for us and we will continue and strengthen our efforts towards these goals.</p> <p>The University recently formed its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) that is responsible to form and monitor the University's EDI strategy, including the University's Gender Equality Plan (GEP).</p> <p>The UCLan Cyprus EDIC is working closely with the respective UCLan UK EDIC and the Chair of the UCLan Cyprus EDIC is a member of the UCLan UK EDIC, thus ensuring effective two-way communication related to EDI matters between the two campuses. UCLan UK is also a member of Athena SWAN, something that informs its actions and strategy, which in turn, informs and guides the UCLan Cyprus actions and strategy.</p> <p>Gender balance of admitted students per programme and for the University as a whole is one of the key pillars of the University's EDI strategy and GEP plan.</p> <p>Beyond this, the School is very active in its efforts to increase its number of female students and achieve a good gender balance between its students population. Evidence of the School's commitment to gender balance and recruitment of female students in its programmes, is the organisation and hosting of the ACM womENCourage 2022 conference (https://womencourage.acm.org/2022/), which is an international conference aiming at connecting women from diverse technical disciplines and encouraging them to</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>pursue their education and profession in computing and STEM areas.</p> <p>We believe that our efforts and commitment is also reflected on our new recruitment campaign, which highlights the University's strategy to implement a diversity and inclusion approach towards the new intakes: https://www.uclancyprus.ac.cy/new-advert-we-embrace/</p>	
<p>Regarding the curriculum, the EEC recommends two different routes in terms of the title of the program and the content of the curriculum depending on what the learning outcomes are and what the targeted intake of students' background is. The following changes are recommended based on the choice of title of the MSc program:</p> <p>O MSc in Data Analytics: a series of changes to the curriculum need to take place to ensure that courses not related to the learning outcomes of the program are reduced and the focus is on Data Analytics if the program is aimed for students who wish to develop a career in data analytics. For example, in the current curriculum the only modules related to DA are: CO4761; CO4760; CO4762. The core modules expected within an MSc in DA should provide core modules for the students to demonstrate in depth knowledge in computational methods, including computer programming and scientific visualisation. The EEC recommends the consideration of the following example module titles: Data Programming with R; Statistical Machine Learning; Data Programming with SAS; Data Programming with Python;</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for the constructive comment and the thorough guidance provided for the two different programme directions. The programme team has reviewed, researched and discussed the two options and decided to proceed with the second one, i.e. MSc in Business Data Analytics. The team believes that the existing content of the programme is better represented with this award title.</p> <p>At its current state, the programme covers in-depth skills in data analytics, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Statistical Methods <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Descriptive statistics: Basic Statics (Central Tendency, Data Dispersion) - Inferential Statistics: statistical significance, hypothesis testing, t-tests, non-parametric tests - Predictive statistics: Regressions (linear, multi-linear, ANOVA, logistic, non-parametric), Time-series (exponential smoothing, ARIMAX models) - Statistical methods for outlier detection (parametric, non-parametric) - Statistical Tests of Significance for model selection • Programming for Analytics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - R programming: Programming skills (variables, conditionals, loops), Descriptive Statistics, Data Visualisation (simple graphs, correlation, complex graphs), Data Preparation, Statistical inference (t-tests, goodness of fit), Regressions (linear, multi-linear, diagnostics, ANOVA, logistic, non-parametric), Time-series (exponential smoothing, ARIMAX models) - SQL programming: querying and reporting, filters, groupings, aggregates, ranking, programming (views, triggers, indexes, cursors, stored procedures, variables, conditionals, loops), data preparation, data management - Python programming: Programming skills (variables, conditionals, loops), Dataframes, Data Preparation, Visualisations, Clustering, 	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>Predictive Analytics; Multivariate Analysis; Statistical Network Analysis; Time Series; Stochastic Models; Machine Learning and AI. In this case the program would be suitable for graduates from ICT background and need to develop a career in data analytics.</p> <p>O MSc in Data Analytics for Business: EEC recommends that the title of the course should be updated if the aim of the course is for the students to be provided with a set of analytical methods for solving problems to aid decision making in Business within the context of large quantities of data. In this case the program would be suitable for graduates from different disciplines or applicants with practical experience that would like to redirect their career. Within an MSc in Business Analytics the applicants will be able to apply business analysis tools and apply current research into data science, decision making and management science.</p> <p>O In either MSc title the program director and Teaching and Learning Committee should focus on the in depth skills in data analytics as a learning outcome for the students enrolled (i.e. Statistical methods; Programming for Analytics; Decision and Behavioural Analytics; Mastering Big Data) . Minimum entry requirements in terms of Maths and Statistics for the successful student progress during the program and limiting the withdrawal rate.</p>	<p>Regressions, Frequent Pattern Mining, Decision Trees</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decision and Behavioural Analysis <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Foundations and Technologies for Decision Making: Decision Support, Business Reporting, Business Performance Management, Visual Analytics - Analytics for Decision and Behavioural Analysis: Descriptive, Predictive (Data mining, classification, clustering, frequent pattern mining, text analytics, web analytics), Prescriptive (model-based decision making, modelling, simulation, automated decision systems, knowledge management) • Data Management and Automations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Principles of Data Management - Data Architectures - Information Modelling - Data Storage and Operations - Data Integration - Data Preparation and Data Quality - Querying and Reporting - Data Warehousing • Machine Learning and Data Mining <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Data Pre-processing: Data Quality, Data Cleaning, Data Integration, Data Reduction, Data Transformation - Supervised Learning: Classification (decision tree induction, Naive Bayesian Classification, rule-based, neural networks, support vector machines, classification using frequent patterns, lazy learners, genetic algorithms, bagging, boosting, random forests, ensemble), Regressions (linear, multiple-linear, ANOVA, logistic, non-parametric), Model Evaluation and Selection (metrics for classifier performance, holdout method, sampling, cross validation, bootstrap, statistical tests of significance, Clustering Tendency, number of clusters, cluster quality) - Unsupervised Learning: Clustering (partitioning methods, hierarchical methods, density-based methods, grid-based methods, probabilistic clustering, clustering with constraints), Pattern Mining (Frequent Pattern Mining, constrained FPM, association analysis, sequence analysis) - Reinforcement Learning (part of elective in Artificial Intelligence): Associative reinforcement learning, Deep reinforcement learning, Adversarial deep reinforcement learning, Fuzzy reinforcement learning 	
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Text Analytics (Text Mining, Sentiment Analysis) - Web Analytics (Web Mining, Social Analytics) - Other topics: Data Mining for Society, Legal and Ethical Aspects of Data Mining <p>Following from the structure of the programme and its target audience, the minimum programme requirements (admission criteria) include at least a Bachelor's degree (Lower Second Class of 2.2) or equivalent. Applicants must demonstrate an adequate level of English Language proficiency at least IELTS 6.5 or equivalent. Interviews with the course leader may be required as part of the admissions process, especially for prospective students who cannot demonstrate basic mathematics and statistics skills or programming skills.</p> <p>It should be noted that students who do not have the knowledge and/or skills (e.g. mathematics and statistics skills) to successfully follow and complete the programme can be provided with the option to take relevant preparatory modules before they are admitted to the programme.</p>	
<p>The EEC also recommends that the process of collecting, analyzing and communicating student and other statistics is upgraded with gender based data, that it is digitized, and that different sources of information are cross-referenced so that contradictions, errors and gaps are avoided, and insights from data analysis can be communicated efficiently.</p>	<p>The University currently collects and analyses student data across multiple levels (programme level, School level, University level).</p> <p>It should be noted that such data is an integral part of the annual programme monitoring process. The following minimum statistical data is currently considered and presented on the annual course leader report (i.e. programme evaluation report) for each programme of study:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Application data, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Applications by age ○ Applications by gender ○ Applications by residency ○ Applications by ethnicity ○ Applications by declared disability • Enrolment data, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ New enrolments ○ Enrolments by age ○ Enrolments by gender ○ Enrolments by residency ○ Enrolments by ethnicity ○ Enrolments by declared disability • Progression data, which includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Completion of studies ○ Withdrawal of studies ○ Interruption of studies • Completion of study data, which includes: 	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Completion by age○ Completion by gender○ Completion by residency○ Completion by ethnicity○ Completion by declared disability <p>It is also worth mentioning that upon its completion, the Course Leader report is made available to all the students of the programme.</p> <p>The programme team recognises that there is always room for improvement, and we are committed to continue and enhance our data collection and analysis processes at all levels.</p>	
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2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>The program could be reviewed in terms of teaching and learning approaches to promote student-centered learning and increase student autonomy and confidence, which is of high importance for the market needs in Data Analytics. The students need to be exposed to different operating systems through the available servers and desktops, e.g. The program should consider the investment on Apple devices as well for the students to familiarize with the MacOs operating system which many employers currently use.</p>	<p>Student engagement and student-centred learning is at the core of the School’s Policy for Teaching, which aims to provide guidance for the development of an exceptional learning environment across all the programmes of the School. Among other things, the policy provides general guidelines for academics to ensure student-centred learning.</p> <p>To this end, throughout the programme delivery, the academic team utilises different approaches to engage students in the learning process. A summary of the applicable teaching and learning approaches is available in each of the programme’s module descriptors (provided in Appendix 1).</p> <p>Overall, the team utilises a diverse approach to teaching learning activities, some targeting individual and independent learning, whereas others target collaborative learning. Learning activities include, but are not limited to, the use of lectures, classroom group work, online discussion forums, problem based learning, gamification activities, discussion and reflection on case studies, formative and summative assessment, interactive exercise, self-assessment exercises, application of knowledge to real life scenarios, etc.</p> <p>Regarding the MacOS, this recommendation has been considered by the programme team and a request was made to the Head of the School of Sciences for consideration and inclusion in the next academic year’s budget.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Teaching methods are modern, effective, and support the use of modern educational technologies (Microsoft Teams as a complement to campus based teaching & Blackboard as the institutional VLE). However, in the context of blended learning there should be further alignment between on campus teaching and activities that are taking place online. E.g. further clarity in the student oriented</p>	<p>We would like to confirm to the EEC that the MSc Data Analytics programme submitted for re-accreditation involves only a conventional delivery (i.e. with physical presence). According to CyQAA regulations, in order for a programme to be offered in a blended-learning delivery mode, a separate application should be submitted.</p> <p>The blended learning delivery that the Committee has evaluated during the online evaluation event, concerns the approach used by the programme’s team during extraordinary circumstances arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The standard delivery of the MSc Data Analytics</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>documentation about expectations re: online learning and how this relates to campus based teaching.</p> <p>The teaching and learning effectiveness is highly linked with the level of expertise of the teaching staff. All staff have compulsory basic pedagogical training. The EEC watched the lectures recorded, and found that online interactivity should be enhanced further by the use of appropriate technologies (e.g. breakout rooms to allow the students to work in small groups on their own on activities and report back to the plenary) and activities where the lecturer is not always the central focus and peer learning is also facilitated.</p>	<p>programme is through physical presence, as required by CYQAA .</p> <p>Regarding online interactivity, this is not applicable to the MSc Data Analytics with conventional delivery, but it is addressed in our response for the MSc Data Analytics with distance learning delivery.</p>	
<p>Rigorous internal reporting in terms of the pipeline year on year of students graduating and alumni for future data analysis is highly recommended. This reporting should include the student's progression to industry and academia after the graduation or the advancement of their current career (reporting should be on each academic year and not on the average for all years of operation).</p>	<p>We agree with the EEC's recommendations, and we acknowledge the importance of having such information available and sharing it with students. Indeed, the School and the University are actively working towards this.</p> <p>Overall, collection of formal alumni information and communication is primarily handled centrally by the University's Student Support Office and the University's Alumni officer. Given the young age of the University and the small number of students/graduates, until recently, alumni specific information was not available or representative to be formally shared with students, although anecdotal information is always shared with students as well as general information about future employability and potential career pathways.</p> <p>In its efforts to strengthen the collection of information and further support its alumni, the University has recently established an Alumni Association, basic details of which are specified on its website at https://www.uclancyprus.ac.cy/connect/alumni-association/. The University has also established the UCLan Cyprus Alumni Steering Committee after elections in July 2020. The steering committee is now in office and comprises of a dynamic group of graduates who together with the UCLan Cyprus academics, support the University in its efforts to establish a strong alumni network, whilst administering the Alumni Association of the University. The</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>members of the committee aspire to provide a constructive platform for networking with fellow graduates and aim to support current students by sharing knowledge and expertise on how to advance their career path post-graduation. Moreover, aiming to establish a strong and mutually beneficial relationship with its graduates, the University has an open communication channel and a procedure in place for the graduates to subscribe to the Alumni Association leading to an already available database of alumni that we intend to grow as the University is further developing. All latest news and announcements as well as the e-form for subscription to the Alumni Association can be found on the University's website (https://www.uclancyprus.ac.cy/connect/alumni-association/). Moreover, the UCLan Cyprus Alumni has its own Facebook group, where announcements, promotional material and other related info are published.</p> <p>Beyond the centrally coordinated University efforts, every effort will be made at the programme level to keep in contact with the programme's alumni and collect relevant information through different means (e.g. LinkedIn). Additionally, the Student Experience and Enhancement Committee of the University in collaboration with the Student Support Office and under the coordination of the Alumni Officer, has recently developed an Alumni Survey that allows the collection of information on the graduates' progression to the employment market or academia.</p> <p>Moreover, programme graduates who consist of successful cases in terms of employability will be invited to provide guest seminars/lectures and share their experiences.</p> <p>All relevant alumni data will also be kept separately and annually at the programme level.</p>	
<p>Overall, assessment is appropriate, and all grades must be accompanied by written feedback that makes it clear why the specific grade was awarded and that supports the students in learning what their mistakes were and how they could be rectified. This should be standard practice for all courses and all forms of homework or examination.</p>	<p>We strongly agree with the EEC that promptly providing feedback to students and having an active line of communication is crucial for their learning journey. It is part of the University's policy that teaching staff have regular and effective communication with their students and provide timely and effective feedback to them.</p> <p>In line with the University's academic regulations (section G., Assessment), individual assessment feedback to students must be provided within 15 days and in various formats (e.g. written, audio, digital format). As it is expected, the programme can have a different set of assessment (formative or summative) methods, which means that there will be learning activities in which students</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<p>will receive immediate feedback (e.g. electronic quizzes, multiple choice exercises, oral presentations) and others that will require more time for the feedback to be provided (e.g. essays, projects). Thus, according to the type of assessment, students can receive feedback on their performance from 0-15 days. It should be noted, that although the University policy refers to the maximum of 15 days (to allow time for moderations of marks), it is a common practise for academics to provide feedback to the students earlier than this, so that students can review the feedback and reflect on it, until their final mark is provided (within 15 days).</p> <p>Moreover, every assessment is accompanied by an assessment brief, which provides a description of the assessment, the targeted assessment learning outcomes, the assessment guidelines, and more importantly, the marking criteria (rubric) for the specific assessment. The assessment rubrics are discussed with the students so that they are aware of the expected learning outcomes and how their performance will be assessed. As a result, students can utilise the marking rubrics to self-evaluate themselves so that they are aware of the feedback to be expected.</p>	
<p>Although the description and organization of the courses is of good quality, we noticed that the development of students' competencies and general learning experience varies. This might be due to the different students' backgrounds. However, we advise that the college should take the necessary actions as noted in Section 1 for the review of entry requirements and connect the teaching and learning with real-life challenges and experiences for Data Analytics in Business.</p>	<p>The programme's admission criteria are provided in Section 1 (page 8).</p> <p>Regarding the connection of teaching and learning with real-life challenges and experiences for Data Analytics, this is implemented through the use of real datasets, case studies, exercises provided by partner organisations from multiple diverse domains including retail, healthcare, banking, pharmaceutical, compliance and regulatory tech, and many others. Moreover, students have the opportunity to collaborate with one of the programme's industry partners for their thesis project.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>The School has recruited academic staff and professional development activities for teaching staff focused on the Teaching and Learning skills will prove impactful in the years to follow on the quality of the teaching and learning in the program and the reputation of the program. The panel would advise as well in the future rounds of recruitment to review the curriculum needs of the program and the research strategy of the School in order to identify candidates with potential to progress within your institution. The university tries to improve the teaching skills of the teaching staff through the compulsory training for the Fellowship of the UK Higher Education Academy. These efforts are appreciated.</p>	<p>We appreciate the EEC's advice on future academic recruitments. As with all of our recruitment efforts, we will ensure that new academic appointments for the programme and the School will be directly aligned to the curriculum needs of the programme as well as the research strategy and future research directions of the School. It is important for us to identify people who can strengthen the research profile of the School and assist the School in achieving its long term goals.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>The EEC recommends having clear documentation in terms of how the research activities of the staff members benefit the curriculum and the teaching and learning activities within this program.</p>	<p>The Research Policy of the University is clear on the importance of research-informed teaching and how research work should connect to teaching.</p> <p>Research informs teaching throughout the curriculum delivery in and out of the classroom as well as through the co- and extra-curricular activities taking place in each School and/or programme or at university-level. Programme curriculum is frequently reviewed and updated according to the latest research findings in the field. Results of externally funded projects, outputs, publications, events (round tables, conferences, trainings, seminars, workshops, surveys), CPD and public outreach events are embedded directly and/or indirectly in the course of teaching and learning, as learning activities and/or resources.</p> <p>In general, research informed teaching activities include, but are not limited to, the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning material reflecting the latest research findings 	<p>Choose an item.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions of research findings, online materials, news items or practical scenarios • Library search of specific research sources • Design of blogs, short research questionnaires or surveys (short research studies) • Discussion of research case studies, arguing and debating • Development of arguments on a research position/topic • Writing of case studies, essay planning and problem questions • Collaborative writing and critique, peer review • Group presentations, with or without group representative • Diagnostic and formative tasks, mocks • Discussion of assignments and proposals • Post-it activity to give feedback or titles to discussions • Creation of mind maps and spider graphs to tackle complex problem questions • Progressive generic and individual feedback. <p>The MSc Data Analytics curriculum is both, research-informed and industry-informed. Academics do a regular research and technology scouting, alongside their own research activities, integrating research and industrial project outcomes into the delivery of the curriculum. As with all of our programmes, the programme curriculum delivery is updated yearly, and on many occasions, specific learning material is updated during the academic year to cope with the dynamic nature of the data analytics landscape and relevant research and technological advances.</p> <p>Furthermore, we would like to emphasise that MSc Data Analytics students have the opportunity to conduct applied research in the context of their Master’s Project (thesis), working on real world problems and contributing innovative solutions.</p> <p>We would like to assure the EEC that we greatly value research- and industry-informed teaching and we will continue working in this context, strengthening even further the research component in the MSc Data Analytics.</p>	
<p>It would be interesting if there were some internal mentoring mechanism through which more experienced professors could</p>	<p>The University operates a university wide academic mentoring scheme, the Research and Innovation & Enterprise Mentoring (RIEM) scheme. Through the RIEM scheme, early career academics are partnered with more</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>guide and mentor less experienced staff when they join the university.</p>	<p>experienced academic staff (their mentors) who will support and guide them through their early career years.</p> <p>In addition to the University RIEM scheme, UCLan Cyprus academics enjoy further mentoring from colleagues in UCLan UK. We currently have 3 peer groups (early career, mid-career and professor groups), in which academics from both campuses are members. Academics who are members of these groups, enjoy two main benefits, which is the exchange of information, ideas and practises with other academics who are at the same career level as them, and the group mentoring from more established academics.</p> <p>Furthermore, we recently established joined research centres with UCLan UK. The primary aim of the centres is to bring together young, early career researchers and well-established researchers in a specific area (each centre has a specific research focus), from both Universities, for the purpose of implementing innovative, state-of-the-art collaborative research projects. Although the development of the centres is very recent (December of 2020), it has already proven beneficial for UCLan Cyprus academics, as they submitted joint proposals for research funding, and they are currently co-supervising PhD students with UCLan academics. An additional benefit of the centres is the research mentoring of UCLan Cyprus academics by very well-established researchers of the centre. The University has developed a formal mentoring process between the two campuses, where academics from both campuses have regular online meetings as groups and as individuals. As these initiatives were implemented during the COVID-19 pandemic with many restrictions for physical meetings and travelling, we expect that now that the pandemic is over, we will also be able to have research mobilities and physical meetings for the members of the centres.</p>	
<p>Recently, the Master's program has not had any visiting professors. However, the faculty has been visited by several visiting professors through the Erasmus program, who have given opening sessions, specialized seminars, etc. from which staff have benefited.</p>	<p>Although, as noted by the EEC, the conventional programme engaged external researchers/academics with the programme delivery as well as the delivery of seminars and workshops (primarily through the Erasmus programme), the programme team agrees with the EEC that engaging Visiting Professors with the programme can be very beneficial. The programme team will actively pursue this for the next academic years.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
<p>The students' feedback during this evaluation process and in discussion with the EEC was positive and indicated a high level of satisfaction among current students and alumni in terms of support during their studies and employability skills linked to the content of the program that led to employment opportunities. The teaching staff (given the early career level) could be supported from the Institution with further career development skills and enhance their visibility at EU and International level.</p>	<p>Relevant information about the support provided to teaching staff and their continued professional development is provided in Section 3 (pages 14-16).</p> <p>Moreover, the University participates in the Erasmus+ programme, which funds short-term teaching and training mobilities to other partner institutions (EU and international mobilities). Already many of the School's –and the programme's– faculty have taken advantage of this and have participated in such mobilities that contributed to their professional development and the enhancement of their knowledge and skills.</p> <p>Furthermore, in the framework of Erasmus+, the University and the School have welcomed reputable academics from partner Higher Education Institutions who actively participate in the delivery of some sessions of the programmes of study. These lectures have contributed to the enhancement of the learning experience of our students as well as the teaching methodology of our academic team. Additionally, the School often sponsors training or research visits for each faculty member to organisations and academic institutions abroad.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>The panel also recommends the development of a 5-10 year plan for the program and the capacity of intake year on year, in order to plan for recruitment activities in EU and abroad and increase the number of applicants and of enrolled students over the next years (if they wish to grow the registration numbers).</p> <p>Some initiatives could be utilised to help attract the right applicants. Examples of such initiatives include: 1) using the current/alumni female students and female graduates as “ambassadors” and include videos on the School website 2) 2) having a gender-balanced</p>	<p>We thank the EEC for the constructive feedback to enhance the programme recruitment and we greatly appreciate the activities suggested by the EEC to assist us in this process. We will communicate this information with the University's Marketing Department and Recruitment & Admissions Department, so that they can enhance their efforts within EU and abroad.</p> <p>The programme team will also work closely with the Marketing Department to identify unique selling points for the programme as well as unique module elements that can be highlighted to attract more students.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>website and external presence of the university in broader activities (Erasmus+), to the extent that this is possible.</p> <p>To attract larger numbers of students, it may be helpful to review the modules taught with content highly relevant with current data science market needs, and to actively promote and advertise the positive values and high potential of this program to prospective students and relevant stakeholders.</p>		
<p>We recommend greater clarity in the program documentation on how research is linked to teaching, particularly with regards to how students benefit directly from staff involvement in research activities.</p>	<p>SEE OUR EARLIER RESPONSE IN SECTION 3 (pages 14-15).</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>Although the application is complete, and the plans of the university are coherent (students' admission, progression and recognition), the limited number of students and potential difficulties in recruiting new students needs to be tackled. To attract the right intake of students, it may be helpful to review the courses taught (as advised in Section 1) with content highly relevant with the current data science for business industry.</p>	<p>Regarding the programme content, the programme curriculum is industry and research informed. It has been designed based on the latest industry trends and research findings. Of course, the Data Analytics field is continuously evolving, and therefore the programme team reviews the curriculum on an annual basis and adjusts the delivery material accordingly, to ensure that it is up to date.</p> <p>Furthermore, the programme's material is aligned with the SAS professional material. Following the establishment of a strategic partnership of the programme with SAS Institute S.A., one of the leading analytics providers in the world, the programme proudly offers students the opportunity to receive the SAS Joint Certificate in Business Intelligence and Data Mining, in addition to their MSc award. This unique opportunity offered through the MSc Data Analytics programme, equips students with additional knowledge and skills to apply analytics to real business problems using real business data and provides students with a competitive advantage in the marketplace, through a professional certification which is in high demand by the international market. SAS is recognised for the ninth consecutive year as a Leader in 2022 Gartner Magic Quadrant for Data Science and Machine Learning Platforms.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
Inclusion of MacOS in the labs (although it is commendable that support to students with MacBook laptops is provided already).	We would like to thank the EEC for their recommendation to include MacOS in the labs. This recommendation has been considered by the programme team and a request was made to the Head of the School of Sciences for consideration and inclusion in the next academic year's budget.	Choose an item.
In terms of student support, in addition to the personal tutor/mentor academic support, a potential solution could be a "buddy coder" mentor system in order for students to reach out to PhD students that have graduated from the program.	As the MS Data Analytics does not have a significant number of alumni, it will be challenging to currently develop the "buddy coder" mentor system with our alumni. At the same time, we currently do not have any PhD students who completed the programme. Nevertheless, we consider the EEC's recommendation an excellent one and we will implement it in the near future.	Choose an item.
The panel also recommends inclusion of an official industry advisory Board along with the existing External examiner.	SEE RESPONSE EARLIER IN SECTION 1 (page 3).	Choose an item.
The School has a rigorous process of data collection in terms of reviewing the pipeline and year on year alumni of the students. Attention should be paid to the gender balance of the program, which already looks promising to reach 50:50 over the next few years.	SEE RESPONSE EARLIER IN SECTION 1 (pages 5-6, 8-9, 11-12).	Choose an item.
The Department should periodically assess (every 2 years) the adequacy and suitability of resources and inform the responsible services of the University for their actions.	The Department reviews its resources on an annual basis. Budgeting is handled centrally by the University and specific budget is allocated to the School according to yearly needs. Within the overall yearly budget, there is a specific budget allocated to resources (e.g. human resources, IT resources, Library resources, facilities, etc.) for each School. To this end, resources are reviewed at the School and programme level before the beginning of each academic year and necessary provisions/budgets are requested for the covering of the School's resource needs.	Choose an item.



6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

NOT APPLICABLE

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For official use Only
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Click or tap here to enter text.	Click or tap here to enter text.	Choose an item.



7. Eligibility (Joint programme) (ALL ESG)

NOT APPLICABLE

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	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
The EEC recommends that within their rigorous policy of review of the program the external stakeholders (i.e. industry representative) to be included formally in the process.	SEE RESPONSE EARLIER IN SECTION 1 (page 3).	Choose an item.
The EEC recommends the review of the entry requirements in terms of the field of background degree. Registrations for the last 5 years (although there was no breakdown on a year-on-year basis), according to the extra material supplied to the EEC by the university, in recent years the program has attracted students from various backgrounds. It is clearly presented that the program attracts more students with Maths/CS background, and it is a very positive development to see 16% from business background. The performance of each field of study was not sent to the EEC and the School should analyse further to identify whether the withdrawals are based on the lack of adequate background knowledge and review the entry requirements.	For the programme's entry requirements, please see response earlier in Section 1 (page 8). The School will analyse and monitor the students background regarding withdrawals.	Choose an item.
The EEC recommends that student representation is practically ensured at all meetings of the internal quality assurance committee.	As indicated by the constitution of the School Internal Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee (ASQAC) its membership includes student representatives. Specifically, undergraduate (on their 3rd year of studies) and postgraduate student representatives. These students are also members of the University ASQAC.	Choose an item.
The EEC recommends that the number and gender balance of admitted students is subject to a targeted strategy that needs to be improved and Athena SWAN Charter in the UK can be of	The University recently formed its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) that is responsible to form and monitor the University's EDI strategy, including the University's Gender Equality Plan (GEP). The UCLan Cyprus EDIC is working closely with the respective UCLan UK EDIC and the Chair of the UCLan Cyprus	Choose an item.




<p>assistance with a number of recommendations.</p>	<p>EDIC is a member of the UCLan UK EDIC, thus ensuring effective two-way communication related to EDI matters between the two campuses. As indicated by the EEC, UCLan UK is member of Athena SWAN, something that informs its actions and strategy, which in turn, informs and guides the UCLan Cyprus actions and strategy.</p> <p>Gender balance of admitted students per programme and for the University as a whole is one of the key pillars of the University's EDI strategy and GEP plan.</p> <p>Beyond this, the School is very active in its efforts to increase its number of female students and achieve a good gender balance between its students population. Evidence of the School's commitment to gender balance and recruitment of female students in its programmes, is the organisation and hosting of the ACM womENCourage 2022 conference (https://womencourage.acm.org/2022/), which is an international conference aiming at connecting women from diverse technical disciplines and encouraging them to pursue their education and profession in computing and STEM areas.</p> <p>The University, the School and the programme team are committed to strengthen their efforts towards this cause.</p>	
<p>A similar strategy to the above should be established to attract higher numbers of students in general, if the School plans any growth in this program. Currently the number of student enrolments is steady year on year with a small decrease last year due to the pandemic, but given the needs of the market it would be worth investigating the growth of the program.</p>	<p>As mentioned earlier in Section 4 (page 17), we agree with the EEC that a strategy is needed to enhance the programme recruitment and we will work closely with the University's Marketing Department as well as the Recruitment & Admissions Department, so that we can support them to strengthen their marketing and recruitment efforts.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>The EEC recommends two different routes in terms of the title of the program and the content of the curriculum depending on what the learning outcomes are and what the targeted intake of students' background is. The following changes are recommended based on the choice of title of the MSc O MSc in Data Analytics: a series of changes to the curriculum need to take place to ensure that</p>	<p>SEE RESPONSE EARLIER IN SECTION 1 (page 6).</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>courses not related to the learning outcomes of the program are reduced and the focus is on Data Analytics if the program is aimed for students who wish to develop a career in data analytics. For example, in the current curriculum the only modules related to DA are: CO4761; CO4760; CO4762. The core modules expected within an MSc in DA should provide core modules for the students to demonstrate in depth knowledge in computational methods, including computer programming and scientific visualisation. The EEC recommends the consideration of the following example module titles: Data Programming with R; Statistical Machine Learning; Data Programming with SAS; Data Programming with Python; Predictive Analytics; Multivariate Analysis; Statistical Network Analysis; Time Series; Stochastic Models; Machine Learning and AI. In this case the program would be suitable for graduates from ICT background and need to develop a career in data analytics.</p> <p>O MSc in Business Analytics: EEC recommends that the title of the course should be updated if the aim of the course is for the students to be provided with a set of analytical methods for solving problems to aid decision making in Business within the context of large quantities of data. In this case the program would be suitable for graduates from different disciplines or applicants with practical experience that would like to re-direct their career. Within an MSc in Business Analytics the applicants will be able to apply</p>		
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<p>business analysis tools and apply current research into data science, decision making and management science.</p> <p>O In either MSc title the program director and Teaching and Learning Committee should focus on the in depth skills in data analytics as a learning outcome for the students enrolled (i.e. Statistical methods; Programming for Analytics; Decision and Behavioural Analytics; Mastering Big Data). Minimum entry requirements in terms of Maths and Statistics for the successful student progression during the program and limiting the withdrawal rate.</p>		
<p>The EEC has found the workload of the courses quite low in terms of the corresponding ECTS (10/course currently). It is advised to review all courses in terms of workload, the naming and content that are necessary and relevant to the learning outcomes of this program, as they need to be streamlined and up to date. The ECC recommends to include to each module descriptor how the workload is allocated within each course's for activities of 10ECTS. Based on current descriptions the courses are overestimating the workload for introductory concepts of data analytics and the detailed list of workload per activity needs to be provided to the course descriptions for students' clarity and expectations.</p>	<p>In line with the ESG and CyQAA guidelines, 1 ECTS is estimated at around 25 learning hours. Therefore, any 10 ECTS module offered under the MSc Data Analytics programme involves a total of 250 learning hours. The workload distribution per module is available in Appendix 1.</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>The EEC recommends that the collection, analysis and communication of data such as student statistics by the college is digitised and integrated more closely into the management of the program taking into account students' feedback.</p>	<p>SEE RESPONSE EARLIER IN SECTION 2 (pages 8-9).</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

<p>Students have been assigned to mentors, and it is advised a student mentoring scheme that could be addressed through the volunteer work of PhD students.</p>	<p>SEE RESPONSE EARLIER IN SECTION 5 (page 19).</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>
<p>After carefully considering all the facts and evidence provided to the committee as part of this evaluation, the committee believes that the curriculum needs revision before being accepted, as suggested by the recommendation made above (especially under sections 1 and 2).</p>	<p>SEE RESPONSE EARLIER IN SECTION 1 (pages 6-8).</p>	<p>Choose an item.</p>

C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

Name	Position	Signature
Dr. Nearchos Paspallis	Deputy Head of School of Sciences and Chair of TLEC, UCLan Cyprus	
Dr Panayiotis Andreou	Course Leader of MSc Data Analytics, UCLan Cyprus	
Dr Cosmina Theodoulou	Director of Academic Quality and Compliance, UCLan Cyprus	
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Click to enter Name	Click to enter Position	

Date: 22nd September 2022

