

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 14/03/2025

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:

Μαθηματικά και Στατιστική [4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη,
240 ECTS, Πτυχίο (BSc)]

In English:

Mathematics and Statistics [4 academic years, 240
ECTS, BSc (Hons)]

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

In Greek: Concentrations

In English: Concentrations



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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In general, we recommend the introduction of open source, freely available, free of charge computational tools (R and Python) in the first year of studies. Therefore, all courses in the following years, particularly in the areas of Statistics and Probability, can make use of the skills students developed in the first year, yielding a more complete educational experience and better employability for the students. R and Python have moved to become industry standards, and we do not see the need to expose students to Matlab, SPSS, or Stata. 	<p>We would like to thank EEC for their valuable recommendations. The academic team has carefully considered this proposal, and a series of steps have been taken in order to introduce R in the Year 1 module "Introduction to Probability and Statistics" and subsequent modules (e.g. Linear and Generalised Linear Models) in the area of Statistics and Probability, replacing the uses of SPSS and Stata. Furthermore, Python is introduced in the Year 2 module "Computational Mathematics", replacing Matlab and it is then used in other relevant module, e.g. Advanced Computational Statistics and Data Analysis. A detailed description of the modules offered as part of the new programme structure is available in Appendix I.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introducing even more elective choices, especially in the first two years, as started with the introduction of the university elective, would give students the option to sharpen their study focus. Synergies with existing programs at UCLan might be obtained by incorporating Machine/Statistical Learning courses. In addition, courses with a general focus on pedagogical aspects, for students who want to become teachers, or more broad subjects in mathematics (e.g. history of mathematics) would be welcomed by the student population. 	<p>The recommendation of EEC was welcomed by the academic team and therefore the programme of study has been amended to accommodate the student optionality for University Electives on each year of study.</p> <p>Moreover, students have now the opportunity to choose "History of Mathematics", since this module has been included as optional in Year 1 of the studies.</p> <p>More information about the amended structure of the programme is available on Appendix I.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We found that some courses have overlaps: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Regression Analysis has significant overlap with Computational Statistics and Data Analysis. Time Series shares a number of common topics with Financial and Actuarial Statistics. 	<p>In order to avoid any overlaps, as kindly indicated by the EEC, the academic team has redesigned the content of the "Advanced Computational Statistics and Data Analysis" module (see Appendix I for more information). Moreover, two new modules "Actuarial Statistics" and "Introduction to Econometrics" have been introduced to address the EEC recommendations, as well as to avoid any overlapping.</p>	Choose level of compliance:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The content and delivery of some of the courses do not reflect the latest achievements and state-of-the-art in pedagogy. Some of these require only minor adjustments, while some others might be the focus of a possible redesign. In more detail: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Probability and Statistics (MA1862) is delivered without the use of any statistical package (e.g. R), and in the syllabus Excel is mentioned! We highly encourage the adoption of R in this course, both for computing and visualization purposes. In addition, the course should focus on understanding statistical ideas and interpreting the results instead of memorizing formulas and calculating expressions by hand. ○ Introduction to Applied Mathematics (MA1841) and Numerical Methods (MA2852) rely on Matlab. Most of the content can probably be delivered using Python as well. Stakeholders' input stated that Python is becoming the industry standard in these fields. Preparing the students with Python will benefit their employability. ○ Nonparametric statistics and survey methodology (MA2xxx) is an artificial combination of two distinct subjects. We suggest splitting the course. In addition, nonparametric statistics nowadays is outdated and can be replaced using modern computational methods, such as Monte-Carlo schemes or bootstrap resampling. ○ In Regression analysis (MA2xxx), we believe that a final assignment, implemented in R 	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their valuable recommendations that will enrich our programme of study and will ensure that future cohorts will benefit from a state-of-art pedagogical approach, as well as from knowledge related to contemporary developments in the field.</p> <p>The academic team has carefully considered the recommendations of the EEC and has redesign the provision of this Bachelor's degree as following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ R is introduced in the module "Introduction to Probability and Statistics" instead of Excel. <p>A formula sheet was already in use because we agree that the main focus is indeed in understanding and interpreting results.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Python is now used in the module "Computational Mathematics" (MA1851) and furthermore in the module "Numerical Methods" (MA2853) instead of MATLAB. ○ The module "Non-parametric statistics and Survey Methodology" has been removed. The modern computational methods suggested, e.g. Monte-Carlo schemes or bootstrap resampling, are now part of the revised "Advanced Computational Statistics and Data Analysis" module. ○ The title of the "Regression Analysis" module has been changed, as suggested, to "Linear and generalized linear models" and a final assignment in R instead of a final exam has been introduced as introduced. ○ R is now adopted earlier in the Programme, and the "Advanced Computational Statistics and Data Analysis" module has been restructured to include more advanced statistical methodologies. ○ The module "Financial and actuarial statistics" has been split into two 5 ECTS modules of 	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
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<p>or Python, instead of a written exam, would benefit the students. We also believe that the title does not correctly reflect the current content of the course, and we suggest a title such as “Linear and generalized linear models”.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Computational statistics and data analysis (MA3872), which is currently the first course exposing students to R, focuses on implementing earlier learned material in R. If R is adopted earlier in the curriculum as we suggest, the repetition would become unnecessary, and the course should be restructured to focus on computational methods in statistics, i.e. density estimation, Monte-Carlo methods and variance reduction, resampling methods like bootstrap and jackknife, cross validation ideas, etc. ○ Financial and actuarial statistics (MA3xxx) is an artificial combination of two distinct subjects. We suggest splitting the course. In addition, the financial statistics could be replaced by an econometrics course, and we highly encourage the adoption of appropriate statistical packages for implementation purposes. 	<p>“Actuarial Statistics” and “Introduction to Econometrics”, as suggested.</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We very much welcome the introduction of a Topics in Statistics (MA3xxx) course. However, the current content of the course is limited to operational research and biostatistics (epidemiology and survival analysis). We suggest the following changes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ An independent operational research course should be considered as an elective. ○ A broad and generic description of course contents for a “topics” course would be beneficial 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The “Topics in Statistics” module has been revised in line with the EEC recommendations, and it is now a generic module “Topics in Mathematics/Statistics” offering students the opportunity to delve into advanced topics in mathematical and statistical research according to the instructors’ research interests. <p>The detailed description of the new proposed modules and programme structure is available in Appendix I.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>because it would make the delivery of different topics depending on the teacher of the course possible, exposing students to more faculty research interests.</p>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The naming of the courses Introduction to Real Analysis (MA1821) and Further Real Analysis (MA2821) deviates from continental practice, where such titles typically refer to much more advanced topics in the Lebesgue theory of integration. Suggested alternative names could be “Real Numbers and Continuity” and “Differentiation and Integration” respectively. 	<p>The modules titles for MA1821 “Real Analysis” and MA2821 “Further Real Analysis” have been renamed to “Analysis I – Real Numbers, Sequences, Series and Continuity” and “Analysis II – Differentiation and Riemann Integration”, making clear the content of these modules. A third module in this series, “Analysis III – Metric and Topological Spaces” has also been now introduced to ensure the full provision of these mathematical concepts.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partial exams (mid-year) might help students to keep continuously working (apart from the exercises) since the majority of courses are year-long. 	<p>Following EEC recommendation on challenges to participate to Erasmus mobilities for one academic semester, mainly due to the yearlong duration of the modules, the academic team has redesigned the structure of the programmes and the modules have now become semester long. This allows the schedule of the assessment methods proposed for each module during only an academic semester.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent use of presentations for student assignments (feasible because of the cohort size) would safeguard against improper use of AI. 	<p>We agree with the EEC that various and appropriate assessment methodologies should be implemented in order to avoid the improper use of AI. The use of presentations has been introduced for the modules "Numerical Methods", "Mathematics / Statistics Placement", "History of Mathematics" and "Mathematics project". Moreover, a series of modules will be assessed through a portfolio, under which a presentation may be considered by the module leader.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We believe that the duration of the placement should be increased. The current plan calls for 15 days which this committee and the external stakeholders find short. We think that a duration of at least 4-5 weeks (except for a teaching internship, which requires more preparation time) would be much better to get students truly exposed to working in the industry. Based on a 40-hour workweek, this still leaves 90 (or 50) hours of a traditional 10 ECTS module for reflection and presentation. 	<p>We would like to express our appreciation to the EEC and the external stakeholders for their constructive recommendation on the duration of the placement module. The "Mathematics/Statistics Placement" module has been changed to include 160 hours of internship (20 days). See more information on this module in Appendix I.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assessment (written exams, exercises and assignments) in probability and statistics courses should integrate interpretation of the findings, which should be carried out with the help of software (e.g. R). In addition, the 	<p>We agree with the EEC on the manner of implementation of the assessment of probability and statistic modules. We are in the pleasant position to inform you that we were already implementing such practices in some modules. We have informed the Head of the Department on the extension of the</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



small size of the cohort would allow exams in applied statistical courses to be carried out in the computer lab.	use of computer labs in a more consistent fashion, and the necessary provision will be made in the schedule of the respective laboratories.	
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3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wider advertisement of positions could lead to more international recruitment. 	<p>The university's ambition is to develop a high standard international team of academic staff. Currently, beyond the local job market, academic positions are advertised internationally. Please see below some websites/platforms typically used for academic recruitment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Academic Positions – https://academicpositions.com/ Jobs.ac.uk – https://www.jobs.ac.uk/ kariera.gr - https://www.kariera.gr/en Ergodotisi.com - https://ergodotisi.com/en-CY Carierista.com - https://www.carierista.com/el Kariera.com.cy - https://kariera.com.cy/el/ EURES – EUROpean Employment Services - https://europa.eu/eures/portal <p>We have informed our HR Department on the EEC recommendation to expand the international presence of the academic position advertisements.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It would be good to introduce new courses featuring some faculty research or incorporate aspects of it into existing courses. 	<p>The EEC recommendation has been welcomed by the academic team of the programme. The “Topics in Mathematics / Statistics” module is now the main module where faculty research will be incorporated. Students can also be introduced to research in the already existing “Mathematics Project” module.</p> <p>Other aspects can appear in the already existing module of “Cryptology”, the revised “Advanced Computational Statistics and Data Analysis” module and the new “Econometrics” module. The new “Analysis III – Metric and Topological Spaces” can also introduce students to some more advanced topics.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear pathway to promotion (depending on individual merit instead of financial constraints) would be important for recruitment and retention of good faculty. 	<p>The University's academic promotion scheme aims to recognise the contribution of academic members of staff to the successful realisation of the University's strategic goals and objectives, and most importantly, to recognise and reward their wider scientific contribution and achievements within their field of expertise. This also provides an opportunity for the academic members of staff to progress in their professional careers and for the University to secure the retention of</p>	Choose level of compliance:

	<p>high qualified faculty. The Academic Promotion Evaluation Model is based on six (6) required broad areas of activity (categories):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teaching• Research Publications (or Artistic Work for Arts related disciplines)• Research and Innovation & Enterprise (I&E) Activities• Income Generation• Administration and Leadership• Academic Citizenship	
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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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A wider marketing strategy would yield a greater variety of international students. 	<p>We agree with the EEC on the expansion of our marketing strategy to reach international markets and enrich the international student population. It is worth mentioning that during the first decade of the University operation, the strategy of UCLan Cyprus was mainly focused on the establishment of strong foundations for a reputable Higher Education Institution in Cyprus. Indeed, the strategy of the University for the 2nd decade of operation includes the expansion of the student population by increasing international recruitment. The marketing department is working towards this new goal by implementing a series of strategies which include, but they don't limit to, participation to International Educational Fairs, establishment of international sustainable partnerships, more aggressive social media advertising, etc.</p> <p>The team has already informed the University's Marketing Department of the EEC's feedback, which is now in the process of enhancing its marketing and advertising strategy.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The year-long module structure makes it hard for students to participate in exchange, both incoming and outgoing. This seems hard to address for administrative constraints, but we urge the administration to work towards a solution. 	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for this pertinent recommendation. The academic team in collaboration with the QA department have taken a series of steps to re-design the programme structure with a semester-based delivery of modules. Please see the updated structure per semester in Appendix I. This new structure will facilitate the participation of incoming and outgoing students in more mobility programmes such as Erasmus +.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A clear communication of requirements for individual merit consideration would be good. 	<p>In its efforts to attract highly academic performant students, the University offers a series of Academic Merit based Scholarships which are advertised on our</p>	Choose level of compliance:

	<p>website: Fees & Scholarships UCLan Cyprus</p> <p>Furthermore, the requirements for the maintenance of the Merit scholarship are clearly indicated in the student offer letter, as well as in the above-mentioned University website: <i>“All Undergraduate Academic Scholarships can be maintained for each year of study conditional on the academic progress of the student in the previous year. The conditions are written and agreed in the Offer Letter of the student. The standard condition is: 70% on the student average grade & at least 60% on each individual module, of the year.”</i></p>	
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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
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The library is rather small (physical space) and the collection of books available to the students is limited (there are rather many empty shelves). Building up a good collection of (physical) books would yield a more welcoming learning environment. 	<p>We thank the EEC for their feedback on the library resources and we would like to assure the EEC that our Library is committed to maintaining a collection that contains both key physical resources and a growing number of electronic resources. The growth in electronic resources reflects the influence of the worldwide digital shift within the library sector and provides online worldwide 24/7 access to over 300,000 electronic e-books, e-journals and databases.</p> <p>The library includes the latest self-service facilities, incorporating RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) technology. Moreover, students have access to all of the online library resources, IT training modules and the online teaching and learning materials for all of their programme's modules via the University's virtual learning environment, Blackboard Ultra. This portal operates across UCLan UK and UCLan Cyprus campuses and is tailored to the needs of every individual student.</p> <p>All of the programme modules have an electronic reading list which is supported by Leganto platform, that students can see automatically via the Blackboard Ultra space; however, students can also access these via the library catalogue at: https://librarysearch.uclan.ac.uk/discovery/search?vid=44UOCL_INST:44UOCL_CY&sortby=rank or can visit the Reading List online website directly at: https://uclan.alma.exlibrisgroup.com/leganto/public/44UOCL_INST/searchlists where they can enter the module code to see the reading list associated with that module. Academic staff can manage their own reading lists by adding, editing and removing items from a reading list. It is possible to place any resource on a reading list from a book or journal (paper-based or electronic) to a video, photograph, or link to a webpage. The librarians and the academics work closely together to ensure that reading lists are updated and that sufficient resources are available in the library to support the students.</p> <p>Before the end of an academic year, the Course Leader of each programme of study submits a list of new resources to be purchased by the library for the next academic year. These resources are included in the budget of the library that is further approved by the Head of the Department, Rector and CFO. The availability of physical resources at the library to cover the</p>	Choose level of compliance:

	students' studying and learning needs is a priority of the University and the appropriate budget is allocated for it. The academic team has already informed the library on the EEC recommendation and the purchase of new library resources will be budgeted for the next academic year.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> As before, student mobility is limited due to administrative constraints. 	The new semester long structure of the BSc (Hons) Mathematics and Statistics programme will facilitate the exchange of students under any mobility programmes, especially Erasmus+, Turin, Pannoria, etc.	Choose level of compliance:



6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

N/A

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

N/A

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
Study Program and Design: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unique Position: The Mathematics and Statistics program is the only English-language degree in Cyprus in these fields, with a strong focus on both mathematics and statistics, unlike many single-specialization programs. • Industry Alignment: With growing fields like AI and data science, the program is well-positioned to produce industry-ready graduates. • Student Experience: Small cohorts foster close student-faculty relationships, personalized support, and a collaborative environment. • Diversity: Gender balance and a high proportion of international students contribute to a diverse community. • Quality Assurance: Robust procedures are in place, though dual accreditation schemes can slow program developments. Data on student performance and satisfaction is effectively collected and acted upon. • Sustainability: Despite its small size, the program is a strategic priority for the University and enjoys institutional support. 	<p>We would like to thank one more time the EEC for their fruitful discussions during their visit at UCLan Cyprus, as well as for their valuable feedback and recommendations that allows the enhancement of our provision of BSc (Hons) Mathematics and Statistics.</p> <p>The positive feedback provided by EEC as final remarks highlight the strengths of the programme of study and the direct and indirect benefits offered to our graduates upon successful completion of the programme.</p>	Choose level of compliance:
Student-Centered Learning, Teaching, and Assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personalized Approach: Small class sizes enable tailored teaching, with a focus on individual needs and success. • Assessment Integrity: Processes for verification and moderation ensure fair, equitable assessment practices. 	The University is implementing a student-centered learning, teaching and assessment approach that has proved efficient and successful. We are glad that our approach has been positively acknowledged by the EEC.	Choose level of compliance:
Teaching Staff: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young Faculty: The faculty is relatively new and currently lacks a full Professor. 	The University is committed to ensuring a high-quality academic team who fulfill all the necessary qualifications and expertise to teach as part of this programme of study. We are glad that the EEC	Choose level of compliance:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Qualifications and Support: All staff meet teaching requirements and benefit from structured training, including HEA fellowships. • Balance of Roles: Some faculty are research-active, while others focus on teaching and administration. 	<p>appreciated the mandatory HEA teaching training and certification, that all our faculty is undertaken. The academic team of the programme harmoniously consists of full-time research active staff and of special teaching staff who mainly complement the team with hands-on industry expertise.</p>	
<p>Student Admission, Progression, Recognition, and Certification:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transparent Admission: Entry requirements and scholarship criteria are clearly communicated, with some flexibility for individual merit. • High Success Rates: Student progression is closely monitored, with low dropout rates and successful outcomes. • Comprehensive Recognition: The recognition and certification processes are well-established and flexible. 	<p>We appreciate the EEC feedback on the student admission, progression, recognition and certification findings that are integral part of the quality assurance and compliance process of UCLan Cyprus.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>Learning Resources and Student Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resources: Students have access to robust teaching materials via Blackboard, state-of-the-art lecture rooms, and well-maintained facilities. • Support Services: Comprehensive administrative and human support mechanisms, including assistance with settling in Cyprus and housing, are available. • Mobility: Student mobility opportunities remain limited. 	<p>Provision of qualitative and appropriate learning resources and student support is one of the University's priorities. The programme of study has been re-structured to allow student participation in mobility/ exchange programmes.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>For each of the evaluation areas, we have listed the strengths and given numerous recommendations for improvement, in particular for possible future development of the program. These should not be misconstrued as a criticism of the program as it is now, but rather as possible ways to imagine the future of the program.</p>	<p>All recommendations of the EEC have been carefully considered and addressed in the above sections.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p>For the development of the quality assurance process itself, we suggest that more attention should be paid to the relevance and conciseness of</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for their constructive feedback, that we will take into consideration while preparing any future applications.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

the quality assurance application documents. For the current evaluation, these documents, including the appendices, consisted of about 500 pages, where some of the information is very generic and not specific to the program under evaluation, while some other information is repeated in slightly different form in several places. For the external panel to be able to efficiently concentrate on the key issues in the evaluation, it would be beneficial for the institution under evaluation to make more effort to concisely and systematically present the topics on which feedback is sought. As a specific suggestion, we propose that the application material should routinely include the previous external evaluation report and a short letter by the institution explaining how the suggestions of the previous report have been implemented. Moreover, the information that was nicely summarized in the slides that were shown to us during the onsite visit would have been helpful to have already in combination with the application documents to be studied before arriving onsite.

We would like to ensure the EEC that we have followed the guidelines from the CYQAA at all stages of the process and we are willing to implement any further requirements from the CYQAA or the EEC.

C.



D. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
Dr. Demetres Christofides	Course Leader of BSc (Hons) Mathematics and Statistics	
Prof. Nearchos Paspallis	Head of Department of Sciences Chair of the Department of Sciences Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee	
Dr. Cosmina Theodoulou	Chair of UCLan Cyprus Academic Standards and Quality Assurance Committee	

Date: 14/03/2025

