**Doc. 300.1.2**

**Date: 27/02/2024**

# Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution: University of Limassol**

- **Town: Nicosia/Limassol**

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

  **In Greek:**

  Εκπαίδευση, Ηγεσία και Διοίκηση (14-24 μήνες, 90 ECTS, Μεταπτυχιακό πρόγραμμα)

  **In English:**

  Education, Leadership and Management (14-24 months, 90 ECTS, Master of Science)

- **Language(s) of instruction: GREEK**

- **Programme's status:** Currently Operating (Conventional Program)  07.14.685.004.001.

- **Concentrations (if any):**

  **In Greek:** Concentrations
  **In English:** Concentrations

## 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 |
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| Drop-out rates were not provided. | Over a period of 6 years between 2011 and 2017 there have been 19 dropouts (see Annex 13). | Choose level of compliance: |
| It is not clear whether students are asked to evaluate the programme as a whole and whether student feedback has been used to inform the design of the programme. | Students are asked to evaluate every course and the instructor at the end of each module. An online survey with close-ended and open-ended questions is being completed by each student evaluating the structure, delivery, aims achieved of the course. Likewise, students can evaluate the instructor of the course providing feedback on the further improvement of the course. The tabulated evaluation summary is then reviewed by the program committee and the QA committee for any program changes and any needed improvements or modifications considering the students' feedback. | Choose level of compliance: |
| The Program is not available to international students unless they are fluent in Greek. | Now the program is offered in Greek, and it is available for Greek-speaking students. Our main target group for this master's is educators /researchers who are working in education, whether in Cyprus or Greece, where the official language is Greek. If the language of instruction was English, it would be difficult for the students to follow and attend the courses. However, the main bibliography that we use is in English and all students must use this during their studies. | Choose level of compliance: |
| The programme is not up to date, in respect of the theory, literature, and research, in terms of recommended books, journal articles, and other learning resources. | Both conventional and online programs have been entirely redesigned and restructured based on the accreditors' constructive feedback and suggestions. The new study guides and course outlines regarding books and scientific references have been fully updated. The university library continues to update its resources, focusing on the latest scientific publications and textbooks in ELM. | Choose level of compliance: |

## 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 |
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| Most of the courses are not specific to ELM. | After the program's restructuring, as EEC suggested, all the courses are specific to ELM. The new structure of the master course encompasses six (6) core courses (10 ECTS per module) which are specific to ELM + an obligatory Master thesis (30 ECTS) for students to investigate further and deeper the ELM field. See Annex 1. | Choose level of compliance: |
| Students can access library resources through Moodle without the need to log in (single log in between Moodle and library) that ensures easy access to the library. There is technical support in place to help students and staff with any issues related to Teams and Moodle. However, there are very limited resources (books and academic journals) specific to ELM. | We have expanded our resources to include many books and academic journals specific to ELM. We have already updated our resources and made new subscriptions to journals related to ELM. For the needs of the Postgraduate Programme in ELM, the Limassol University Library has all the necessary electronic academic e-resources available, with subscriptions to EBSCO Host, ProQuest Central and cooperation with the University of Cyprus Library for interlibrary loan. | Choose level of compliance: |
| The programme director and team appeared responsive to the questions and comments of the EEC. Students are asked to apply theoretical learning to their practice and reflect on it, facilitating connections between theory and practice. However, most of the curriculum content is not related to educational leadership or management (ELM). | After the program's restructuring, as EEC suggested, all the curriculum content is related to ELM. We have updated our learning resources and focused on ELM including many interactive activities to give students the opportunity to interact with the material and explore the ELM field. See the updated study guides and course outlines in Annex 5. | Choose level of compliance: |
| The online programme has nine courses while the conventional programme has 11 courses. The two programmes should be consistent in this respect. Our recommendation is | -Both conventional and online programs were fully redesigned and restructured based on the accreditors' constructive feedback and suggestions. | Choose level of compliance: |

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| that there should be a maximum of nine courses for both programmes. | -The new structure of both programs encompasses six (6) core courses (10 ECTS per module) + an obligatory Master thesis (30 ECTS). In case a student faces exceptional circumstances that prevent him/her from writing a thesis, in which case, the student may be given permission by the Academic Committee to earn 30 ECTS from three modules (10 ECTS per module) also available in the program. Students must complete 90 ECTS as well as all the requirements of the programme.<br><br>-The structure is identical for both programs, including three modules in the first semester, three in the second semester, and a master thesis in the third/last semester. The execution of the master thesis could start in the second semester based on the student's availability and workload.<br><br>-Please see the new structure of the Education, Leadership and Management (ELM) master course in Annex 1. | |
| Assessment for both programmes should include a dissertation or thesis to enable students to engage in depth with an aspect of educational leadership theory, research and practice. | -The master thesis is worth 30 ECTS and is now compulsory for both programs unless a student faces exceptional circumstances that prevent him/her from writing a thesis, in which case, the student may be given the permission by the Academic Committee to earn 30 ECTS from three modules also available in the program.<br>-See the assessment criteria for the master thesis in Annex 2. | Choose level of compliance: |
| Students should be able to switch between the conventional and online programmes to meet their changing learning needs. | -This is a good suggestion; we would like to ask the Cyprus Agency of Quality Assurance and Accreditation in Higher Education (CYQAA) to allow it, at least in exceptional cases. However, the structure of both programs is flexible, and we | Choose level of compliance: |

| | are always making the necessary adjustments to accommodate all students' learning needs. | |
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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 |
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| Generally, we believe that the teaching staff's qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the programme in its current form and content. However, and essentially, given that the programme aims to centre the topic of Education, Leadership and Management (hereafter termed ELM) there is an evident lack of experience among staff within this particular field.

Course staff do not have qualifications, research or publications within ELM.
 Staff should be required to publish in ELM-specific journals.
Staff should be expected to attend ELM specific conferences | -New staff with ample experience within the ELM field are recruited. See Annexes 10 and 11.

-All the staff (both permanent and visiting) are encouraged to participate in ELM seminars and conferences and do research in the field. There is a research allowance for the permanent staff and other professional opportunities for visiting staff.

-The faculty contracts provide that, besides teaching, the faculty member's top priority is to conduct frontier research and publications in top-tier refereed journals and pursue research grants in his/her area. He/she is encouraged and expected to collaborate on research with colleagues at UOL and beyond.  Each faculty member has a conference attendance allowance of 2,000 euros, a research allowance of 2,000 euros per year for research assistants, data, etc., and a software allowance of 1,000 euros).

-ELM staff will participate in the upcoming conference to be held in Cyprus on 12-13 April 2024 titled "Inspiring, guiding and empowering teachers and trainers: Convergences in Educational Leadership and Adult Education" (more info here https://frederick.ac.cy/en/educational-leadership-adult-education).
 Also, the ELM staff have already contacted the Educational Leadership Network Europe (ELNE) and will participate in the upcoming webinars | Choose level of compliance: |

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| | and activities of the Network https://elnenetwork.org/. Additionally, we will explore other opportunities in the coming months.<br><br>-The UoL research policy is attached in Annex 3. | |
| There is a policy in place for the recruitment and selection of staff but criteria are not specific to the ELM field. The limited specific competence of the teaching staff was also pointed out in the 2018 evaluation and this remains a development need for the University.<br><br>New ELM-specific professors should be recruited, including senior professors with established reputations. | -All the staff have educational background, extensive teaching experience and some of them strong research background in education. Now, we focus on ELM field, and we have recruited new staff with expertise in ELM.<br><br>-We have recruited new senior staff with experience in ELM (Dr. Maria Karamanidou, see her CV in Annex 10), in addition to the staff already in place, who address issues of ELM both in their teaching and research, either thematically or concerning specific fields of educational theory and practice.<br>-The application continues to be open to identify additional staff with strong expertise in ELM. See the application in Annex 4.<br><br>-We have also appointed as an Adjunct Lecturer Dr Areti Stylianou, who holds a PhD in Educational Leadership from UCL (See her CV in Annex 11). | Choose level of compliance: |
| The teaching staff is engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development, but these are not specific to ELM. The application (p. 11) details that the Selection and Promotion Committee (SPC) in these processes should have "a particular focus on research and whether the surrounding circumstances endorse the applicant's promotion". Thus, it becomes | -Teaching is an essential criterion in promoting our teachers/researchers. The overall evaluation of our teaching staff by our students is equal or near to excellence. The reputation of UoL is partially due to our staff's excellence in teaching performance.<br><br>-We are constantly organising a series of internal training sessions for all staff of the ELM program. The training series has been delivered in a | Choose level of compliance: |

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| unclear to what degree teaching also is an important criterion in the promotion of researchers/teachers.<br><br>Specific knowledge and skills in designing and delivering online learning are required. | workshop format. External and internal experts are invited to give the workshops. For example, all the staff participated in two online workshops in December 2023, one on using Moodle for online courses and one on designing online modules. In addition, other related seminars will be organised in the coming months as we proceed with our online programs.<br><br> See below some of the topics:<br>- How to teach online (considerations on how to teach online effectively, theoretical underpinnings of online education, teaching methods, recent evolutions)<br>- Interaction with students in an online environment (online communication techniques).<br>- Students' engagement in an online course (tips to keep your students focused and engaged, digital tools for online courses, feedback, etc).<br>- How to use Moodle for the online courses (this training was done, and all the staff participated)<br>- Instructional Design (how to prepare your activities, etc) | |
| The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study. Visiting staff does not exceed the number of permanent staff. However, given the suggested re-design of the programme, including new courses that better address core elements of ELM, specialist staff recruitment will be necessary given the lack of research experience among the current staff. ELM-specific teaching staff at different levels will be required to ensure a high-quality specialist programme. | New specialist staff is recruited, focused on specific areas of ELM in research and teaching. See the bios of our new staff in Annexes 10 and 11. | Choose level of compliance: |

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| The teaching staff have so few publications in ELM that it is not possible to secure meaningful synergies between teaching and research. Teachers, current or new, will need to be focused on ELM to strengthen the link between teaching and research. | -Current and new teachers are focused on ELM to strengthen the link between teaching and research.<br>-The faculty contracts provide that, besides teaching, the faculty member's top priority is to conduct frontier research and publications in top-tier refereed journals and pursue research grants in his/her area. He/she is encouraged and expected to collaborate on research with colleagues at UOL and beyond.  Each faculty member has a conference attendance allowance of 2,000 euros, a research allowance of 2,000 euros per year for research assistants, data, etc., and a software allowance of 1,000 euros).<br><br>-ELM staff will participate in the upcoming conference to be held in Cyprus on 12-13 April 2024 titled "Inspiring, guiding and empowering teachers and trainers: Convergences in Educational Leadership and Adult Education" (more info here https://frederick.ac.cy/en/educational-leadership-adult-education).<br> Also, the ELM staff have already contacted the Educational Leadership Network Europe (ELNE) https://elnenetwork.org/  and will participate in the upcoming webinars and activities of the Network. Additionally, we will explore other opportunities in the coming months.<br><br>-The UoL research policy is attached in Annex 3. | Choose level of compliance: |
| The EEC found that the staff have experience from various disciplines, and from working with the programme, but generally they don't have adequate experience of working within the field of ELM, not as researchers or practitioners. | Appropriate processes are in place for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff. Regarding the recruitment process, after creating a short list of candidates for a position in the Program, interviews are given before a committee of experts who | Choose level of compliance: |

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| Therefore, we also raise concerns whether there are appropriate processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff. | decide on the person to be recruited. The development of the teaching staff is equally decided by a confident committee appointed for their promotion. The members of the Promotion Committee are chosen between the leading experts in the field of ELM worldwide. | |
| There is an evident lack of experience among staff within this particular field. This also raises questions about whether there are profound strategies for systematically recruiting experts within the field to ensure the competence of the teaching staff, despite the strategies described in the application. | Over the past two years, there has been a long-standing strategy for systematically recruiting experts within the field and an active recruitment process. Still, the Greek language requirement severely limits the applicants with the desired qualifications. We have recently recruited a new staff specialising in educational leadership, in addition to the staff already in place, who address issues of ELM in their teaching and research, either thematically or in relation to specific fields of educational theory and practice. The application call is always open until we find the appropriate person(s). In the meantime, all the staff (both permanent and visiting) are encouraged to participate in ELM seminars, conferences, and research in the field. | Choose level of compliance: |
| ELM-specific teaching staff at different levels will be required to ensure a high-quality specialist programme. | Manolis Koutouzis, Educational Leadership<br>Michalis Socratous, Educational Leadership<br>Maria Karamanidou, Educational Leadership<br>Markella Gregoriou, Evaluation of Educational Staff<br>Panagiotis Kosmas, Educational Technology and Research Methods in Education<br>Ioannis Christodoulou, Philosophy and Sociology of Education, Ethics and Educational Leadership for Social Justice | Choose level of compliance: |

| | Maria Charalambous, Organisational Effectiveness and Improvement | |
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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 |
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| Graduates receive transcripts on completion of their programme but it is not clear if this provides grade details for each module. | All graduates are awarded an official transcript of their academic record showing the courses they attended, the ECTS credits corresponding to each course and the final grade. See Annex 12 | Choose level of compliance: |
| Greater transparency is required in the respective roles of admissions officers and the programme director. | The admission policies and criteria, including academic requirements, standardized test scores, and other relevant factors, are easily accessible to applicants on our website.<br><br>Additionally, comprehensive training on the established admission criteria is provided for admissions officers.<br><br>There is also open communication between admissions officers, program directors, and prospective students. | Choose level of compliance: |
| Progression criteria from one module to another should be clear and transparent. | The program of study is abundantly thought out, and the modules follow each other in a row, according to a certain academic logic of issues that are to be addressed one after another. | Choose level of compliance: |
| Admissions to this specialist programme should be confined to applicants from a professional educational background. | -95% of our students come from education. During the last few years, we have received applications from people with backgrounds in other fields. They wanted to expand their knowledge and expertise and apply for teacher positions in private and public education institutions. This did not affect the focus of the ELM program at all. We always offer our students the most | Choose level of compliance: |

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| | up-to-date perspective of Educational Leadership. The few candidates (up to 5%) with no BSc in Education are given an induction course. | |
| Consideration should be given to providing certification for students exiting the programme before final completion. | Students are issued an official transcript with the courses they attended, and the grades received. In addition to this, a confirmation letter is issued stating the students' achievements during their studies at the University. | Choose level of compliance: |

## 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 |
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| The provision of up-to-date ELM specific books is urgently required. | -We have already updated our resources and made new subscriptions to journals related to ELM. For the needs of the Postgraduate Programme in Education, Leadership, and Management, the Limassol University Library has all the necessary electronic academic e-resources available, with subscriptions to EBSCO Host, ProQuest Central and cooperation with the University of Cyprus Library for interlibrary loan.<br><br>- EBSCO HOST<br>In the academic platform accessed by students through the UoL's online library available on Moodle, students searching for the term "educational leadership" have access to 19,305 results (academic journals, online resources, magazines, books, conference materials, reviews, etc.), full texts and peer-reviewed results dating from 2000 to the present 2023. · EBSCO Link<br><br>- ProQuest Central<br>Similarly, on this academic platform, students searching for the term 'educational leadership' have access to 245,511 results (academic journals, online resources, magazines, journals, books, conference material, reviews, etc.), full texts, and peer-reviewed results, dating from 2000 to present 2023. · ProQuest Central Link | Choose level of compliance: |

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|  | -Interlibrary loan services with the University of Cyprus Library. Students have the option to borrow from the University of Cyprus Library through the cooperation of the University of Limassol Library with the former. By filling in a form (with the student's personal information) available on Moodle and upon request to the librarian, the librarian undertakes to collect the book, deliver it to the student, and then return it to the University of Cyprus Library. |  |
| Similarly, subscriptions to the seven major ELM-specific international academic journals are an essential requirement | -We have already subscribed to the following five (5) ELM journals:<br> 1. Educational Leadership<br> 2. Journal of Business and Educational Leadership<br> 3. Journal of Special Education Leadership<br>4. Academy of Educational Leadership Journal<br>5. International Journal of Educational Policy & Leadership<br><br> Furthermore, we have already discussed with SAGE and ProQuest Central and soon we will acquire subscriptions to the remaining two journals. | Choose level of compliance: |

## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes
*(ALL ESG)*

| 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)*

| 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 |
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| The design, curriculum, structure and content of the programme are largely inappropriate for a specialist ELM master's programme.<br><br>The design, curriculum, structure and content of the programme require a fundamental review, to ensure the centrality of ELM teaching, research and literature. | Both conventional and online programs have been redesigned and restructured according to the accreditors' constructive feedback and suggestions. All the study guides were fundamentally reviewed according to the accreditors' feedback.<br>See the study guides of the courses in Annex 5 | Choose level of compliance: |
| The teaching staff are mostly well qualified but not in respect of ELM-specific degrees, research or publications.<br><br>Additional teaching staff should be recruited, including a full professor, whose qualifications, research and publications are central to the ELM field | We have recruited new senior staff with expertise in ELM, in addition to the staff already in place, who address issues of ELM both in their teaching and research, either thematically or in relation to specific fields of educational theory and practice. The application continues to be open to identify additional expertise. | Choose level of compliance: |
| Teachers cannot draw on their own research to inform teaching on this programme because they do not have ELM-specific research and publications.<br><br>The University should subscribe to the seven major specialist educational leadership journals. | New and existing staff are encouraged to paricipate in ELM conferences and publish in ELM journals. We are now in collaboration with Education Leadership network Europe (ELNE) following the trends and updates in the ELM field.<br><br>We have already subscribed to the following five (5) ELM journals:<br> 1. Educational Leadership<br> 2. Journal of Business and Educational Leadership<br> 3. Journal of Special Education Leadership<br> 4. Academy of Educational Leadership Journal<br> 5. International Journal of Educational Policy & Leadership<br><br> Furthermore, we have already discussed with SAGE and ProQuest | Choose level of compliance: |

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| | Central and soon we will acquire subscriptions to the remaining two journals. | |
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| There are insufficient ELM-specific books and journals, and those that are available are mostly outdated.<br><br>The University should acquire more books, including e-books, specific to the educational leadership field, including the most recent editions. | -We have already updated our resources and made new subscriptions to journals related to ELM. For the needs of the Postgraduate Programme in Education, Leadership, and Management, the Limassol University Library has all the necessary electronic academic e-resources available, with subscriptions to EBSCO Host, ProQuest Central and cooperation with the University of Cyprus Library for interlibrary loan. | Choose level of compliance: |

## C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

| Name | Signature |
|------|-----------|
| **Dr. Paris Cleanthous, Chair of the Committee / Associate Professor, Department Chair of CIIM Business School** | |
| **Dr. Ioannis Christodoulou, Programme Coordinator, Associate Professor** | |
| **Dr. Andrey Afanasiev Vice-Chair of the Committee / Associate Professor** | |
| **Dr. Antonis Violaris Member of the Committee / Assistant Professor** | |
| **Dr. Vias Nicolaides Member of the Committee / Assistant Professor** | |
| **Dr. Kyriaki Mikellidou Member of the committee / Assistant Professor** | |

**Date:** 27/02/2024