

Doc. 300.1.2

Date: 05/04/2024

## Higher Education Institution's Response

- **Higher Education Institution:**  
University of Limassol
- **Town:** Nicosia and Limassol
- **Programme of study**  
**Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

**In Greek:**

MSc Ανάλυση Επιχειρηματικών Δεδομένων, 90 ECTS,  
18 μήνες, Εξ αποστάσεως

**In English:**

MSc Business Analytics, 90 ECTS, 18 months, Distance  
Learning program

- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme's status:** New, distance learning
- **Concentrations (if any):**

**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 2<sup>nd</sup> column of each table, the HEI must respond on the following:*
  - *the areas of improvement and recommendations of the EEC*
  - *the conclusions and final remarks noted by the EEC*
- *The institution should respond to the EEC comments, in the designated area next each comment. The comments of the EEC should be copied from the EEC report **without any interference** in the content.*
- *In case of annexes, those should be attached and sent on separate document(s). Each document should be in \*.pdf format and named as annex1, annex2, etc.*

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

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> The entry requirements should be updated and be more detailed in relation to the required backgrounds, completed bachelor studies, and ECTS. Also there should be mention of any prerequisite knowledge in more detail.</p>	<p>We would like to clarify to the EEC that the entry criteria for the MSc Business Analytics are the General Admission Criteria as follows: 1. Bachelor’s degree from an accredited program. In terms of GPA, we expect 2:2 and above from UK schools, 3.0 and above from US schools, and 6.5 and above or the equivalent from Cypriot and Greek Universities and colleges. Candidates with a lower grade than the above, might be admitted if they have compensatory strengths in terms of work experience or other accomplishments (for example, CFA, ACCA, or ACA).</p> <p>2. Native speaker of English or graduate of a high school or university where the language of instruction is English, or IELTS with a score of at least 5.5, or TOEFL with a score of at least 250 (computerized) or 550 (conventional), or Password-plus 5.5.</p> <p>3. Satisfactory quantitative skills as evidenced by the quantitative courses they have taken during their Bachelor’s degree study.</p> <p>4. A personal interview is an integral part of the selection process. The interview and documents providing evidence of the above qualifications are used as the basis for evaluating candidates. In cases where applicants have graduated from unfamiliar programs or universities, a GRE/GMAT examination score may be required.</p> <p>In addition, regarding the quantitative skills background the following statement is added:” <b>Applicants must have a strong aptitude for quantitative analysis and are likely to have studied a range of degrees including: Management, Marketing, Finance,</b></p>	

	<b><i>Mathematics, Engineering, Computer Science, Economics, and Psychology</i></b>	
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> The details of the study guides is not written in a way that is informative to the students. The department should develop a brochure that is easily accessible to students, with the core information they need for the entire study programme as well as key information per course and the dependencies between courses.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for pointing out that more detailed and informative material should be developed. Towards this, we have proceeded in taking the following actions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. All study guides were re-written to conform to the CYQAA guidelines, with additional information on the progress of each course throughout the semester, additional activities, interactive and multimedia material. ANNEX 2 contains the updated study guides.</li> <li>2. A Brochure for the MSc Business Analytics has been developed with key information per course and the dependencies between courses, as suggested by the EEC. ANNEX 3 contains the Brochure.</li> </ol>	
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> It would be good to have a formal reference group of students for each course that can provide feedback during the course duration at important points in order to ensure that any problems are dealt with prior to course completion.</p>	<p>This is an excellent suggestion, and we have been evaluating the best way to organize this feedback process. Currently we use the course evaluation forms which students complete at the end of every course to evaluate the learning outcomes, the assessment, instructor and provide any feedback they wish to communicate. Prior to the start of each course, the instructors receive the profiles of the students, so that they know the educational and professional background of each student. This helps the instructors structure the course accordingly. They also ask the students for feedback throughout the course in order to make any adjustments where needed.</p> <p>A more formal process has been approved and will be implemented as of the academic year 2024-2025.</p> <p><i>“Selection Process: At the beginning of each course, a group of students will be randomly selected to represent different perspectives and backgrounds.</i></p>	

	<p><i>Responsibilities: The reference group of students will be responsible for providing feedback on various aspects of the course, including content relevance, instructional methods, assessment clarity, and overall learning experience.</i></p> <p><i>Feedback Mechanisms: Throughout the course duration, the reference group will participate in scheduled feedback sessions through a dedicated communication channel to report any issues or concerns as they arise.</i></p> <p><i>Communication with Faculty: The feedback collected from the reference group will be shared with the course instructor. Faculty members will have the opportunity to address any identified issues and make adjustments to improve the course experience for all students.</i></p> <p><i>Continuous Improvement: By integrating feedback from the reference group into ongoing course development and delivery, instructors can continuously refine their teaching methods, update course materials, and implement changes to enhance student learning outcomes.”</i></p>	
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b>          It would be also recommended to have visible information to students about distribution of grades in prior years of each course. Although this is a new study programme, providing transparent information to each course is necessary</p>	<p>In the student intranet – messages section which is visible to all students, we regularly post the class average of each course once the grades have been announced. The same procedure applies to all new programs as well.</p>	
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b>          Allowing for some elective courses or a bit more customization of the content by the students, particularly in the last semester may be good. Since applicants may be looking to apply their skills in different areas or domains, enabling a bit more flexibility in the study structure is deemed as important.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for suggesting the addition of elective courses. We have added elective courses for the final semester of studies. The elective courses, in addition to the Project in Business Analytics Applications, allow the students to explore and/or specialize on specific subjects within the Business Analytics domain. ANNEX 1 contains the list of the</p>	

	<p>Electives. ANNEX 2 contains the respective study guides and in Annex 12 the faculty CVs including the instructors of the new elective courses.</p>	
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b>          The structure and content of the program include an appropriate number and variety of courses, however, there are currently no elective ones.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for suggesting the addition of elective courses. We have added elective courses for the final semester of studies. The elective courses, in addition to the Project in Business Analytics Applications, allow the students to explore and/or specialize on specific subjects within the Business Analytics domain. ANNEX 1 contains the list of the Electives. ANNEX 2 contains the respective study guides and in Annex 12 the faculty CVs including the instructors of the new elective courses.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b>          There is a bit of ambiguity concerning what are satisfactory quantitative skills from the prior quantitative courses that have been taken in their Bachelors studies. There is also limited explanation on what types of bachelor's degrees are appropriate and how they will be assessed in order to be eligible to the Master's in Business Analytics.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for giving us the chance to clarify the subject of entry criteria for the proposed MSc Business Analytics, and specifically the background on quantitative skills. In addition to the general criteria of admission to all MSc degrees, we have added the following statement:  <b><i>"Applicants must have a strong aptitude for quantitative analysis and are likely to have studied a range of degrees including: Management, Marketing, Finance, Mathematics, Engineering, Computer Science, Economics, and Psychology"</i></b>.          We would also like to clarify that the course "Quantitative Methods for Business Analytics", which is offered during the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of studies introduces the students to the required quantitative skills and algorithmic background needed to follow the curriculum of the program. The course "Programming for Business Analytics" which is also offered during the 1<sup>st</sup> semester of studies introduces the students to Programming through the use of the Python programming language, and therefore supplies the programming background needed to follow the curriculum of the program.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b>          The required ECTS for entry to the study programme are not defined, nor the prior knowledge apart from the quantitative skills</p>	<p>We would like to clarify to the committee that the entry criteria for the MSc Business Analytics are the General Admission Criteria as follows:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. In accordance with the Bologna Process a 'first cycle' (or bachelor's) degree consists of either 180 or 240 ECTS credits. Therefore we require from candidates to submit a Bachelor's degree from an accredited program. In terms of GPA, we expect 2:2 and above from UK schools, 3.0 and above from US schools, and 6.5 and above or the equivalent from Cypriot and Greek Universities and colleges. Candidates with a lower grade than the above, might be admitted if they have compensatory strengths in terms of work experience or other accomplishments (for example, CFA, ACCA, or ACA).</li> <li>2. Native speaker of English or graduate of a high school or university where the language of instruction is English, or IELTS with a score of at least 5.5, or TOEFL with a score of at least 250 (computerized) or 550 (conventional), or Password-plus 5.5.</li> <li>3. <b>Satisfactory quantitative skills as evidenced by the quantitative courses they have taken during their Bachelor's degree study.</b></li> <li>4. A personal interview is an integral part of the selection process. The interview and documents providing evidence of the above qualifications are used as the basis for evaluating candidates. In cases where applicants have graduated from unfamiliar programs or universities, a GRE/GMAT examination score may be required.</li> </ol> <p>In addition, regarding the quantitative skills background the following statement is added: "<b>Applicants must have a strong aptitude for quantitative analysis and are likely to have studied a range of degrees including: Management, Marketing, Finance, Mathematics, Engineering, Computer Science, Economics, and Psychology</b>"</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
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## 2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> The study guides need to be rewritten keeping in mind that the target audience is the students on the Business Analytics programme.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for pointing out that the study guides need to be more informative towards distance-learning students and developed towards satisfying this audience. Therefore, we would like to inform the EEC that all study guides were re-written to conform to the CYQAA guidelines, with additional information on the progress of each course throughout the semester, additional activities, interactive and multimedia material. The content is re-developed so that distance learning students can follow the courses in an asynchronous manner, complying with all CYQAA guidelines regarding distance learning education. ANNEX 2 contains the updated study guides.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> Students should receive clear guidance and recommendations on the use of AI in assessment, linked directly to university policy/guidance on the use of AI. This guidance needs to be fully developed.</p>	<p>The University of Limassol Quality Assurance policy on the Use of Generative AI provides instructors and students with guidance and recommendations on the use of AI. (see Annex 6)</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> Staff should be supported dealing with academic offences originated by the use of generative AI technologies. Clear guidance, training on technologies and redesigning assessments is necessary.</p>	<p>The University of Limassol Quality Assurance policy on the Use of Generative AI provides instructors and students with guidance and recommendations on the use of AI. (see Annex 6) As discussed in the meeting with the EEC, UoL’s Distance Learning Unit is implementing a project dedicated to assisting all UoL academics teaching distance learning courses in preparing and enhancing their course design and delivery for their distance learning courses and in converting existing course materials and pedagogical practices into eLearning material, ultimately improving student learning and satisfaction. Through purposeful utilization of digital tools,</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>including innovative applications of generative AI, the project seeks to equip instructors with the requisite skills and expertise to navigate the complexities of distance learning education. By fostering the development of digital readiness and proficiency, this initiative empowers UoL instructors to craft engaging and adaptive eLearning experiences that meet the evolving needs of students. Furthermore, the project emphasizes the creation and utilization of digital education content, ensuring its relevance, accessibility, and inclusivity across diverse learning environments. A by-product of the project is a dynamic repository of best practices that guides UoL educators towards effective digital integration. By promoting collaboration and knowledge-sharing, this initiative drives the cultivation of digital skills and expertise among stakeholders. Specifically, UoL’s Distance Learning Unit, in collaboration with the MBA coordinator, is developing a capacity-building training course, built in the same distance learning mode, following the same approach, and using the same type of eLearning activities that should be produced as a result of the training course. In this course, participants will learn to set eLearning outcomes and create distance learning lesson plans, assessment tasks, eLearning material and activities (some with the use of generative AI), multimedia-production, evaluation rubrics, etc. The course will be offered as a distance learning course where participants will, on one hand, act as students to familiarize themselves with the student experience and, on the other, develop their eLearning distance courses while receiving feedback as they themselves complete the various eLearning activities. This course is mandatory for all instructors teaching a distance learning course in the MSc BA or any other UoL program and will be offered as soon as the distance learning MSc BA is accredited. At completion of the program, participants will receive a certificate of completion.</p>	
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<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b>          There is scope to create incentives for students to use interactive tools, e.g. including simulations, serious games etc. Doing so will help student development and enhance the student experience during the distance learning Business Analytics programme.</p>	<p>To successfully engage students, we've carefully selected a wide range of engaging interactive activities for our online courses. With the addition of H5P, our online environment provides an immersive learning experience. Interactive films &amp; videos enable students to take an active role by answering questions associated with the content. Quizzes test retention and understanding, yet discussion forums foster creative collaboration, learning as well as critical thinking. Fill-in-the-blank tasks enhance understanding, while drag-and-drop games stimulate practical learning. Crossword puzzles provide a pleasant way to reinforce crucial topics, and word searches endorse exploration and language retention. For courses that are more practical by nature, we have designed and implemented activities via interactive environments, such as Jupyter Notebook, that help students learn by engaging them in a journey. These interactive elements not only encourage active participation, but also adapt to a variety of learning styles, resulting in rich and fulfilling educational journeys for all participants.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b>          Training seminars should be timetabled (and potentially offered on a regular basis) to ensure that all staff should be able to attend. This is also needed in respect of distance learning student training and induction.</p>	<p>Thank you for your feedback regarding the importance of training seminars and accessible provisions for both staff and students within our MSc Business Analytics programme. We value your recommendations and are pleased to inform you that our Distance Learning Unit already has robust mechanisms in place to address these needs, ensuring both our faculty and students are well-equipped for academic excellence.</p> <p>For our faculty, we schedule two mandatory webinars each academic year, focusing on the development of interactive materials, simulations, and effective use of the Moodle Learning Management System for course creation. These webinars are part of our commitment to enhance teaching effectiveness, particularly in a distance learning context. This approach mirrors the practices established for our</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>conventional programs, adapted to emphasize interactivity and engagement in a virtual learning environment.</p> <p>Furthermore, we offer an induction week for our MSc Business Analytics students, designed to familiarize them with our digital platforms, clarify academic scheduling, and provide a comprehensive overview of the student handbook, detailing university policies and regulations. This initiative is supplemented by continuous updates and resources available through our Student Help Center page on Moodle. Here, students can access a wide range of information, from leveraging online sources responsibly to understanding plagiarism, and acquiring career skills.</p>	
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b> Significant work needs to be done to ensure successful translation into an e-learning environment.</p>	<p>Thank you for emphasizing the importance of thoughtful and best-practice-driven conversion of course materials and pedagogical practices for e-learning environments. We fully acknowledge the complexity of this transition and are committed to ensuring our processes are both meticulous and informed by the latest in distance education methodologies. Our dedicated team works closely with instructional design experts to ensure that our e-learning provision is not only a translation of our conventional content but is also enhanced and optimized for online learning, reflecting best practices in the field.</p>	
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b> We reviewed a guide for staff teaching on the conventional programme. There does not yet appear to be a similar guide for DL staff. This needs to be addressed. In our discussions, the EEC was informed that a guide in electronic format was still in preparation. There are instructor resources on Moodle, which need further development, as they seem to be focusing on the technical support rather than the pedagogical elements.</p>	<p>Based on the EEC comment, and as discussed during the visit, the <b>UoL Distance Learning Instructor and Staff Guide</b> (Annex 4) was finalized and approved. The Guide includes the formulation of our pedagogical model for e-learning, aligned with the overarching vision and objectives of the UoL Distance Learning Unit. To ensure comprehensive development, we have referred to the standards and directives outlined by various quality assurance bodies and agencies (CYQAA, ENQA, ESG, EADTU). The purpose of this guide is to provide UoL instructors of distance learning programs</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>and staff with a comprehensive resource to enhance their understanding of online teaching methods and best practices. It aims to equip UoL Distance Learning instructors with the knowledge, tools, and strategies necessary to create engaging, effective, and inclusive Distance Learning experiences for UoL students.</p> <p>Distance learning is a fast-evolving set of instructional methods. We prioritize staying current with the latest developments in quality assurance frameworks to ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of our e-learning pedagogical model. As new DL technologies and methods become available and are incorporated by the UoL DL Unit, this Guide will be updated accordingly.</p> <p>In a collaborative project with 7 other institutions in 6 countries, UoL is conducting a comprehensive review of relevant literature and existing pedagogical approaches across participating institutions, as well as leading programs from non-participating institutions. This involves collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing context-specific information on (1) innovative pedagogical eLearning methods and practices in the relevant literature, across the participating institutions, and from selected leading eLearning programs from non-participating institutions; (2) current trends in generative artificial intelligence and its applications in education to understand its potential impact on teaching and learning processes; (3) innovative pedagogical methods and practices that integrate or leverage AI technologies within the context of higher education. The ultimate objective is to prepare an eGuide outlining the method and steps that need to be taken when developing generative-AI-enhanced, pedagogically-innovative eLearning tools and material for distance learning courses. UoL staff will have access to this material and the additional eGuide as well.</p>	
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b></p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for giving us the chance to provide sample examination</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>We did not see any exam papers from the MSc under consideration.</p>	<p>papers for all courses of the program. All sample examination papers are attached in ANNEX 5.</p>	
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b> The university does not seem to have a comprehensive policy or guidance for the use of AI for members of staff and students. This is a key area in the current context of the proliferation of generative AI technologies (inc. ChatGPT). The implications of students using generative AI applications can be severe for assessment practice. The programme team indicated they are using Turnitin to detect plagiarism offences. However, the current plugin developed by Turnitin to detect the use of AI generative technologies like ChatGPT can be erratic. Careful thinking and attention to sectoral best practices is important here.</p>	<p>The UoL Senate approved the <b>QA policy on guidance for the use of AI</b> during its meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March. The Policy can be found in Annex 6</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b> Regarding the assessment framework for distance learning, the EEC is told that distance learning special provisions (particularly in relation to enhanced assessment methodologies) and policies for distance learning are currently in the process of being finalised and will be approved shortly by the QA committee before being submitted to the Senate.</p>	<p>Based on the EEC constructive comment, and as discussed during the visit, to ensure the quality and effectiveness of our distance learning programs, the <b>UoL Distance Learning Assessment framework</b> (Annex 7 ) was finalized and approved. Following CYQAA regulations, the document provides useful information about the assessment framework, the criteria, and activities that assess student performance in an online course and aims to guide instructors within the UoL DL Unit to design, implement, and evaluate assessments effectively. By adhering to these criteria and incorporating diverse assessment activities, we can ensure the quality, integrity, and accessibility of our distance learning programs, ultimately enhancing the learning experience for all students.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b> Training and induction opportunities in e-learning for students and staff is being planned. Such activities should support learning and help students and staff</p>	<p>As discussed in the meeting with the EEC, UoL's Distance Learning Unit is implementing a project dedicated to assisting all UoL academics teaching distance learning courses in preparing and enhancing their course design and delivery</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>to develop digital literacies and related skills.</p>	<p>for their distance learning courses and in converting existing course materials and pedagogical practices into eLearning material, ultimately improving student learning and satisfaction. Through purposeful utilization of digital tools, including innovative applications of generative AI, the project seeks to equip instructors with the requisite skills and expertise to navigate the complexities of distance learning education. By fostering the development of digital readiness and proficiency, this initiative empowers UoL instructors to craft engaging and adaptive eLearning experiences that meet the evolving needs of students. Furthermore, the project emphasizes the creation and utilization of digital education content, ensuring its relevance, accessibility, and inclusivity across diverse learning environments.</p> <p>A by-product of the project is a dynamic repository of best practices that guides UoL educators towards effective digital integration. By promoting collaboration and knowledge-sharing, this initiative drives the cultivation of digital skills and expertise among stakeholders.</p> <p>Specifically, UoL’s Distance Learning Unit, in collaboration with the MBA coordinator, is developing a capacity-building training course, built in the same distance learning mode, following the same approach, and using the same type of eLearning activities that should be produced as a result of the training course. In this course, participants will learn to set eLearning outcomes and create distance learning lesson plans, assessment tasks, eLearning material and activities (some with the use of generative AI), multimedia-production, evaluation rubrics, etc. The course will be offered as a distance learning course where participants will, on one hand, act as students to familiarize themselves with the student experience and, on the other, develop their eLearning distance courses while receiving feedback as they themselves complete the various eLearning activities. This course is <b>mandatory for all instructors teaching a</b></p>	
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	<p><b>distance learning course</b> in the MSc BA or any other UoL program and will be offered as soon as the distance learning MSc BA is accredited. At completion of the program, participants will receive a certificate of completion. The intention of the project is in fact to accredit this certification program and offer it to non-UoL participants as well, in the future.</p> <p>All eLearning material produced by participants in the training and capacity-building course will be collected so as to build a repository of course material to be used as future training material for all academics, instructors, instructional designers, and other eLearning staff at UoL. At the same time, in a collaborative project with 7 other institutions in 6 countries, UoL is conducting a comprehensive review of relevant literature and existing pedagogical approaches across participating institutions, as well as leading programs from non-participating institutions. This involves collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing context-specific information on (1) innovative pedagogical eLearning methods and practices in the relevant literature, across the participating institutions, and from selected leading eLearning programs from non-participating institutions; (2) current trends in generative artificial intelligence and its applications in education to understand its potential impact on teaching and learning processes; (3) innovative pedagogical methods and practices that integrate or leverage AI technologies within the context of higher education. The ultimate objective is to prepare an eGuide outlining the method and steps that need to be taken when developing generative-AI-enhanced, pedagogically-innovative eLearning tools and material for distance learning courses. UoL staff will have access to this material and the eGuide as well.</p> <p>Additionally, UoL has provided a list of online courses and training programs on distance learning offered by other academic institutions. Distance learning instructors are attending courses and training sessions</p>	
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	<p>to complement their knowledge and skills. For the same reason, UoL’s Distance Learning Unit is preparing a list of webinars that complement the learning gained at the capacity-building training course. The idea is that webinars will inform and train instructors in the use of new and innovative techniques and practical skills not covered by the training course. These include two mandatory webinars each academic year, focusing specifically on the development of interactive materials, simulations, and effective use of the Moodle Learning Management System for course creation. These webinars are part of UoL’s commitment to enhance teaching effectiveness, particularly in a distance learning context. This approach mirrors the practices established for our conventional programs, adapted to emphasize interactivity and engagement in a virtual learning environment.</p>	
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### 3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> The university could provide some further financial incentives so that academic staff can conduct quality research. There is an allocated amount per year, but this may need to be increased to allow for further research development. The budget offered for research activities could be increased to accommodate more than one conference per year.</p>	<p>As stated in the UoL Policy on Faculty Research (Annex 8 and Annex 8a) each faculty member is expected to attend academic conferences in their field as a presenter or a discussant. Research allowances of €2,000 per faculty member per year are awarded by the School out of its Research Fund to faculty, based on research proposals Conference participation allowances of €2,000 per faculty member per year are awarded by the School, based on invitations to present research papers at conferences Software and data-base allowance of €1,000 per faculty member per year There exists a University Research Fund from which research faculty may request seed research funding (e.g. research assistants, funding for experiments, data collection etc). In addition, faculty can buy back part of their teaching time to pursue eternal multi-PI research grants by drawing on the School's Research Fund (as of the next academic year 2024-25) Bonuses of up to €2,500 for outperforming faculty in research publications beyond their contractual level are awarded by the School/University.  In case the funding for conferences is used up, upon approval by the Dean of School they can use unutilized funding from the other research allowances.  Additional funding can be requested and approved by the Dean.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> It would also be a good practice to make teacher training</p>	<p>For our faculty, we schedule two mandatory webinars each academic year, focusing on the development of</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

<p>mandatory and ensure that several important areas about how to develop high quality and accessible resources are met.</p> <p>There should also be provision of equipment and learning resources on how to effectively conduct distance learning based on latest knowledge. Currently, the staff have an approach that is based on their own experiences and what they believe works best which may create variations in the quality of courses online.</p>	<p>interactive materials, simulations, and effective use of the Moodle Learning Management System for course creation. These webinars are part of our commitment to enhance teaching effectiveness, particularly in a distance learning context. This approach mirrors the practices established for our conventional programs, adapted to emphasize interactivity and engagement in a virtual learning environment. Also, our capacity-building training course will be offered three times per year, in the fall and spring semesters as a 16-week distance learning course and in the summer as an 8-week distance learning course. The repository of eLearning material, the eGuides, the complementary training webinars and all instructor resources will be available to distance learning instructors throughout the year. This provides ample opportunities for instructors.</p> <p>In November 2023, we have also initiated a series of workshops for UoL faculty by the IT department on the use and applications of our Moodle platform. We have also engaged a distance learning professional from the Open University of London who will provide a kick-off training seminar on distance learning for UoL Faculty in April 2024. This is in addition to external training sessions that our faculty have attended since the last academic year, following the decision of the university to initiate distance learning programs. (Annex 13).</p>	
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b>          It is not clear how the department develops synergies between research and education, and if teaching cases are considered in applications for promotion.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for giving us the chance to explain how the University of Limassol and specifically the Technology and Innovation School promotes the development of synergies between research and education. Creating synergies between research and education enriches the learning experience in university courses, fostering</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>engagement and innovation. Since all the course instructors within the MSc Business Analytics are active researchers in the domain that their course deals with, they have knowledge of the cutting-edge research in the respective domain. Therefore, research-led teaching comes naturally as an educational method within all MSc Business Analytics courses. All courses have a substantial amount of credit devoted to a project, which is a subject drawn from the current state of research in the specific subject. In addition, the MSc Business Analytics has a course during the final semester of studies on "Project in Business Analytics Applications". This is a practical, project-based course which draws from current research practices and applies them in a real-world business case. In addition, instructors seek to engage students in research, by promoting the output of their projects as demonstrations, posters or research papers at peer-reviewed conferences.</p> <p>Regarding the comment on whether "teaching cases are considered in applications for promotion" we would like to point out that the promotion criteria are clearly stated in the UoL Charter, the Faculty Handbook and the individual Faculty contracts and they are outlined in the attached UoL TENURE SYSTEM OF FACULTY RECRUITMENT, EVALUATION AND PROMOTION (annex 9). The workload allocation and the weights given to teaching, research, service and community outreach are explicitly stated in the contract of each faculty member and performance is annually evaluated based on the point system. Both quantitative and qualitative criteria and quality criteria are considered in annual evaluations; see for example the attached UoL Policy on Faculty Research (annex 8) on how the point system is applied in the evaluation of research .</p>	
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	<p>Below is an example of the points system for resident faculty:          The faculty member must earn 100 points per year by carrying out his/her responsibilities in          (a) teaching, (b) research and publications, (c) programme directorship, administration and organization, (d) outreach to the community and other duties as prescribed above.</p> <p>These 100 points, in principle, correspond to the above-mentioned 4 pillars as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teaching: 30% or 30 points</li> <li>- Research and publications: 35% or 35 points</li> <li>- Programme directorship, administration, and organization: 25% or 25 points</li> <li>- Outreach to the community and other duties: 10% or 10 points</li> </ul> <p>An informal review regarding the points of the faculty member takes place in the middle of the year, in order 'corrective measures' to be adopted if necessary. Furthermore, a relevant formal review takes place at the end of the year, in order the faculty member to be evaluated.</p>	
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#### 4. Student admission, progression, recognition and certification (ESG 1.4)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> While the university appears to cater to the student needs, there are some areas of improvement in relation to admission requirements that remain unclear, especially since the new programme will operate in an international environment, so students need to be given more information about what kinds of background are eligible and what prior skills are required. This also extends to the number of required ECTS and how they are calculated from non-European students.</p>	<p>The entry criteria for the MSc Business Analytics are as follows: 1. Bachelor’s degree from an accredited program. In terms of GPA, we expect 2:2 and above from UK schools, 3.0 and above from US schools, and 6.5 and above or the equivalent from Cypriot and Greek Universities and colleges. Candidates with a lower grade than the above, might be admitted if they have compensatory strengths in terms of work experience or other accomplishments (for example, CFA, ACCA, or ACA).</p> <p>2. Native speaker of English or graduate of a high school or university where the language of instruction is English, or IELTS with a score of at least 5.5, or TOEFL with a score of at least 250 (computerized) or 550 (conventional), or Password-plus 5.5.</p> <p>3. Satisfactory quantitative skills as evidenced by the quantitative courses they have taken during their Bachelor’s degree study.</p> <p>4. A personal interview is an integral part of the selection process. The interview and documents providing evidence of the above qualifications are used as the basis for evaluating candidates. In cases where applicants have graduated from unfamiliar programs or universities, a GRE/GMAT examination score may be required.</p> <p>In addition, regarding the quantitative skills background the following statement is added:” <b><i>Applicants must have a strong aptitude for quantitative analysis and are likely to have studied a range of degrees including: Management, Marketing, Finance, Mathematics, Engineering, Computer Science, Economics, and Psychology</i></b>”</p> <p>In addition to the above the UoL admissions office also uses the The ENIC-NARIC platform to check the recognition of foreign qualifications (degrees) as well as the ECCTIS platform (an internationally trusted and respected reference point for qualifications and skills standards).</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>As an example we recently had a case of an applicant from India for which we had to check with the Indian Embassy whether the Certificate of Competency [CoC] issued by the Indian Maritime Administration is recognized as equivalent of a University Bachelor degree.</p>	
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> It would be beneficial to have a diploma supplement that conforms with European standards so that graduates are eligible to apply for other European institutes or jobs based on this. In addition, providing the option for additional 30 ECTS in the form of extra courses or a project would be beneficial for those that are interested in pursuing a doctoral programme at other European universities as they need a total of 120 ECTS. We also understand that the university aims to establish a doctoral programme, so they may want to introduce more research-oriented electives.</p>	<p>The University of Limassol follows the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) a central tool in the Bologna Process, which aims to make national education systems more comparable internationally. ECTS also helps make other documents, such as the Diploma Supplement (see sample Annex 10) clearer and easier to use in different countries. A ‘first cycle’ (or bachelor's) degree consists of either 180 or 240 ECTS credits. A ‘second cycle’ (or master's) degree equates to 90 or 120 ECTS credits. The use of the ECTS at the ‘third cycle’, or Ph.D. level, varies. In case a student wishes to acquire additional credits, he/she can do so by choosing extra courses from the list of elective courses, provided in Annex 1. In this case the final transcript of the student will show the total number of ECTS based on the courses the student attended, for example 120 ECTS.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b> The students suggested that learning requirements for courses and study programmes be clearer, as some of them experienced that there was a steep learning curve for some courses.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for pointing out the subject of a steep learning curve. We have indeed spotted this as well and therefore have designed the 1<sup>st</sup> semester course “Quantitative Methods for Business Analytics” in a way so that students can acquire the necessary knowledge before progressing further into the degree. More specifically, the course introduces students to 2 axes: 1. Discrete Mathematics and Algorithms (relevant to the Computer Science-related requirements) and 2. Statistics (relevant to the statistical methods requirements). Towards this end, the course serves as a way for students with limited quantitative and/or computer science related background to follow the curriculum of the MSc Business Analytics.</p>	

## 5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Areas of improvement and recommendations <b>by EEC</b>	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> An additional facility to support students outside Cyprus who require access to printed copies of books should be available via a university network of collaborations, when there are no digital copies available.</p>	<p>The University of Limassol currently has a partnership with the University of Cyprus for the interlibrary loan of books in printed form for its students, which it intends to extend to other universities in Europe. Initially, it will undertake a mapping exercise of the geographical background of its candidates, informing them of the provision of academic material available in digital format and their options for books in print. The creation of new partnerships with universities abroad is in the immediate plans of the Limassol University Library. For candidates in Greece, the University of Limassol will cooperate with Greek universities in major urban centres such as Athens, Thessaloniki, Thrace, Ionian Islands, Aegean Islands, Crete, etc. Future collaborations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Panteion University</li> <li>- Aristotle University</li> <li>- University of Thrace</li> <li>- Ionian University</li> <li>- University of the Aegean</li> <li>- University of Crete</li> </ul> <p>As the geographical background of each candidate student will be different, the university will try to cover most of his needs with new cooperation agreements and informing students in case a new cooperation is impossible, in which academic libraries he can visit and become a member with zero or small fee. In the age of modern technology, however, the university will ensure that all its academic needs for library material are met in digital format.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> There is a need to develop training and induction for distance learning students on the external software tools to be used during their studies. At the time of completing this report it</p>	<p>All software that is available to face to face students is also available to be downloaded and used by distance learning students. Most of the software tools are either free and open source and/or cloud-based, therefore the students do not need to use their own hardware to run the software. For the cases of specialized non-cloud software, such as</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>



<p>was not clear to us how this would be done.</p>	<p>SPSS and STATA, student licenses are given to all students, regardless of whether they are following distance learning or face to face programs.</p> <p>Before the beginning of each course, synchronous introductory sessions and trainings on the software that is used are conducted by either the instructor or the software vendor representatives. Software tutorials are given throughout the course duration to aid the students toward completing their assignments and projects.</p>	
<p><b>Additional recommendations:</b>          The programme team provided a list of external software tools to be used for the distance learning MSc Business Analytics for the benefit of the students. It is important to ensure that distance learning students have equal access to such resources.</p>	<p>Distance learning students will have equal access to various resources needed for their successful completion. Depending on the software that will be needed per module, there will be introductory sessions prior to the commencement of each module during which the instructor will explain to the students how to use the relevant software.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

## 6. Additional for doctoral programmes

(ALL ESG)

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

(ALL ESG)

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

Conclusions and final remarks by EEC	Actions Taken by the Institution	For Official Use ONLY
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> One area that needs to be improved however is how students can customize their studies, and acquire specialized knowledge related to domain-specific applications of business analytics.</p>	<p>We would like to thank the EEC for suggesting the addition of elective courses. We have added elective courses for the final semester of studies. The elective courses, in addition to the Project in Business Analytics Applications, allow the students to explore and/or specialize on specific subjects within the Business Analytics domain. ANNEX 1 contains the list of the Electives. ANNEX 2 contains the respective study guides and in Annex 12 the faculty CVs including the instructors of the new elective courses.</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b> There could be more clarification of the profile of background, prior learning, and knowledge that are best suited to enrol in this MSc programme. If there is a willingness to attract students from other universities, these aspects should be explicitly defined in the selection criteria. Also, it would be good to include criteria that correspond to European and other international institutions.</p> <p>The programme should also provide a diploma supplement to graduates that highlights the courses taken, the number of ECTS they have received, and follow the Bologna conventions to allow for students to be better integrated in the European market and academia.</p>	<p>The entry criteria for the MSc Business Analytics are the General Admission Criteria as follows: 1. Bachelor's degree from an accredited program. In terms of GPA, we expect 2:2 and above from UK schools, 3.0 and above from US schools, and 6.5 and above or the equivalent from Cypriot and Greek Universities and colleges. Candidates with a lower grade than the above, might be admitted if they have compensatory strengths in terms of work experience or other accomplishments (for example, CFA, ACCA, or ACA). 2. Native speaker of English or graduate of a high school or university where the language of instruction is English, or IELTS with a score of at least 5.5, or TOEFL with a score of at least 250 (computerized) or 550 (conventional), or Password-plus 5.5. 3. Satisfactory quantitative skills as evidenced by the quantitative courses they have taken during their Bachelor's degree study. 4. A personal interview is an integral part of the selection process. The interview and documents providing evidence of the above qualifications are used as the basis for evaluating candidates. In cases where applicants have graduated from unfamiliar programs or universities, a GRE/GMAT examination score may be required. In addition, regarding the quantitative skills</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>background the following statement is added:” <b><i>Applicants must have a strong aptitude for quantitative analysis and are likely to have studied a range of degrees including: Management, Marketing, Finance, Mathematics, Engineering, Computer Science, Economics, and Psychology</i></b>”</p> <p>The University of Limassol follows the European Credit Transfer and Accumulation System (ECTS) a central tool in the Bologna Process, which aims to make national education systems more comparable internationally. ECTS also helps make other documents, such as the Diploma Supplement (see sample Annex 10) clearer and easier to use in different countries. A ‘first cycle’ (or bachelor's) degree consists of either 180 or 240 ECTS credits. A ‘second cycle’ (or master's) degree equates to 90 or 120 ECTS credits. The use of the ECTS at the ‘third cycle’, or Ph.D. level, varies.</p>	
<p><b>Areas of improvement:</b>          There should also be a plan for the staff in developing materials for such cases. Currently, it is unclear how content will be developed, with what equipment, and how the university will ensure that it is based on best practices.</p>	<p>Based on the EEC comment, and as discussed during the visit, the <b>UoL Distance Learning Instructor and Staff Guide</b> (Annex 4) was finalized and approved. The Guide includes the formulation of our pedagogical model for e-learning, aligned with the overarching vision and objectives of the UoL Distance Learning Unit. To ensure comprehensive development, we have referred to the standards and directives outlined by various quality assurance bodies and agencies (CYQAA, ENQA, ESG, EADTU). The purpose of this guide is to provide UoL instructors of distance learning programs and staff with a comprehensive resource to enhance their understanding of online teaching methods and best practices. It aims to equip UoL Distance Learning instructors with the knowledge, tools, and strategies necessary to create engaging, effective, and inclusive Distance Learning experiences for UoL students. Distance learning is a fast-evolving set of instructional methods. We prioritize staying current with the latest developments in</p>	<p>Choose level of compliance:</p>

	<p>quality assurance frameworks to ensure the continued relevance and effectiveness of our e-learning pedagogical model. As new DL technologies and methods become available and are incorporated by the UoL DL Unit, this Guide will be updated accordingly.</p> <p>In a collaborative project with 7 other institutions in 6 countries, UoL is conducting a comprehensive review of relevant literature and existing pedagogical approaches across participating institutions, as well as leading programs from non-participating institutions. This involves collecting, analyzing, and synthesizing context-specific information on (1) innovative pedagogical eLearning methods and practices in the relevant literature, across the participating institutions, and from selected leading eLearning programs from non-participating institutions; (2) current trends in generative artificial intelligence and its applications in education to understand its potential impact on teaching and learning processes; (3) innovative pedagogical methods and practices that integrate or leverage AI technologies within the context of higher education. The ultimate objective is to prepare an eGuide outlining the method and steps that need to be taken when developing generative-AI-enhanced, pedagogically-innovative eLearning tools and material for distance learning courses. UoL staff will have access to this material and the additional eGuide as well. In addition to the Instructors Guide the UoL Distance Learning Unit has also development a technical guide for instructors (Annex 11) and the UoL Distance Learning Assessment framework (Annex 7 ). Following CYQAA regulations, the document provides useful information about the assessment framework, the criteria, and activities that assess student performance in an online course and aims to guide instructors within the UoL DL Unit to design, implement, and evaluate assessments effectively. By adhering to these criteria and incorporating diverse</p>	
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	assessment activities, we can ensure the quality, integrity, and accessibility of our distance learning programs, ultimately enhancing the learning experience for all students.	
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### C. Higher Education Institution academic representatives

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Signature</i>
<b>Vasilis Polimenis</b>	Vice Rector for Academic Affairs and Quality Assurance, Chair	
<b>Andreas Artemiou</b>	Dean of Technology & Innovation School, Vice Chair	
<b>Paris Cleanthous</b>	Chairperson of the Department of Management, Director of MBA and MPSM,	
<b>Lena Jelic</b>	Director of Academic Affairs, Member	
<b>Snezana Eminidou</b>	Director of the BSc Economics, Member	
<b>Afxentis Afxentiou</b>	Academic Research Manager, Member	
<b>Andreas Mathikolonis</b>	President of Student Council, Member	

Date: 05/04/2024

