

Doc. 300.1.1

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External Evaluation Report (Conventional-face-to-face programme of study)

- **Higher Education Institution:**
C.D.A. COLLEGE
- **Town:** Limassol
- **School/Faculty (if applicable):**
- **Sector:**
- **Programme of study- Name (Duration, ECTS, Cycle)**

In Greek:
Διοίκηση Επιχειρήσεων [4 ακαδημαϊκά έτη, 240 ECTS, Πτυχίο (BA)]

In English:
“Business Administration” [4 academic years, 240 ECTS, Bachelor of Arts (BA)]
- **Language(s) of instruction:** English
- **Programme’s status:** Currently Operating
- **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].

Introduction

The EEC visited the three locations where the C.D.A. College offers the BA Business Administration (Bachelor of Arts, 4 years, 240 ECTS) programme: Nicosia, Limassol and Paphos.

It is important to realize that it is the same programme with the same courses (having unique course codes) but with different lecturers is delivered to students with the same admission criteria, etc

The EEC report will assess and comment on the programme as delivered per branch (location) and will clearly identify C.D.A. College level points of discussion (for the three branches together at programme and institutional support level) and on branch level (consistent with the fact that the Ministry of Higher Education considers each of the three deliveries as separate programmes).

The EEC, therefore, had separate interviews with staff, faculty and students at each of the locations (see agenda) and will present findings both on branch as on programme (C.D.A. College) level.

The EEC commends the C.D.A. College with its strategy and strategy implementation with respect to its operations in three different locations, each of them having specific characteristics. The C.D.A. College delivers the same programme (with joint, centralized quality assurance, course design, content development, etc ...) in settings that sometimes differ significantly in terms of student population, student profile, links with (local) industry, etc ...). Important to notice is that the C.D.A. College succeeds in creating synergies and (relevant) economies of scale and scope with respect to the Business Administration (and probably with all other programmes not under review by this committee).

In the report below, the EEC will elaborate further on particular standard related issues, but in general and across the three branches, the EEC came to conclusion that four main issues came to the front:

1. The challenge of having different student populations and different (local) market or industry challenges and opportunities at each of the three branches;
2. The challenge of serving students with demanding high quality courses when the large majority of students also works (with a significant part-time workload);
3. The challenge of innovating the programme, restructuring courses, integrating new courses into the programme, reviewing assessment and evaluations;
4. The challenge of strengthening the research foundation of the programme and increasing quality research output.

On all of the above, the EEC had an open and pro-active discussion with all stakeholders.

A. External Evaluation Committee (EEC)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>University</i>
Philip Vergauwen	Full Professor, Chair EEC	Maastricht University (NL) and Université Libre de Bruxelles (BE)
Ernst Verwaal	Full Professor, Member EEC	Katholieke Universiteit Leuven (BE)
Ad De Jong	Full Professor, Member EEC	Copenhagen Business School (DK)
Demetris Kazamias	Student, Member EEC	University of Cyprus (CY)

B. Guidelines on content and structure of the report

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

Sub-areas

- 1.1 Policy for quality assurance**
- 1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review**
- 1.3 Public information**
- 1.4 Information management**

1.1 Policy for quality assurance

Standards

- *Policy for quality assurance of the programme of study:*
 - *is a part of the strategic management of the program.*
 - *focuses on the achievement of special goals related to the quality assurance of the study program.*
 - *has a formal status and is publicly available*
 - *supports the organisation of the quality assurance system through appropriate structures, regulations and processes*
 - *supports teaching, administrative staff and students to take on their responsibilities in quality assurance*
 - *ensures academic integrity and freedom and is vigilant against academic fraud*

- *guards against intolerance of any kind or discrimination against the students or staff*
- *supports the involvement of external stakeholders*
 - *is developed with input from industry leaders and other stakeholders (i.e. industry leaders, professional bodies/associations, social partners, NGO's, governmental agencies) to align with professional standards.*
 - *integrates employer surveys to adapt to evolving workplace demands.*
 - *regularly utilizes alumni feedback for long-term effectiveness assessment.*
 - *is published and implemented by all stakeholders.*

1.2 Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review

Standards

- *The programme of study:*
 - *is designed with overall programme objectives that are in line with the institutional strategy and have explicit intended learning outcomes*
 - *Aligns course learning outcomes with student assessments using rubrics to ensure objectives are met.*
 - *Connects each course's aims and objectives with the programme's overall aims and objectives through mapping, aligning with the institutional strategy.*
 - *is designed by involving students and other stakeholders*
 - *benefits from external expertise*
 - *reflects the four purposes of higher education of the Council of Europe (preparation for sustainable employment, personal development, preparation for life as active citizens in democratic societies, the development and maintenance, through teaching, learning and research, of a broad, advanced knowledge base)*
 - *is designed so that it enables smooth student progression*
 - *is designed so that the exams' and assignments' content corresponds to the level of the programme and the number of ECTS*
 - *defines the expected student workload in ECTS*
 - *includes well-structured placement opportunities where appropriate*
 - *is subject to a formal institutional approval process*
 - *results in a qualification that is clearly specified and communicated, and refers to the correct level of the National Qualifications Framework for Higher Education and, consequently, to the Framework for Qualifications of the European Higher Education Area*
 - *is regularly monitored in the light of the latest research in the given discipline, thus ensuring that the programme is up-to-date*
 - *is periodically reviewed so that it takes into account the changing needs of society, the students' workload, progression and completion, the effectiveness of procedures for assessment of students, student expectations, needs and satisfaction in relation to the programme*
 - *is reviewed and revised regularly involving students and other stakeholders*

- collaborates with industry experts for curriculum development.
- conducts joint reviews with external academic specialists to maintain academic rigor.
- performs periodic assessments with external stakeholders to ensure continuous alignment with market needs.
- establishes collaboration with international educational institutions or/& other relevant international bodies for a global perspective.
- conducts regular feedback sessions with local community leaders for societal relevance.

1.3 Public information

Standards

- *Regarding the programme of study, clear, accurate, up-to date and readily accessible information is published about:*
 - *selection criteria*
 - *intended learning outcomes*
 - *qualification awarded*
 - *teaching, learning and assessment procedures*
 - *pass rates*
 - *learning opportunities available to the students*
 - *graduate employment information*

In addition, the program has established mechanisms of transparency & communication to ensure that

- Professional bodies validate program descriptions and outcomes.
- Community leaders actively participate in ensuring that the program's public information is relevant and resonates with the local and societal context.
- External auditors review public information for accuracy & consistency vis-à-vis the actual implementation of the program.
- Industry-specific & societal information is regularly updated with expert inputs.
- Alumni testimonials are included for a realistic portrayal of program outcomes.

1.4 Information management

Standards

- *Information for the effective management of the programme of study is collected, monitored and analysed using specific indicators and data i.e:*
 - *key performance indicators*
 - *profile of the student population*
 - *student progression, success and drop-out rates*
 - *students' satisfaction with their programmes*
 - *learning resources and student support available*
 - *career paths of graduates*

- *industry trend analysis.*
- *feedback mechanisms from external partners/stakeholders*
- *data exchanges with professional networks*
- *employer insights concerning career readiness*
- *Students and staff are involved in providing and analysing information and planning follow-up activities.*

Findings

The EEC finds that the C.D.A. College has fully documented processes and procedures with respect to policies for quality assurance, design, approval, on-going monitoring and review of the programme and courses, that adequate public information is provided and that the College operates state-of-the art information management systems with respect to programme design and development.

The EEC finds that the programmes and the course correspond to the European Qualifications Framework (EQF) and that the study programme support development of the learners' general competencies including digital literacy, foreign language skills, entrepreneurship, communication and teamwork skills.

Strengths

The EEC commends the C.D.A. College for having engaged staff and faculty serving the College in the diverse internal and external mechanisms for evaluating and reviewing the quality of the programme, student engagement and student satisfaction, study progress. The Assurance of Learning system the College operates is characterized by closed-loop principles and ensures adequate delivery of the same programme at the different locations.

The EEC also finds that the C.D.A. College is pro-active with respect to current and consistent developments in society (labour market, digital technologies, etc.). We recommend the College to be even more courageous when it comes to integrating new courses addressing Artificial Intelligence, Data Sciences, Sustainability (ESG). The EEC recommends to introduce such courses as core courses (mandatory) rather than offering them as electives.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC strongly recommends the C.D.A. College to implement the programme renewal the College has prepared and to ensure that AI related issues become core courses of the programme and are integrated in the different disciplines relevant to Business Administration (finance, accounting, marketing, management, HR, organisational behaviour, etc ...).

The EEC also strongly recommends the School keep the Business Project a mandatory 12 ECTS course as opposed to allowing students to replace the (capstone) Business Project by two 6 ECTS courses. Furthermore, the EEC finds strong support among students and faculty for keeping this course mandatory and for allowing the Business Project to become a group or team effort with clearly identifiable individual contributions by students as members of such team. This design would strengthen (achievement of) critical learning objectives and allow the College to introduce peer learning and peer evaluation dimensions.

With respect to ESG and sustainability in general, The EEC strongly recommends the College to implement an actionable and concrete set of development goals connecting the dots with respect to connecting the ESG. The EEC considers such consistent and coherent approach to be normal practice in higher education institutes that really want to have impact.

The EEC also strongly recommends the College to review evaluation and assessment methodologies (mid-term and final exams). Strengthening peer collaboration and interactive control between the lecturers delivering the same course at the different branches will allow the College to insure and increase the quality of assessment and to further strengthen the portfolio of assessment methodologies (see also section 2 wrt student assessment) focused on assessment of critical thinking.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
1.1	Policy for quality assurance	Compliant
1.2	Design, approval, on-going monitoring and review	Compliant
1.3	Public information	Compliant
1.4	Information management	Compliant

2. Student – centred learning, teaching and assessment (ESG 1.3)

Sub-areas

- 2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology
- 2.2 Practical training
- 2.3 Student assessment

2.1 Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology

Standards

- *The process of teaching and learning supports students' individual and social development.*
- *The process of teaching and learning is flexible, considers different modes of delivery, where appropriate, uses a variety of pedagogical methods and facilitates the achievement of planned learning outcomes.*
- *Students are encouraged to take an active role in creating the learning process.*

- *The implementation of student-centered learning and teaching encourages a sense of autonomy in the learner, while ensuring adequate guidance and support from the teacher.*
- *Teaching methods, tools and material used in teaching are modern, effective, support the use of modern educational technologies and are regularly updated.*
- *Mutual respect within the learner-teacher relationship is promoted.*
- *The implementation of student-centred learning and teaching respects and attends to the diversity of students and their needs, enabling flexible learning paths.*
- *Appropriate procedures for dealing with students' complaints regarding the process of teaching and learning are set.*
- *Detailed schedules in course materials are included, explicitly stating the expected hours for lectures, self-study, and group projects, ensuring transparency in time allocation.*
- *A system is integrated where each learning activity is assigned a weight proportional to its importance and time requirement, aiding in balanced curriculum design.*

2.2 Practical training

Standards

- *Practical and theoretical studies are interconnected.*
- *The organisation and the content of practical training, if applicable, support achievement of planned learning outcomes and meet the needs of the stakeholders.*
- *The expected hours for different components of practical training, such as lab work, fieldwork, and internships are clearly documented in the training manuals*
- *A weighting system is applied to various practical training elements, reflecting their significance in the overall learning outcomes and student workload.*

2.3 Student assessment

Standards

- *Assessment is consistent, fairly applied to all students and carried out in accordance with the stated procedures.*
- *Assessment is appropriate, transparent, objective and supports the development of the learner.*
- *The criteria for the method of assessment, as well as criteria for marking, are published in advance.*
- *Assessment allows students to demonstrate the extent to which the intended learning outcomes have been achieved. Students are given feedback, which, if necessary, is linked to advice on the learning process.*
- *Assessment, where possible, is carried out by more than one examiner.*
- *A formal procedure for student appeals is in place.*
- *Assessors are familiar with existing testing and examination methods and receive support in developing their own skills in this field.*

- *The regulations for assessment take into account mitigating circumstances.*
- *The time allocation for each assessment task is explicitly stated in course outlines, ensuring students are aware of the expected workload.*
- *A balanced assessment weighting strategy is implemented, considering the complexity and learning objectives of each task, to ensure fair evaluation of student performance.*

Findings

The EEC commends C.D.A. College for being very supportive and facilitative to individual student's intellectual and social development. The students that spoke to the panel indicated this as strength. Teaching is delivered mainly on branch. Teaching staff is flexible and responsive. The pace of teaching is tailored and adjusted to the individual students' needs. Students get a lot of support from teaching staff, which might make students a bit passive. Teaching methods and facilities are yearly updated. There are highly levels of mutual respect between students and teachers. Students feel appreciated. If students have questions or complaints, teachers are responsive and supportive in addressing them. Documentation of the teaching schedule, course descriptions etc. is accurate and detailed out. Overall, the program looks balanced.

The program contains – in name – virtually only theoretical courses. In practice, however, these theoretical courses also contain practical elements. For instance, in practice, teachers of courses in the first year help (international) students develop social skills and this way help them to get accustomed to the fact that they are students in a Cyprus context.

Stakeholders are Cypriot companies with a focus on service delivery, like financial service, consulting, tourism. They are satisfied with the students and commend them for their ability to apply knowledge and skills and also for their loyalty and trustworthiness.

One essential element at the end of the study is the study project. Students have to execute this study project, which is a good opportunity for them to apply their theoretical knowledge. There is not that much explicit information available in the course schedule about practical elements, while conversations with teachers taught the panel that there are practical elements present at least in several courses. Courses are weighted according to the number of ECTS, there is no explicit mentioning of practical training elements.

The assessment of the courses is consistently applied to all student in correspondence with the written regulations and procedures. While the assessment in terms of exams is clear and straightforward, it is quite basic does not always live up to the standards of what might be expected from a BA study in general. The criteria of the assessment are announced in advance as part of the course descriptions. The assessment is quite basic in nature and – only based on the limited sample that the EEC could assess - there is doubt whether the assessment captures sufficiently the achievement of intended learning goals. In most cases, the assessment is performed by the teacher who is responsible for the course. Students have room to (formally) appeal against assessment outcomes. Teachers are familiar with assessment procedures and formats and support each other in that respect. Individual student's specific circumstances are carefully taken into account when it comes to assessment. Assessments tend to be relatively easy and not very difficult, neither very challenging.

The school considers skipping the business project at the end of the study as there are practical issues that make it hard to run the thesis project. Especially international students find it hard to find a company to run their business project. However, we strongly recommend keeping the business project due to its practical nature and as it is a good preparation for their future job life. Ways to address practical issues is 1) run the business project as (a multicultural)

team rather than as individual students, 2) set up and develop a more formalized and sophisticated matching system to match particular students/student teams to particular businesses, and 3) make more intensive use of alumni network.

Strengths

The EEC strongly commends the C.D.A. College for its best-practice student-oriented climate. Teaching staff and also the administrative staff are dedicated, helpful and responsive to students' request for help and clarifications. For instance, students can email and approach their teachers at every moment of day getting quick answer to their questions and problems.

The College has small class sizes with a limited number of students. As a result, more emphasis is placed on each student, and instructors are able to repeat or clarify topics that students may not have understood. This personalized approach enhances the quality of education, as it allows students to fully grasp the course material and receive the support they need.

Students at C.D.A. College receive the appropriate material for each course one week before the lesson. This is very helpful, as it gives them enough time to prepare in advance. As a result, they are better able to participate in class and understand the lesson more effectively. Moreover, early access to the material allows students to take better notes, which can significantly enhance their productivity and overall academic performance.

It is also commendable that students are assessed through multiple criteria rather than relying solely on one or two exams. Their evaluation includes participation, assignments, group projects, and exams. Group projects help foster a spirit of teamwork and teach students how to collaborate effectively with others. In fact, a group of students suggested that it would be beneficial to complete their thesis in collaboration with others rather than working individually. In addition, evaluating class participation motivates students to engage more actively in lessons and maintain consistent attendance.

National students have the opportunity to participate in internships either during the summer period or throughout a semester. This allows them to gain not only theoretical knowledge but also valuable practical experience. However, international students are not allowed to take part in internships due to legal restrictions. They are only permitted to work a limited number of hours.

Students also have the opportunity to move to a foreign country and work in an industry related to their field of study. This experience allows them to understand how organizations operate and coordinate in different cultural and professional environments. Interacting with people from other countries offers many benefits—it enhances their communication skills, improves their adaptability, and broadens their perspectives, helping them to think more creatively and "outside the box." Furthermore, it can lead to future employment opportunities, as some students may be offered jobs in the host country after graduation. The College actively supports students who wish to participate in this program by offering financial assistance and helping them find accommodation.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC identified the following areas for further improvement.

One major concern is the basic nature of the assessment/exams. There is serious doubt whether the assessment sufficiently captures the achievement of intended learning goals. Inspection of some exam copies taught the evaluation committee members that there is significant room for improvement of the quality and level of the exams. Exams, for instance, contain questions that quite strongly focus on testing factual knowledge and do not reflect the depth and comprehensiveness of the teaching material. Much elaboration is needed here. One major way to improve is e.g. the organisation of oral exams allowing to address potential AI challenges and allowing a more in-depth assessment of the student's knowledge.

This exam/assessment related concern by the EEC leads to an only "partial" compliance with respect to student assessment.

The focus is much on teaching theoretical courses and officially only theoretical courses are taught. The EEC strongly suggests C.D.A. College to make more explicitly clear the presence of practical elements in course and also in the program guide. The panel spoke to students who recommend stronger emphasis on the theory presented in the lectures can be applied in business practice. For instance, make use of guest lectures (e.g. CEOs, managers) may be a way to cover this gap.

The school considers skipping the business project at the end of the study as there are practical issues that make it hard to run the thesis project. Especially international students find it hard to find a company to run their business project. However, we strongly recommend keeping the business project due to its practical nature and as it is a good preparation for their future job life. Ways to address practical issues is 1) run the business project as team rather than as individual students, 2) set up and develop a more formalized and sophisticated matching system to match particular students/student teams to particular businesses, and 3) make more intensively use of alumni network.

The EEC also strongly encourages the C.D.A. College to make course evaluations by students mandatory, respecting the anonymity of the evaluation. This approach would encourage honest feedback, helping to identify areas for improvement. As a result, the quality of the program would increase, making it more efficient and effective. Currently, submitting evaluations is not mandatory, and as a result, a vast majority of students do not provide their feedback. One possible way to implement a better policy is to restrict access to final grades until students have submitted their evaluations.

The EEC also finds that the structure of the course material mainly consists of presentation slides. For theoretical courses, this format is generally sufficient, as it allows students to grasp key concepts. However, for more practical subjects—such as mathematics, statistics, and accounting—it is difficult and impractical to convey all the necessary information through slides only. These courses require more detailed explanations and worked examples in order for students to fully understand the material.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
2.1	Process of teaching and learning and student-centred teaching methodology	Compliant
2.2	Practical training	Compliant
2.3	Student assessment	Partially compliant

3. Teaching staff (ESG 1.5)

Sub-areas

- 3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development**
- 3.2 Teaching staff number and status**
- 3.3 Synergies of teaching and research**

3.1 Teaching staff recruitment and development

Standards

- *Institutions ensure the competence of their teaching staff.*
- *Fair, transparent and clear processes for the recruitment and development of the teaching staff are set up.*
- *Teaching staff qualifications are adequate to achieve the objectives and planned learning outcomes of the study programme, and to ensure quality and sustainability of the teaching and learning.*
- *The teaching staff is regularly engaged in professional and teaching-skills training and development.*
- *Promotion of the teaching staff takes into account the quality of their teaching, their research activity, the development of their teaching skills and their mobility.*
- *Innovation in teaching methods and the use of new technologies is encouraged.*
- *Conditions of employment that recognise the importance of teaching are followed.*
- *Recognised visiting teaching staff participates in teaching the study programme.*

3.2 Teaching staff number and status

Standards

- *The number of the teaching staff is adequate to support the programme of study.*
- *The teaching staff status (rank, full/part time) is appropriate to offer a quality programme of study.*
- *Visiting staff number does not exceed the number of the permanent staff.*

3.3 Synergies of teaching and research

Standards

- *The teaching staff collaborate in the fields of teaching and research within the HEI and with partners outside (practitioners in their fields, employers, and staff members at other HEIs in Cyprus or abroad).*
- *Scholarly activity to strengthen the link between education and research is encouraged.*
- *The teaching staff publications are within the discipline.*
- *Teaching staff studies and publications are closely related to the programme's courses.*
- *The allocation of teaching hours compared to the time for research activity is appropriate.*

Findings

C.D.A. College offers courses in all classical relevant disciplines with respect to Business Administration: Human Resources, Marketing, Entrepreneurship, and Public Administration. The program is delivered by a diverse faculty composed of individuals with both substantial industry experience and academic qualifications, including PhD holders. The staffing levels are sufficient to support the program's delivery effectively.

The EEC finds that course leaders possess relevant academic and professional backgrounds aligned with the modules they teach. Student feedback is regularly collected through formal surveys. There is an established process in place to address student feedback and complaints. The college's quality assurance team differentiates between various types of student misconduct and recommends appropriate responses. Additionally, there are mechanisms for evaluating teaching performance and taking corrective action when needed. The College is participating in Erasmus+. However, the faculty currently does not use it for exchange or to receive visiting staff from other institutions participating in Erasmus+.

Faculty members can receive extensive support to pursue research and collaborate on industry projects via the Aristotle Research Centre. There is a straightforward procedure for obtaining workload credit. Every year, the College keeps a research report (Faculty Booklet) monitoring research activities, attendance of seminars, training, and exchange. The institution encourages these collaborations and promotes student involvement in research initiatives.

Regarding qualifications, most of the teaching faculty hold a PhD, or is pursuing doctoral studies. Faculty members participate in professional development and skill-building activities. A recruitment process is in place for hiring new academic staff.

Strengths

The majority of faculty members have relevant PhDs and/or bring significant industry experience, and have taught at the BA level for several years. Their motivation and professional credentials contribute substantially to the delivery of BA modules.

The recruitment and development processes for teaching/faculty are closely monitored and appear to be effective. A notable strength of C.D.A. College is its research center, where the College collaborates with research funding agencies and external stakeholders. The research environment offered by Aristotle can enrich the BA program, and this connection should be further integrated into the BA programme.

Most current faculty qualifications meet the standards necessary to achieve the program's learning outcomes and ensure high-quality instruction.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC recommends C.D.A. College to increase the proportion of PhD-qualified staff within the BA program who are active and hold a "workload credit" in the Aristotle Research Centre. Additionally, allocating more resources to support research activities and faculty participation in research projects could further strengthen the program.

Developing a comprehensive research strategy and vision for the Business Administration faculty could enhance the synergy between the institution's research and teaching, as well as its standing in the BA education market. This approach will help align teaching with ongoing research efforts and create opportunities for stronger industry funding for the College's applied research. Furthermore, the College could improve communication of scholarly achievements. For example, the members of Aristotle should be presented on the C.D.A. website as well as their relevant research achievements.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
3.1	Teaching staff recruitment and development	Compliant
3.2	Teaching staff number and status	Compliant
3.3	Synergies of teaching and research	Compliant

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

Sub-areas

- 4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria**
- 4.2 Student progression**
- 4.3 Student recognition**
- 4.4 Student certification**

4.1 Student admission, processes and criteria

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student admission are in place.*
- *Access policies, admission processes and criteria are implemented consistently and in a transparent manner.*

4.2 Student progression

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student progression are in place.*
- *Processes and tools to collect, monitor and act on information on student progression, are in place.*

4.3 Student recognition

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student recognition are in place.*
- *Fair recognition of higher education qualifications, periods of study and prior learning, including the recognition of non-formal and informal learning, are essential components for ensuring the students' progress in their studies, while promoting mobility.*
- *Appropriate recognition procedures are in place that rely on:*
 - *institutional practice for recognition being in line with the principles of the Lisbon Recognition Convention*
 - *cooperation with other institutions, quality assurance agencies and the national ENIC/NARIC centre with a view to ensuring coherent recognition across the country*

4.4 Student certification

Standards

- *Pre-defined and published regulations regarding student certification are in place.*
- *Students receive certification explaining the qualification gained, including achieved learning outcomes and the context, level, content and status of the studies that were pursued and successfully completed.*

Findings

The EEC finds that rules and regulations about student admission are carefully documented and detailed out in a clear way. There is not that much of documentation on student progression. The College could pay more attention to the recognition and differentiation of the performance achievements of the high potential students to push them further. The focus is on inclusivity, equality, and mutual recognition of students' skills and knowledge and factoring in their different cultural backgrounds.

With respect to student progression, the EEC finds that, in general, there is good recognition of individual students' specific situation and context and needs. The school and teaching staff as well as administrative staff are supportive in facilitating and or adjusting the learning conditions if needed. Especially in the first year of the study teachers of several courses pay attention to develop international students' nonformal social and learning skills to get them mentally prepared for the studying and living in the Cyprian context and make progress.

With respect to student recognition, The EEC can confirm that there is collaboration with other educational institutions. The school provides a list of other educational institutions with whom they collaborate especially from countries in Eastern and Southern Europe. However, it is not very clear what the nature of those collaborations entails.

Lastly, the EEC finds that regulations on students' certification are clear, consistent and carefully documented. For students that receive certification, there is explanation on the level and context of the qualifications.

Strengths

The EEC finds that and commends the College for teaching and administrative staff's attention to the needs of individual students' (to what is needed or should be adjusted to help them to optimally process, learn and prepare for assessments).

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The EEC finds that there is quite a strong focus on social safety and how students as a collective can pass the courses, program. Notwithstanding this, more attention should be given to the differences among individual students with more focus on individual student's intellectual potential and performance trajectories. Currently, quite strong emphasis is put on how students and especially the weakest ones can pass. Instead, more attention and resources need to be provided to materialize address the full intellectual potential of students and how high-potential students can be more challenged.

Collaboration of the school with other educational institutions could be more elaborate and better documented in terms of what each collaboration of the school with each collaborating institution actually consists of in terms of type of activities involved.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
4.1	Student admission, processes and criteria	Compliant
4.2	Student progression	Compliant
4.3	Student recognition	Compliant
4.4	Student certification	Compliant

5. Learning resources and student support (ESG 1.6)

Sub-areas

- 5.1 Teaching and Learning resources
- 5.2 Physical resources
- 5.3 Human support resources
- 5.4 Student support

5.1 Teaching and Learning resources

Standards

- *Adequate and readily accessible teaching and learning resources (teaching and learning environments, materials, aids and equipment) are provided to students and support the achievement of objectives in the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing the learning resources.*

5.2 Physical resources

Standards

- *Physical resources, i.e. premises, libraries, study facilities, IT infrastructure, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*

- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.3 Human support resources

Standards

- *Human support resources, i.e. tutors/mentors, counsellors, other advisers, qualified administrative staff, are adequate to support the study programme.*
- *Adequacy of resources is ensured for changing circumstances (change in student numbers, etc.).*
- *All resources are fit for purpose and students are informed about the services available to them.*

5.4 Student support

Standards

- *Student support is provided covering the needs of a diverse student population, such as mature, part-time, employed and international students and students with special needs.*
- *Students are informed about the services available to them.*
- *Student-centred learning and flexible modes of learning and teaching, are taken into account when allocating, planning and providing student support.*
- *Students' mobility within and across higher education systems is encouraged and supported.*
- *Students receive support in research-led teaching through engagement in research projects, mentorship from research-active faculty, and access to resources that enhance their research skills and critical engagement with current studies.*

Findings

The EEC finds that C.D.A. College offers excellent accessibility and utilizes a wide range of learning aids and resources. The lectures are systematically recorded and can be reviewed by the students.

Students are well-informed about the various services available to them. However, the faculty handbook does not clarify whether there are specific policies in place for students with learning disabilities, such as dyslexia, or regarding the accessibility of facilities for students with physical disabilities. The college website does not include a general page on policies related to learning disabilities.

The classrooms are in good condition, and computers are available for students' use. However, the committee noted that smart whiteboards or facilities for tablet connections were not present in many classrooms.

The EEC finds that the library has only a rather limited number of copies available for each book. A student can borrow a book for a maximum of two weeks (conditionally renewable), which means not all students have access to the

relevant bibliography for the entire semester. To a certain extent, this issue is mitigated through an online system that offers digital books. Multiple students can access the same book at the same time, which significantly improves availability.

Specifically for the Limassol branch, the EEC finds that the library provides students with access to computers for completing assignments and projects. They have new computers which increase productivity. Due to the fact that computers are new, students spend less time searching for information and completing their tasks.

Strengths

The lectures are systematically recorded and can be reviewed by the students.

The administrative staff are qualified and motivated, working collaboratively to support students. Both faculty and students emphasized the importance of practical knowledge application within the program.

A key strength of the program is the integration of theoretical and practical components. Both students and external stakeholders of C.D.A. College consistently demonstrate high satisfaction with the management of the programme.

A commendable strength of the C.D.A. College is its student support. Students testify that professors answer email question in a short time (even in weekends). According to students, the administrative staff offers a high level of support. They help students not only with academic issues but also with personal challenges. Many students mentioned that they feel like part of a family. For students, having a friendly and supportive environment is very important: a positive atmosphere reduces stress and increases students' ability to concentrate on their studies.

Areas of improvement and recommendations

The College should prioritize investing more in access to smart technologies (smartboards or tablet connections).

The College can lower the costs for the students by making books available online during the courses. The library can facilitate students by offering ebook access to the literature during the semesters.

There is a document outlining how to address student disabilities. However, there are no clear, actionable, and specific guidelines on how to deal with these disabilities. For example, advice to extend the deadline can lead to considerable variety in how that is interpreted by different members of staff. The policies should also be clearly communicated and included in the faculty handbook.

The college website should also include a general page on policies related to learning disabilities.

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area	Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant
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5.1	Teaching and Learning resources	Compliant
5.2	Physical resources	Compliant
5.3	Human support resources	Compliant
5.4	Student support	Compliant

6. Additional for doctoral programmes (ALL ESG)

Sub-areas

- 6.1 Selection criteria and requirements
- 6.2 Proposal and dissertation
- 6.3 Supervision and committees

6.1 Selection criteria and requirements

Standards

- *Specific criteria that the potential students need to meet for admission in the programme, as well as how the selection procedures are made, are defined.*
- *The following requirements of the doctoral degree programme are analysed and published:*
 - *the stages of completion*
 - *the minimum and maximum time of completing the programme*
 - *the examinations*
 - *the procedures for supporting and accepting the student's proposal*
 - *the criteria for obtaining the Ph.D. degree*

6.2 Proposal and dissertation

Standards

- *Specific and clear guidelines for the writing of the proposal and the dissertation are set regarding:*
 - *the chapters that are contained*
 - *the system used for the presentation of each chapter, sub-chapters and bibliography*
 - *the minimum word limit*
 - *the binding, the cover page and the prologue pages, including the pages supporting the authenticity, originality and importance of the dissertation, as well as the reference to the committee for the final evaluation*
- *There is a plagiarism check system. Information is provided on the detection of plagiarism and the consequences in case of such misconduct.*
- *The process of submitting the dissertation to the university library is set.*

6.3 Supervision and committees

Standards

- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the advisory committee (to whom the doctoral student submits the research proposal) are determined.*
- *The composition, the procedure and the criteria for the formation of the examining committee (to whom the doctoral student defends his/her dissertation), are determined.*
- *The duties of the supervisor-chairperson and the other members of the advisory committee towards the student are determined and include:*
 - *regular meetings*
 - *reports per semester and feedback from supervisors*
 - *support for writing research papers*
 - *participation in conferences*
- *The number of doctoral students that each chairperson supervises at the same time are determined.*

Findings

N/A

Strengths

N/A

Areas of improvement and recommendations

N/A

Please select what is appropriate for each of the following sub-areas:

Sub-area		<i>Non-compliant/ Partially Compliant/Compliant</i>
6.1	Selection criteria and requirements	Not applicable
6.2	Proposal and dissertation	Not applicable
6.3	Supervision and committees	Not applicable

C. Conclusions and final remarks

The EEC confirms the C.D.A. College's compliance with the standards, with one exception, being the partial compliance wrt assessment and evaluations.

The EEC also wants to thank the School and its internal and external stakeholders for the very productive, open-minded and in-depths discussions on the institute, the programme and the ways forward. The EEC commends the C.D.A. College for the strong inclusive, friendly and very supportive environment it provides for students, staff and faculty. The sense of personal engagement and loyalty absolutely characterises the C.D.A. College as an institution.

With respect to the four major dimensions for further improvement (see introduction) and/or development mentioned above and relevant across all branches and overarching all programme and course-related standards:

- (1) the challenge of having different student populations and different (local) market or industry challenges and opportunities at each of the three branches;
- (2) the challenge of serving students of which the large majority also works (with a significant part-time workload);
- (3) the challenge of innovating the programme, restructuring courses, integrating new courses into the programme and
- (4) strengthening the research foundation of the programme,

the EEC has confidence in the C.D.A.'s ability to address these issues when recommendations by the EEC are adequately addressed.

As major conclusions, the EEC proposes the C.D.A. College:

- to find ways to challenge students more, certainly when it comes to the assessment/evaluation, i.e. final exams. Such exams should allow for evidence of critical thinking, ability to analyse and synthesize. Including oral components of examination will, e.g., mitigate this concern. Furthermore, a control on branch level can and should be complemented by a control on discipline level across the branches (4-eyes principle);

- to find answers in the real-life context where students do have part-time jobs (with advantageous effects on student maturity, the link between theory/study and practice, ...), the full time study programme has to be challenging and pushing students. In other words, as the overwhelming majority of students at C.D.A. College work while studying, the efficiency and effectiveness of their studies can be negatively affected. It is indeed very difficult to work full-time and still dedicate the necessary time and energy to fully understand and absorb the course material. A full-time job is physically and mentally demanding, leaving students with limited energy and focus for their academic responsibilities. The C.D.A. College is strongly recommended to have clear policies and explicit expectations and to use its close relationships with industry to find a better equilibrium (e.g. covenants with industry wrt the quality of the job students do, internships, work-study balance, etc ...).

- to intensify commendable research-related initiatives the C.D.A. College takes (creation of the Aristotle Research Center). Such initiatives need to be consistent with the view on the importance of research for the delivery of the courses and the programme and with the workload and research requirements of faculty teaching these courses in the programme, the goal being to realize synergies between delivering high quality teaching and relevant (applied) research in support of that quality and of the institute's impact on and reputation in society.

- to encourage the C.D.A. College to integrate new courses and to review and update existing courses with respect to critical developments regarding data science, artificial intelligence and other technology-based developments in



society and industry. Such issues and topics should be core to the programme rather than offered as electives or options.

The EEC also wants to repeat its commendations with respect to the social and professional environment it has created for students, staff and faculty.

D. Signatures of the EEC

Name	Signature
Philip Vergauwen	
Ernst Verwaal	
Ad de Jong	
Demetris Kazamias	

Date: June 12 2025